DISSENTING TRADITIONS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY CENTRAL CANADA

COMMUNITIES APART:

DISSENTING TRADITIONS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY

CENTRAL CANADA

By

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Abstract

"Communities Apart: Dissenting Traditions in Nineteenth-Century Central Canada"

studies the relationship between five Dissenting Protestant groups – the Quakers, Children of

Peace, Disciples of Christ, Millerites and the Holiness Movement Church – and several key

political and social transformations in nineteenth-century central Canadian life. It challenges SD

Clark's argument that Dissenting "sects" were otherworldly and apolitical, while at the same time

revising the more modern Canadian historiographical trend to confine discussions of

Protestantism's cultural impact to so-called "mainline" denominations. In the process, it discovers

that Dissenting denominations were important participants in the societal dialogue regarding

various aspects of central Canadian life. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the Dissenters

considered in this thesis challenged the compact between Church and state which was entrenched

in the Constitution of 1791, and presented alternatives to the culture of hierarchy and deference,

rooted in a common core of democratic, Christian values. These included a strident anti-

formalism, in addition to a staunch defense of liberty of conscience, the priesthood of all

believers and sola scriptura, or alternatively, a mystical sense of God's active direction in the life

of the believer. As the links between church and state were dismantled, a new form of Dissent

arose whose focus was more socio-economic than political. Indeed, within this thesis, "New

Dissent" constituted a reaction to mainline Methodism's assumption of several of the cultural

attributes of an established church in defense of a rising, and later consolidating middle class.

Although the context had shifted, Dissenters of the new era continued to base their criticisms of

the larger culture and of Methodist elites, in addition to their claims to superior spiritual and

hence social authority on democratic Christian notions. Moreover, this thesis explores how

certain Dissenting communities were guided by their religious beliefs and experiences to present alternatives to the gender ideologies espoused by the larger culture. It also demonstrates how "mainstream" cultural consensus was profoundly shaped in response to Dissenting alternatives from the 1840s to the 1890s. What emerges is a clearer understanding of the diverse and uniquely Canadian ways in which contentious political, social and religious questions were experienced, imagined and resolved.

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Introduction

In recent years, several Canadian historians have investigated the links between Christian belief on the one hand, and politics, gender, culture and religious organization on the other. In the process, new theories have been put forth regarding a vast range of subjects, including the gendered nature of Upper Canadian religious and political ideologies, evangelicalism's response to Darwinism and the higher criticism, and the rise of a Protestant cultural consensus in mid-to-late nineteenth-century Ontario.[1] Although broad in scope, even the most comprehensive examples of the new historiography have focused on the largest Christian denominations. As a result, the impact of the many varieties of Protestant Dissent on Canadian life has remained largely unexplored. This stands in stark contrast to American and British historians' extensive investigation of the significance of Dissent.[2] Furthermore, it has raised several questions about the dominant mythologies which have helped shape both scholarly and popular views of Canada's past.

In the area of religious history, SD Clark's seminal work, Church and Sect in Canada, published in 1948, set the standard for future historians' attitudes toward the role of Dissent in Canada's past. Clark's argument rests on a rigid model of religious development that combines Ernest Troelsch's dichotomization of "church" and "sect" as pure organizational types with the "frontierism" of Frederick Jackson Turner. In the context of the decline of the American frontier, Turner had argued that the genius of American life and democracy was rooted in the frontier experience. His view was both positive and fearful: the frontier was the fount of all that was uniquely American; its decline was looked upon with a sense of foreboding for the future of the republic. In contrast, Clark's social conservatism influenced his attitude toward the role of the frontier in Canadian religious life. As the product of mature political, economic and social development, churches were characterized by an activist spirit and a desire to accommodate the

needs of the larger community. Conversely, sects were inevitably the product of primitive, frontier conditions. Although ultimately doomed to extinction, or to becoming churches themselves once the frontier disappeared, sects impeded the progress of mature social and religious development by challenging the leadership of the larger, more "stable denominations."[3]

Clark has influenced the writing of Canadian religious and political history in several ways. First of all, Church and Sect's compelling arguments, and magnificent range had for several years dissuaded historians from re-examining its Dissenting terrain in any depth. Indeed, its focus on the ultimate victories of church versus sect, in addition to Clark's tacit support of the former's conservative values set the standard for future discussions of Canadian religion. In contrast to the United States – the cradle of democracy and revolution – Canada's unique genius lay in the triumph of church over sect, and in the larger pattern of peace and order which inspired the nation's core values. Furthermore, Clark's assertion that sects are essentially "otherworldly" and hence, politically indifferent, has strengthened Canadian historians' tendency to ignore Dissent's significant contribution to political life, particularly from the 1810s to the 1850s. As a result, students of history are presented with a limited sense of the ways in which central Canada's most vexatious Constitutional questions were revisioned and solved. Canadian political historiography has not ventured far beyond the struggles of Anglican and Methodist into the 1840s,[4] and general treatments of the religious pluralism which fired movements for Reform from the 1820s to the 50s.[5]

This legacy has influenced Canadian historians' approach to Dissent's impact with regard to more purely cultural questions as well. A case in point is William Westfall's impressive synthesis entitled Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario. In it, he argues that between 1820 and 1870, a distinctive Protestant culture rose up in Ontario, premised on a rapprochement between the "religion of order," best represented by the Church of England, and the "religion of experience" most perfectly embodied by Canadian Wesleyan Methodism.

Although frequently at loggerheads during the early part of this period, by the 1850s, shifts within both denominations and within the larger society allowed for a consensus to develop amongst not only Anglicans and Methodists, but all mainline denominations. During the 1840s and 50s, Methodist revivalism lost its enthusiastic zeal as the religion of experience was tempered into romantic evangelicalism. In addition, Methodism "began to occupy a more central position in the religious structure of the colony and to take a more active interest in the world it once rejected." At the same time, disestablishment and the rise of a new, secular state forced the "established" churches to become self-supporting, to become, in effect, denominations like any other. As a result, the two sides – the religions of experience and order – now "saw themselves and the world in a similar way."[6] Despite its exceptional qualities, Westfall's study perpetuates the common tendency to equate Upper Canadian Dissent with Methodism, with the result that other religions of "experience" are obscured. Moreover, Westfall adheres to the divisions set forth by SD Clark regarding "sects" and "churches." Indeed, the story of Methodism's coming of age in the 1840s is in many ways the story of a "sect" sloughing off its otherworldliness in the process of becoming a "church."

Thus, this thesis began with a desire to reconsider Canadian Dissent's varied expressions in light of the new, international historiography. I wished to enlarge upon Westfall's scope of inquiry by demonstrating the specific ways in which Dissent contributed to the societal discourse in the areas of political ideology and participation, gender, family, and cultural formation. Unlike Clark's sociological approach which stressed the "uniformities and the cumulative patterns of social development...[and] religious sectarianism," this thesis is more properly devoted to the humbler tasks of the historian: to provide explanations for human behaviour in specific contexts and periods.[7] These aims were best served by the cultural methods employed in the international practice of religious history. The 1980s marked a shift toward cultural history as the profession's "central terrain." It is an amalgam of several different strains of scholarly inquiry. As social

historians sought answers to questions regarding the consciousness of their subjects, questions that quantitative analyses could not answer, several "quanitifiable givens" were reappraised, including notions of class, race, ethnicity, gender and several other variables. At the same time, intellectual historians, abandoning the materialist assumptions of social history, returned to the history of ideas, but with a new focus: the means by which all ideas, great and small were articulated, produced and received. These newly-minted cultural historians were influenced by semiotics which encouraged the view that a wide array of texts and artifacts could carry cultural meaning. It was also influenced by the French school of the Annales, formed in 1929. Traditionally, historical study had been concerned with the narration of "facts" and the progress of great men and great ideas. In contrast, the new history was concerned with analyzing all types of human activity. Cultural history embraced relativism as its guide and it moved beyond the study of elites to encompass the views and experiences of ordinary individuals, having as its goal the "histoire totale" of the human experience.[8]

As it is employed in this thesis, culture refers to the patterns of human thought, belief, speech, and behaviour which are transmitted by means of language, abstractions, tools and artifacts between individuals and groups, and from one generation to the next. Culture encompasses customary beliefs and rituals which influence human behaviour, and which constitute people's ever-shifting responses to the quest for life's meaning: most basically, it embodies the human quest to construct order out of chaos.[9] To this I would add that culture or rather, cultures are multitudinous and overlapping. Moreover, they speak to the functions of power and resistance, which stem from innumerable points and infuse entire systems and societies.[10] Interestingly, the etymology of the word "culture" underscores its original links to religion. Its root-word, "cult" stems from the Latin word cultus, later transformed into the French word culte, which denotes worship, dwelling, care and adoration in addition to the cultivation of land. The idea that culture and worship are intimately connected is a central premise of this thesis. Although different

religions draw upon reason, faith, tradition and sentiment in various ways, all seek to explain and many seek to evoke life's mysteries and paradoxes. In so doing, religions are perpetually engaged in answering the questions which societies ask, a process which is never simple and is frequently contested.[11]

Before the argument of this thesis is set forth, it is necessary to clarify my understanding of the term "Dissent." In Britain and North America, a major result of the Reformation was the prolific, and continual creation of Dissenting bodies which I alternately refer to as religious "communities," "groups" or "denominations."[12] I have tried to avoid describing Dissenting bodies as "sects" because of the term's connotations to SD Clark's argument, which I refute. Occasionally, however, I have used it in reference to the Dissenters considered in this thesis. As it is commonly used "sect" refers to a religious group which opposes the doctrines and practices of an established or mainline Protestant church. Similarly, "Protestant Dissent," is commonly used to describe those groups which differed from the beliefs, traditions, rites and governance of the established church, and chose to worship outside of it. This definition encompasses a wide variety of denominations. In the Upper Canadian case, those not in conformity with the practices of the United Church of England and Ireland, and arguably, the Church of Scotland, were considered to be "Dissenters." First and foremost, Canadian Dissent was constructed in opposition to the compact between Church and State established by the constitutution of 1791, and its attendant culture of hierarchy and deference. However, my definition is more selective in that it takes into consideration shifts in denominational practice and self-perception: for example, as early as the 1830s Methodist, Baptist and Presbyterian bodies began to take on several of the cultural attitudes and prerogatives of the established churches. At various times, all "mainstream" churches tried to cultivate financial and legal relationships with the State, and as such, attempted to adopt characteristics of the establishment. Indeed, in 1840, Clergy Reserves revenue was divided in such a way that a plural establishment was formed. As will be shown, most of the groups that I

examine had dissented from Dissent, and rejected, in varying degrees, "mainstream" denominational attempts to control the outpourings of individual conscience, and to establish more stringent standards of theological and behavioural orthodoxy. As such, my definition of Dissent is rooted in the idea of a dual establishment—one duly constituted by colonial law and practice, and another more purely cultural variety, constructed from Protestant Dissent's evolving "mainstream."

The groups I have selected include the Society of Friends and their offshoot, the Children of Peace, the Disciples of Christ, the Millerites, and the Holiness Movement Church.[13] The first of these denominations to take root on Canadian soil was the Society of Friends, which entered Upper Canada in the 1780s. The Holiness Movement Church which emerged in the 1890s, and which continued its ministry into the twentieth century was the last to emerge. These particular groups were chosen for a variety reasons, one of which was the availability of documents. Each denomination published at least one newspaper during the nineteenth-century. These were closely studied, along with church minutes, correspondence, missionary accounts, personal and travel diaries, disciplinary case files, tracts, books, and hymns. Importantly, a wide variety of sources pertaining to the Methodist and Anglican churches were consulted, in addition to several so-called "secular" newspapers. Not all of the groups considered were large. In some instances, sheer numbers corresponded directly to a denomination or movement's cultural importance: this was the case with the Millerites. Other groups, such as the Holiness Movement Church were partly representative of a larger phenomenon, a fact which magnifies their significance. Indeed, no simple equation exists between a denomination's membership figures and its cultural relevance. The Disciples of Christ and the Children of Peace are a case in point: these groups, though comparatively small, wielded influence beyond what their numbers would logically warrant.

In studying these denominations, one is made aware of the much greater propensity for religious pluralism than has been suggested by the recent historiography. Indeed, these groups were purposely selected to reflect a wide cross-section of Dissent, rural and urban, North American

and British, and a variety of religious origins—Puritan, Methodist and Baptist—in addition to a range of denominational life spans. Taken together, they reveal varieties of religious expression that had significant political and social effects in nineteenth-century central Canada by questioning the prevailing values in various realms of life.

This thesis contends that in nineteenth-century Canada, Christianity was the primary point of reference for the vast majority of people. It was a general consensus that the social order was built upon a Christian foundation, but underneath this consensus lay some important divisions over what constituted correct Christianity. These divisions, in turn, were intimately bound up with differences of opinion regarding the social order, politics, gender and the place of the individual in society. In the first forty-odd years of the nineteenth-century, the main cultural divide separating inhabitants of Upper Canada, and to a lesser extent, Anglo-Protestants of Lower Canada was based on religion. In Upper Canada, this divide was rooted in the Constitution of 1791which made provisions for an established Protestant church to act as the bulwark of the social and political order versus the American-inspired threat of revolution. Although the word "Protestant" was originally intended to refer to the Church of England, the word's meaning was contested over the next few decades, particularly by the Church of Scotland which eventually won status as a co-established church based on British precedent. As such, the religion of the politically and socially entitled, a group which came to be known as the "Family Compact," was Anglican, and to a lesser extent Presbyterian. Indeed, as Robert Saunders has argued, "the greatest hallmark of the Compact... was its support of the established church."[14] Due to patterns of both American and British immigration, the religion of the "people" or the plebeian masses was characterized by Dissent. This distinction is important because until the 1840s, church and state were united – the Church of England, and secondarily the Church of Scotland functioned in a political capacity, as "official" churches that provided the ideological basis for social and political organization. Viewed in reverse, from 1791 to the 1840s, when reforms led to the gradual dismantling of church and

state, the government of Upper Canada was founded, and justified on the basis of a particular

religious conception of the cosmos. Proponents of the "official" religious culture of

establishmentarianism in Canada believed in a system based on divinely-ordained, hierarchical

social, political and religious distinctions in which each individual attended to the duties of his

station for the greater good of all. During this period, establishmentarian religion reflected the

values and assumptions of the tory elite. This elite was forcefully challenged by the Dissenters

considered in this thesis.

In general terms, Dissenting denominations not only influenced the lives of their adherents,

but also participated in the larger societal dialogue about various facets of central Canadian life.

Communities such as the Children of Peace and the Disciples of Christ did more than attract

members by propounding differing theological conceptions. In the first half of the nineteenth

century, they also challenged political structures and the ideologies upon which they were based.

Although politically diverse, Dissenting denominations presented alternatives to

establishmentarianism and the culture of hierarchy and deference. This interpretation challenges

SD Clark's presentation of Dissent as emphatically apolitical and otherworldly. The Quakers, the

Children of Peace and the Holiness Movement Church further demonstrate how particular

Dissenting groups were inspired by their religious convictions to counter dominant gender

ideologies and to suggest gender and family relations at variance with those espoused by the larger

culture. The emergence of new movements like Millerism compelled larger Dissenting

denominations such as Methodism to react much like Anglicanism had in attempting to fend off

assaults on its ill-fated search for privileged status in early nineteenth-century Ontario. From

Millerism onward, and especially following mid-century transitions toward a secular state, politics

was less frequently the focus for such Dissenters. Indeed, one can make a distinction between "Old

Dissent" – a highly political phenomenon, moulded with reference to establishmentarianism – and

"New Dissent" whose concerns were more socio-economic in emphasis. The latter arose in

reaction to a rising and later consolidating middle-class cultural "establishment" best represented by Canadian Wesleyan Methodism. The Holiness Movement Church was a case in point: emerging in the late nineteenth century, it was predicated on social characteristics that set its adherents apart from mainline Methodism in terms of social class and rural residency. That being said, "New Dissent" was never entirely apolitical: in the form of Millerism, it protested the apparent toryism of Methodist elites in early 1840s Upper Canada.. Moreover, in the 1890s, Holiness' populist social critique parallelled developments in the political arena, namely, the rise of the Patrons of Industry in Ontario. All told, Dissenting denominations were a common characteristic not simply of nineteenth-century Protestantism in central Canada, but of Canadian society more generally. As such, this thesis revises Clark's suggestion that such groups were self-contained units – interesting as barometers of economic disruption, but with little impact beyond their own denominational parameters.

More specifically, in chapter one, the basic elements of Canadian ancien regime culture are discussed. This provides the reader with a clearer understanding of the culture that the Dissenters so vehemently opposed. Additionally, three of the five dissenting bodies treated in this thesis are introduced, including the Quakers, the Children of Peace and the Disciples of Christ. The bulk of this chapter examines the background, theology and local history of these groups, each of which took root in the Canadas prior to the 1840s, and each of which took part in the creation of a broad, cultural alternative to ancien regime society. In the process, it draws upon the work of historians Nancy Christie and George Rawlyk who have argued that American immigration into British North America from 1775-1815 flooded the area with evangelicals. As a result, the Canadian evangelical scene, prior to 1815 was nourished by a pervasive cultural republicanism. Both authors build upon the arguments of US historian Nathan Hatch who argued that the American Revolution broke down traditional theological categories and unleashed, on North American soil, a diverse range of unlettered, self-proclaimed preachers. In voicing the concerns of the poor and marginal, they based

their claims to legitimacy on religious liberty and the primacy of individual conscience. In the process, Christianity was "democratized." This phenomenon was instrumental in producing a fragmented and pluralistic religious polity, which was immediately transplanted to Upper Canada and the Maritimes via "loyalist" and "late-loyalist" migration. Both Rawlyk and Christie contend, with slightly different emphases, that the evangelicalism represented by the New Lights in the Maritimes and the Methodists in Upper Canada constituted two facets of a common popular religious impulse. This impulse had as its goal a radical redefinition of British North American society in contrast to the established order of church and state. Evangelicals challenged the primary assumptions of establishmentarianism by emphasizing individualism over communalism, egalitarianism over hierarchy, vernacular over educated authority, independence over submission, and voluntarism in matters of faith and education over State-Churchism. Representatives of elite culture in British North America interpreted religious Dissent as an expression of a rival political ideology, based as it was on concepts of religious and civil liberty.[15]

Christie and Rawlyk both end their discussion of the pervasiveness of religious republicanism at the War of 1812. Christie and others argue that after the war, the forces of conservatism were galvanized around the Upper Canadian elite and the idea of loyalty to the British crown. In the minds of all those who fought in the militia regiments, anti-republicanism and anti-Americanism became synonymous with the patriotic defence of one's native land. This occurred at roughly the same time that evangelicals began to prosper and become more conservative. By the early Victorian period, most evangelical denominations had fragmented, a process which separated the respectable pro-tory majority from an increasingly marginal, radical fringe.[16] Christie argues that the radical dimensions of early evangelicalism continued on in rural communities in particular, and that its legacy lived on in the debates of the period 1820-1860 over Church and state, voluntarism, loyalty and reform.[17]

Chapters one and two build upon and revise Christie's and Rawlyk's arguments by discussing how Dissent functioned in a non-republican political culture, especially after 1815. Particularly in Upper Canada, Dissenters of various stripes were forced to unite in political opposition against the governing clique due to the restrictions on religious toleration and democratic freedoms which establishmentarianism justified. More positively however, the content of Dissenters' opposition to the ancien regime order was moulded with reference to a common, popular Protestant culture that transcended denominational peculiarities. Central to the Dissenting mind-set was a rejection of ecclesiasticism's style and substance: the formalism, luxury and dissipation evident in the Church of Rome and its most notorious Protestant offspring, the Churches of England and Scotland proved that Christianity's original message had been corrupted. And historically, these churches had made a mockery of the Reformation principles of liberty of conscience and sola scriptura, by restricting the rights of those who refused to assent to their "unreasonable" creeds. The Dissenters treated in this thesis borrowed from an arsenal of images which linked sensualism, greed and unreason—the hallmarks of sin and deficient character— to the Church of England, and to other groups which seemed to share its ecclesiastical pretensions.

Chapter two, "Central Canada and the Politics of Dissent: 1812-1854" focuses on the significant contributions of the Children of Peace and the Disciples of Christ to the public debate over how the British Constitution should function in the colonies. In addition to demonstrating the continued importance of "radical" Dissent, this chapter points to the heterogeneous origins of its membership. After 1815, it ceased to be solely derived from American sources. Indeed, the rise of British immigration to the Canadas after the War of 1812 meant that a significant strand of Canadian Dissent found its origins in Britain. Some historians have argued that British immigration provided a conservative antidote to the republican tendencies of those Upper Canadians of North American origin.[18] While this was probably true for the most part, my findings suggest that cultural republicanism continued to be fed after 1815, not only by Dissenters

of American origins, but also by Britons.[19] Moreover, it is my contention that after 1815, the American **and** British dissenters that are the subject of this dissertation assisted in the creation of a culture in opposition to conservatism, most notably through efforts to reform the Constitution. As such, this thesis moves the discussion of political theology beyond the traditional Anglican/Methodist paradigm, and proves that the Reform legacy of the 1820-60 period was much more than the remnants of an earlier, more radical form of Methodism.

In essence, Dissenting culture was a more diversified, reverse image of establishmentarianism. But whereas the Church of England embodied the values of the ancien regime, no single Dissenting group definitively represented the politics of Reform. For example, prior to the Rebellion of 1837, the Children of Peace believed that ideally, a divinely-guided monarch would act both as the guarantor of republican liberties and as special protector of the poor. In the 1840s and 50s, the Campbellite fusion of populist Dissent and radical liberalism contributed to the Clear Grit agenda in Canada West. Proponents of this view believed that the success of the voluntarist experiment depended upon Protestant Dissent's ability to create a thoughtful, active, and reform-minded Christian citizenry. Despite such differences, Dissenters' attempts to reform the Constitution found common ground in Reformation notions of liberty of conscience, the priesthood of all believers, and sola scriptura, or alternatively, faith in the mystic's ability to receive God's messages directly. Upper Canadian reformers were particularly anxious that virtue and merit—the basis of democratized Christianity—replace hierarchy and deference as building-blocks of the common good

In chapter three, Dissent's impact on questions of gender and family is explored amongst the Society of Friends, and the Children of Peace. The experience of these groups, from the late eighteenth-century to the 1840s, speaks to the persistence of early-modern modes of social organization. Within the Quaker and Davidite variants of this system, family and the community of faith were intimately connected, economies were subsistence-oriented, and morality involved a

suppression of the individual will for collective good. These rural communities divided work according to sex, but in the main, gender roles were much less polarized than they would become much later in the century. In both groups, good citizenship was best demonstrated through good parenting, which was the softer side of attempts to mould young people's behaviour via the control of land. The emphasis that Quakers placed on proper parenting had led to their recognition of women's equality as ministers, elders, committee members and overseers of discipline. This practice, however, did not remain uncontested. Within the Children of Peace, there existed a huge gap between the rhetoric of women's power and reality by the 1830s, when community leaders tried, with limited success to reduce the scope of individual freedom, particularly with regard to courtship, marriage, and religious obligations. As such, this study establishes that there was no dominant model of gender relations or indeed separate spheres in Upper Canada. Additionally, in concert with the final chapter on the Holiness Movement Church, it underscores the fact of Dissent's cultural multiplicity with regard to gender. For example, many Quakers, the Children of Peace, and the Disciples of Christ were united by their democratic reform inclinations. Nonetheless, these denominations understood questions of gender in markedly different ways. The Holiness Movement Church responded to the triumph of separate spheres ideology in the last decades of the nineteenth century by contesting Methodist limitations on female preaching, and by the assertion that female equality was rooted in the Holy Spirit's gift of entire sanctification. Despite this fact, several challenges lay in the way of making this ideal a reality. In short, a Dissenting perspective could either enhance women's authority, reduce it, or produce ambivalent effects: within the Canadian context, no simple equation exists between religious belief on the one hand, and either nascent forms of feminism, or oppression on the other.

After the achievement of responsible government, the Dissent/Reform consensus began to fragment. The challenges of balancing the concerns of French Catholics in Canada East with those of the British Protestant majority in Canada West exacerbated disagreements over

disestablishment, support of separate schools, and political patronage. Although Dissenters continued in their commitment to achieve a true, voluntarist settlement of the Reserves question, particularly through Clear Grit Reform channels, there arose in the 1840s a new variety of Dissent whose focus was more social than political. In chapters four and five, the parameters of this new form of Dissent are explored through the experiences of Millerism in the early 1840s, and of the Holiness Movement Church in the 1880s and 90s. Both movements drew upon the democratic Christian tradition in their protest against the cultural leadership of Methodism and other, "mainstream" evangelical denominations. In the ensuing struggles between movement and "mainstream" new cultural understandings were born. In both cases, the Dissenting "margins" assisted in defining the evangelical "centre."

Chapter four "The Millerite Heresy and the Making of Canadian Liberalism," links Methodist elite attempts to grasp the opportunities created by gradual disestablishment with the explosive rise of Millerism in Canada East and West in the early 1840s. The movement's pessimistic attitude toward human endeavour, and its belief that the world was moving toward imminent destruction was rooted in the premillennial promise of Christ's return in 1843 or '44. The political turmoil created by the Rebellions and their aftermath, economic uncertainty, combined with the emphasis Millerism placed upon several traditional evangelical verities contributed to the popularity of the Movement's great refusal. But it was its response to metropolitan Methodism's efforts to place itself on the vanguard of liberal, progressive change that resonated most profoundly with adherents of the Movement. The Methodist Church reacted to Millerism's defence of populist Christianity, its rejection of political involvement, and its criticisms of mainstream evangelicalism's increasing educational elitism by attempting to discredit the Movement both morally and intellectually. In concert with their Anglican brethren, elite Methodists used Millerism as a negative referent. In the process of rejecting Millerites as ignorant, lazy and unbalanced, the church defined, with significant precision, its support of Victorian liberalism's essential cultural

elements. As such, Methodism's engagement with the Dissenting "periphery" was crucial to the emergence of a culture dedicated to economic, intellectual and moral progress, and more particularly to the church's own commitments to higher education and social leadership.

The final chapter, "Aspects of Religious Populism: The Holiness Movement Church and the Crusade Against Consumerism, 1887-1916" locates the core of late-nineteenth century revolt against "mainstream" Methodism in the rural and small-town experience of Christian perfection. Centred in the Ottawa Valley region, and formally separated from the Methodist Church in 1895, the Holiness Movement Church was one of many contemporary churches and associations dedicated to helping individuals move beyond conversion to sudden, "entire sanctification" in the revival context. The chapter explores the reasons why church founder, RC Horner could evangelize the Holiness message as a Methodist minister in 1883, but not in 1895. It demonstrates how elements of Dissent's classic, democratic content—in this case its asceticism, anti-intellectualism, and emphasis upon liberty of conscience—was utilized in protest against metropolitan Methodism's supposed rapprochement with consumerism and modernity. In one sense, Hornerite Holiness' often bombastic attacks versus the Methodist Church were part of its leaders' attempts to define themselves as "outsiders" and to assert the superiority of their rebel identity. Furthermore, such attacks constituted an attempt to preserve the pre-industrial, rural, island community from what appeared to be the damaging compromises of Methodist elites. This phenomenon is closely related to the larger, populist revolt occurring in Ontario in the 1890s. Similar to Millerism, Hornerite Holiness assisted in the birth of a new form of Methodism, by forcing it to define its agenda with greater precision. Although both Millerism and Holiness challenged Methodist leaders' ability to control the effects of popular preaching, their struggles with Horner and his supporters led to a direct questioning of "enthusiastic" practices once deemed acceptable. The result was the creation of an elite consensus that emphatically favoured the religious style of a respectable and sophisticated middle class.

In examining Canadian Dissent's engagement with the wider, nineteenth-century world, this thesis leads to a new understanding of how some of the era's most contentious political issues were solved, how gender and family were envisioned and experienced, and how cultural beliefs were contested and reconstructed. It points to the difficulty in understanding Canada's nineteenth-century past without reference to religious sensibilities which go beyond consensus, and beyond the battles between mainstream Protestant and Roman Catholic. Indeed, this investigation sheds light not only on the diverse forms of community and worship that took root on Canadian soil, but also on some common sources of political and cultural opposition, and on Dissent's intimate involvement in defining shifting cultural values.

Endnotes

[1]For an exploration of the links between gender, religion and politics in the Upper Canadian period, see Cecilia Morgan, Public Men and Virtuous Women: The Gendered Languages of Religion and Politics in Upper Canada, 1791-1850 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996). Henceforth, this citation will be referred to by the author's last name. For a discussion of religion, gender, and leisure toward the end of the century, see Lynne Marks, Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure and Identity in late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996). For discussions of the intellectual and cultural challenges to nineteenth-century evangelicalism in Canada, see Ramsay Cook, The Regenerators: Social Criticism in Late Victorian English Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985); Michael Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century: College and Creed in English Canada from the Great Revival to the Great Depression (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991); David B Marshall, Secularizing the Faith: Canadian Protestant Clergy and the Crisis of Belief, 1850-1940 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992). In addition to the aforementioned work by Michael Gauvreau, William Westfall's Two Worlds: The Protestant Culture of Nineteenth-Century Ontario (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989) explores Protestantism's cultural consolidation.

[2] American and British social historians have more easily resisted the impulse to divorce the consideration of religion from questions of race, class, ethnicity and gender. In both cases, there exists a huge body of literature which places religion at centre stage. Gender historians in particular have long recognized the sophisticated interplay between religious affiliation, social class, gender and modes of power. See Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780-1850 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987); Deborah M Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters: Female Preaching and Popular Religion in Industrial England (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1985); Barbara Leslie Epstein, The Politics of Domesticity: Women, Evangelism, and Temperance in Nineteenth-Century America (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1981); Nancy Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood: "Woman's Sphere" in New England,

1780-1835 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977); Mary P Ryan, Cradle of the Middle Class: The Family in Oneida County, New York, 1790-1805 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981). They have also investigated the links between religion, the life course, family and childhood. See, for example, Barry Levy, Quakers and the American Family: British Settlement in the Delaware Valley (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988); Gerald F Moran and Maris A Vinovskis, Religion, Family and the Life Course: Exploration in the Social History of Early America (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992); Philip J Greven, The Protestant Temperament: Patterns of Child-Rearing, Religious Experience, and the Self in Early America (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1977). Moreover, both American and British historians have mined the sectarian experience for insights on social, political and cultural shifts. For the former, an interest in religious Dissent is perhaps rooted in the strength of its own founding mythology: America was a haven for victims of religious persecution—Puritan and Quaker in particular – and it was envisioned as the "New Jerusalem" of apocalyptic promise. Scholarly interest was also encouraged by the sheer popularity of Christianity in the present-day, combined with a rich history of indigenous expressions of religious Dissent, particularly in the first sixty-odd years of the Republic. See Nathan O Hatch The Democratization of American Christianity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989); Stephen J Marini, Radical Sects of Revolutionary New England (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1982); Klaus Hansen, Mormonism and the American Experience (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); John F Wilson, "Religion, Government, and Power in the New American Nation," in Religion and American Politics from the Colonial Period to the 1980s, ed. Mark A Noll (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990). This zeal has been matched by British historians seeking insight into the relationship between church and state, particularly from the time of the Henrican Reformation, to the movement for Constitutional reform at the end of the "long eighteenth century." See, for example JGA Pocock, The Varieties of British Political Thought, 1500-1800 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993); JCD Clark, English Society 1688-1832: Ideology, Social Structure and Political Practice During the Ancien Regime (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994). Also, they have extensively explored the links between industrialization, evangelicalism, middle-class formation and radical Dissent. In addition to Davidoff and Hall, and Valenze see JFC Harrison, The Second Coming: Popular Millenarianism 1780-1850 (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1979). Their early recognition of religion as a category of analysis equal to others, in addition to their discriminating use of post-modern methodology has produced a highly sophisticated rendering of the British and American pasts.

[3]SD Clark, Church and Sect in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1948; reprint, 1965). Clark's work can be placed within the third stage of what JMS Careless has dubbed the "environmentalist school" of Canadian history, so-called because of its environmental determinism. [See JMS Careless, "Frontierism, Metropolitanism, and Canadian History," in Approaches to Canadian History.eds. Ramsay Cook, Craig Brown, Carl Berger (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1967), 63-83.] During the 1940s, historians modified earlier, cruder applications of frontierism to Canada's past by emphasizing the interactive relationship between metropolitan centres and frontier peripheries. [Note, for example, Fred Landon, Western Ontario and the American Frontier (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1941: Toronto), and Arthur RM Lower, Colony to Nation: A History of Canada (Don Mills: Longmans, Green & Co., 1946).] But unlike his colleagues who often viewed pioneers as morally superior to their urban counterparts, Clark evinces a preference for the stability of the metropolitan church versus the disorderliness of the supposed frontier sect.

[4]This is true of several works as diverse as Gerald M Craig's Upper Canada: The Formative Years, 1784-1841 (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1963); Morgan's Public Men and Virtuous Women; Lower's Colony to Nation; Goldwin S French's Parsons in Politics : the Role of the Wesleyan Methodists in Upper Canada and the Maritimes from 1780 to 1855 (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1962); JMS Careless' The Union of the Canadas: The Growth of Canadian Institutions, 1841-1857 (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1967).

[5]Two notable exceptions include Fred Landon's Western Ontario and the American Frontier. (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1941; Toronto: McClelland Stewart, 1967); and Colin Read's The Rising in Western Upper Canada, 1837-8: The Duncombe Revolt and After (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982).

[6] Westfall, 9, 45, 78, 86.

[7] Carl Berger, The Writing of Canadian History. Aspects of English-Canadian Historical Writing: 1900-1970 (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1976), 168.

[8] See Richard Wightman Fox and RJ Jackson Lears, eds., The Power of Culture: Critical Esssays in American History (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 1-3; Peter Burke, ed., New Perspectives on Historical Writing (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991), 1-19; David Hackett Fischer, Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America (New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989),vii-x; Roger Chartier, Cultural History: Between Practices and Representations, trans. Lydia G. Cochrane (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), 1-16.

[9]Westfall, 12-15; Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., 1971), 552.

[10]Michel Foucault, A History of Sexuality: An Introduction, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 77-97.

[11] Webster's, 552;Westfall, 13; Williams, Culture and Society, 319-323. Roger Williams discusses the relationship of cultures in abstract terms, noting that the contrast between dominant and minority cultures are never absolute. Instead of creating "exclusive areas of culture" he prefers to think in terms of "degrees of shifting attachment and interaction." See also Williams, "Marx on Culture," in What I Came to Say (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1989),195-225.

[12] "Denomination" refers to any religious community.

[13]I have used alternative names for many of these groups. For example, Quakers and Society of Friends are used interchangeably. So are Campbellites and Disciples of Christ, Davidites and Children of Peace. Hornerites refer to members of the Holiness Movement Church.

[14]Robert E Saunders, "What Was the Family Compact?" in Historical Essays on Upper Canada, ed. JK Johnson (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1975), 134.

[15]See GA Rawlyk, The Canada Fire: Radical Evangelicalism in British North America, 1775-1812 (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994); Nancy Christie, "'In These Times of Democratic Rage and Delusion': Popular Religion and the Challenge to the Established Order, 1760-1815," in The Canadian Protestant Experience, 1760 to 1990 ed. GA Rawlyk (Burlington: Welch Publishing, 1990), 9-47.

[16]Christie, 41-2.

[17]Ibid., 43.

[18]Allan Greer, "1837-38: Rebellion Reconsidered," Canadian Historical Review, LXXVI, 1, (1995): 10.

[19]This is supported by Kenneth C Dewar's article, "Charles Clarke's 'Reformator': Early Victorian Radicalism in Upper Canada," Ontario History, LXXVIII, no. 3, (September 1986):232-52. Dewar studies the origins of Clear Grit reform thought by looking at the radical conception of political reform articulated by Charles Clarke between 1849 and 1851. This article suggests that British ideas in Upper Canada were not limited to a narrow range.

Chapter I: Establishmentarianism and Dissenting Traditions, 1791-1854

In early to mid nineteenth-century Canada, Christian culture – its beliefs and traditions – acted as the primary reference point for most people. Indeed, they were united in the view that Christianity was the rock upon which virtuous societies were constructed. Beneath this consensus, however, lay several divisions regarding Christianity's true nature, which resulted in differences of opinion regarding the social order, politics, gender and the place of the individual in society.

From 1791 to the 1850s, Anglo-Protestants in the Canadas were divided along an axis separating adherents of the Church of England, and to a lesser extent, the Church of Scotland, from those of Dissent's many incarnations. This chapter explores the central assumptions of _ancien regime_ culture, noting how the marriage of Church and State gave religious sanction to a political system which recognized hierarchies and distinctions within society as divinely mandated. Within the colonial context, the Church of England preached a gospel of social inequality, which was expressed through its attempts to monopolize the Clergy Reserves, through efforts to limit the political authority of the democratic assembly, and through its unwillingness to extend full rights to other religious bodies. During this period, establishmentarian religion constituted the major expression of the aspirations of the tory elite; it was also perceived as the primary guarantor of social stability versus the threat of revolution. Within elite circles, to reject the authority of the established Church was to shake the foundations of the entire political and social order. The "official" religious culture, and indeed the very compact between Church and State was challenged by evangelicals who immigrated from the United States into British North America from the late-eighteenth century to 1815, and who preached the gospel of democratized Christianity. Some of the most intense challenges to the ruling elite came from the Dissenters considered in this thesis – the Children of Peace and the Disciples of Christ in particular. From the early-nineteenth century

to the 1850s their proponents fought to recreate the British Constitution in their own image, in the process, giving greater shape to the Dissenting tradition in nineteenth-century central Canada.

The fate of establishmentarianism in Upper Canada is well known. By the 1850s, the triumphalist vision of the Anglican elite and of its tory supporters was in tatters, as church and state were separated, and as responsible government introduced a fair measure of democracy in the Canadas. The early nineteenth-century optimism of the Church of England in Upper Canada gave way over the next few decades to defensiveness and pessimism as clergy struggled, with little success, in a context of religious pluralism, to convert the unchurched and Dissenters alike to the Anglican via media. The presence of so many Dissenters in the colony meant that attempts to retrench Anglican privilege caused seething resentment that was chanelled into efforts to reform Upper Canadian politics on a liberal, voluntarist basis. More globally, it seems that the attempt to create Upper Canada as a miniature Britain came too late in the historical game for proponents of establishmentarianism to put down any solid roots. Canadian efforts at reforming the system coincided with British reforms of the late 1820s and 30s that abolished the main bulwarks of the ancien regime, and with liberal political trends on the continent and in the United States.[1]

In addition to sketching the main contours of Canadian establishmentarianism, this chapter will explore the cultural roots, theology and local histories of the Quakers, the Children of Peace and the Disciples of Christ, each of which was either transplanted to or sprung from Canadian soil in the first third of the century. It will also examine each group's contribution to the creation of an alternative to the culture of hierarchy and deference. Despite their differences, these denominations drew upon a common set of assumptions which emphasized the ability of individuals to discern God's will, whether through Scriptural study, or mystical revelations but always without the assistance of priestly mediators. These groups based claims of religious and social leadership upon a meritocracy of the spirit and proven character, a fact which underscored both their commitment to a voluntarist state and religious toleration.

From the 1810s to the 1850s, Canadian Dissent was highly politicized in reaction to the pretensions of State-Churchism. During the 1840s and 50s, the state and society were reorganized on a liberal, voluntarist basis: in 1841 provisions were made for a non-sectarian public school system; in 1849 responsible government was achieved and King's College was transformed into the secular University of Toronto; and in 1854 the Clergy Reserves were dismantled. Historians have argued that the 1840s and 50s witnessed the rise of a political consensus based on the values of moderate conservatism,[2] and of a religious consensus based on a common Protestantism that combined secular and sacred impulses with a sense of optimism about the possibilities for social progress that awaited them.[3] The reforms of the 1840s and 50s allowed for cooperation to develop between the religious establishment and Dissenters who opposed State-Churchism, because religion was no longer formally bound up with the function of the state. It was at this point that the Dissenters treated in this thesis shifted their attentions from questions of politics to more purely cultural ones and to issues of class. The shift was not seamless, and did not occur in a linear fashion across all groups, but the main point is that Dissent was effectively de-politicized.

I

In 1763, the Treaty of Paris marked the end of the Seven Years' War and the passing of Canada from French to British hands. British predominance in North America would soon be challenged, however, by the rebellion of the thirteen colonies, and their secession in 1776. In 1789, France was also rent by the spirit of revolution. In 1791, the Constitutional Act was passed, as a means of dealing with the large influx of American loyalists into Canada, and with the intent of promoting a social structure which would head off the possibility of insurrection there. The Pitt ministry believed that the Americans had rebelled because they had been too free: they had been allowed too much democracy, and the social order was not sufficiently bolstered by aristocratic

elements and the inclusion of a strong established church. In response, it intended to plant on American soil, "the very image and transcript of the British constitution."[4] London consciously placed the assembly under strong executive control, so as to restrain any unruliness among the representatives of the people. In each province, a Lieutenant Governor charged with appointing the members of the Legislative Council or upper house would head the government, so as to ensure power to men of property. An appointive Executive Council would function as the Governor's personal cabinet. Moreover, the Governor would possess extensive veto powers, and access to revenues from Crown lands set aside by the Act. These provisions would ensure the complete independence of the Executive. Indeed, the 1791 act lacked any specific provisions that would make it constitutionally responsible to the Assembly. Finally, 1/7 of all land grants were to be reserved for the benefit of a Protestant Clergy. This provision was intended as a buttress to social stability based on the ancien regime alliance of squire and parson, peer and bishop.[5]

The Constitution of 1791 was the blueprint for the creation of a British, ancien regime social order in Canada. The Act was Pitt and Grenville's answer to American republicanism, and the French revolutionary constitution, in that it affirmed Britain's commitment to an Anglican, aristocratic establishment not only in Canada, but also at home. By clarifying what ancien regime culture entailed, one can better comprehend the meaning and significance of religious Dissent, for Dissent, during this period defined itself in opposition to the values of the "official" culture. "Official" culture was represented at the highest level, in both Lower and Upper Canada by the governor and the coterie of appointed officials that made up the inner governing circle at Quebec and York. By the early nineteenth-century, these officials were derisively referred to as the "Chateau Clique" and the "Family Compact." These tightly knit groups were able to dominate the Executive and Legislative councils and control government operations. In Upper Canada, through their powers of political patronage, they appointed people with similar views and of similar social

background to local centres. This resulted in the creation of smaller oligarchies across the province. At the centre of this group stood John Strachan.[6]

Strachan was perhaps the most eloquent spokesperson for ancien regime values in British North America. A belief in the indissoluble, and divinely ordained bond between the Church of England and the state was the essential core of conservative ideology that dominated British political culture to the late 1820s. Until that point, British ancien regime culture was premised on an ideology of order that stressed the correspondence between the divine hierarchy, which included the church and all parishioners, and the hierarchy of creation, which included human government. The ancien regime theory held that all civilized societies were founded on a social and religious compact, and that man's true happiness could be attained only through individual deference to both temporal and divine authority. This culture was essentially patriarchal in that the authority of the father within the family was likened to the authority of the state within the nation. Furthermore, the nation was conceived as a group of families which culminated in the Holy Family. To use a common analogy of the day, the body politic was like the human body: the monarch was the head of state, while labourers were the lesser members. Hierarchy, and deference to one's social betters formed the basis of just and harmonious relations in society. Within British State-Church culture, political entitlement was based on membership in the patrician class, which in turn was dependent on membership, however nominal, in the Church of England.[7]

John Strachan was an establishmentarian. In his view, the Church of England constituted a via media between the perilous extremes of Roman Catholicism on the one hand, and Dissent on the other. Just as the British constitution navigated the course between the tyranny of the monarchy and the tyranny of the people, Anglicanism represented the perfect, middle ground between the superstition, irrationality and temporal slavery of Catholicism on the one hand, and the schismatic, revolutionary, and antinomian tendencies of Dissent on the other. In the Anglican economy of salvation, the individual was called upon to recognize his own sinfulness, and to seek

redemption by restraining his passions, by having faith in a triune God, and by living a virtuous life. Redemption was gradual, and the perfectibility of the human soul was possible, not as a sudden experience, but as the culmination of years of meticulous self-discipline. It was partly because of people's difficulty with controlling their passions that Strachan so strongly advocated a religious establishment. The Church, supported by state funds, and represented by a settled and learned clergy, would teach the values of obedience, humility and reverence to superiors. Over time, society would change and fallen humanity would return to God. In Strachan's view, the Church and state worked in tandem to ensure that the public remained loyal and orderly.[8]

In another sense, Strachan's early nineteenth-century variant of the religion of order was based on a distinctive interpretation of the natural world. In his view, right religion was rational and systematic. This was so because God's earthly creation was an obvious manifestation of rationality: the universe was a finely crafted mechanism that showed evidence of a Great Chain of Being in which all creatures, great and small had an assigned place. In creation, every element was perfectly suited to the task it was intended to perform, and it contributed to the general workings of the larger system. This hierarchy of the natural world was mirrored in a social hierarchy in which all individuals would perform the duties necessitated by their station, so as to contribute to social harmony. Evidence of the rational design of the natural world complemented and sustained Biblical revelation. In Strachan's eschatology, God was not interventionist, but rather would work through the divinely ordained social hierarchy to save the entire British colonial family. The religion of order emphasized the peace, happiness and salvation of the entire community over that of the individual.[9]

II

The history of the Society of Friends in Upper Canada begins with the migrations of families of American Loyalists to Niagara and to the east end of the colony during the 1780s. In the main, these migrants came from Friends' communities in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania that had suffered the consequences of remaining neutral during the Revolutionary War. Subsequently, this initial migration was augmented by the arrival of "late" Loyalist Quakers who were part of the Great Westward migration into the Ohio country, western New York and Upper Canada. In addition, a new Quaker settlement was founded by Timothy Rogers in 1799 in the York backcountry in order to bridge the gap between the two established Quaker settlements, and to further the unity of Friends in the colony. In 1810 there were approximately 200 families or parts of families constituting roughly 1000 members of the Society of Friends in Upper Canada. In the next twenty-odd years, American migration and natural increase more than doubled its numbers, so that by 1828 it boasted 2500 members. By 1830, however, the flow of American immigration to Upper Canada slackened, as British immigration increased. Quaker numbers and strength declined in relative terms. The situation was exacerbated by the Great Separation of 1828, which severed the society into two groups – Orthodox and Hicksite.[10]

The Society of Friends was founded in the 1650s, by a group of northern English separatists and enthusiasts assembled around Yorkshire leather-worker George Fox. The Quakers, and other sects of the English Civil War such as the Seekers, Fifth Monarchists, Levellers, and Baptists were both a product of and a reaction to Puritanism. At heart, Quakerism constituted a protest against the entire political, social and religious order. Associated with and embodying the Revolution's more radical aims, Quakerism rose up in protest against the suppression of the republican cause in the 1650s, and held fast to a vision of millennial fulfilment in the temporal realm through the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit. For Quakers, it was not enough that

England had been cleared of kings and bishops. They believed that the entire ecclesiastical edifice linking Church and state was rotten. As such, they advocated a departure from the formalism of establishmentarianism, and from a university-bred, privileged, tithe-collecting clergy towards a ministry of plain-spoken men and women able to touch the hearts of the simplest of folk.[11]

In the early days, Quaker theology, as it was expressed by George Fox, was simple and unsystematized. It sought to reduce the religious importance of formal learning and ritual – the handmaidens of establishmentarian religion – in favour of a direct and unmediated experience of God's grace. God had provided each person with the inherent ability to receive his message via the "Inward Light." This notion formed the crux of Quakerism's distinctiveness. While Puritans and Quakers both sought salvation via purification of the church, rigorous discipline, and otherworldliness, the latter rejected the concepts of predestination and original sin. Their answer to the question "what must I do to be saved?" was simple. Christ's atonement had opened the way to universal salvation. The onus was on the individual to make the saving choice. All people were born innocent, and the evil tendencies that eventually emerged were attributable to the latent effects of the Fall of Man. The Inward Light enabled humans to know and choose the good. As such, individual salvation hinged upon one's response to the illumination. Although Quakers believed that only a small number of people would be saved in actuality, theoretically, this doctrine put salvation within the reach of every person.[12]

The Inward Light provided the basis for a radical attack on ancien regime religion and culture. Because the human experience of the Divine was mystical and direct, there was no need for mediators in the form of a "hireling clergy." Quaker theology discredited such clergy, who though highly educated, had ignored the call of God in their own hearts. It turned over the entire hierarchical order of ancien regime religion in its egalitarian assertion that God communicated directly with the individual, regardless of gender, station, or education. When backed up by radical actions such as the interruption of Church services, the refusal to pay tithes, and an unwillingness

to acknowledge social distinctions, Quakerism became more emphatically subversive. Elites and plebeians alike began to equate Quakerism with social and political anarchy, and this resulted in a narrowing of the limits of toleration after 1656. During the Restoration, King Charles recognized the Quaker potential for subversion: the faithful were forced to retreat from radical activism in favour of a more accommodating, quietistic means of religious expression. A rising concern with systematizing Quaker theology and polity led to the tempering of the more anarchical implications of the Inward Light doctrine, in favour of group control.

In some ways, the evolution of Quakerism after 1660 contradicted its early testimony against ecclesiastical power, for during the Restoration, Quakers created a wide-ranging system of community self-discipline. Historians have argued that the discipline was born of the persecution Friends suffered during the Restoration. Because Quakers refused to take oaths, believing that their word was sufficient affirmation of their honesty and lawful behaviour, they needed to find a way to disprove the slanderous accusations of their oppressors. The discipline was created as a means of making honesty not just an affirmation, but a fact. It allowed the Society to cull all dishonest and unrepentant members from its ranks, and to publicize their expulsion as an example to the world. Despite the fact that the Quaker system was voluntary, and that the discipline was gentle by seventeenth-century standards, the denomination nonetheless assumed elements of the role of the much maligned church courts. In one sense, the Quakers sought to create an enclave for themselves as a "culture apart" that dissented from Restoration social mores, while at the same time acquiescing to the new reality. It was a tenuous balance to maintain, but Friends were assisted in this regard by its roots in "spiritual tribalism."[13]

After the Civil War, Puritan reformers, from England's southeastern, cosmopolitan core, moved to the northwest part of the country and attempted to replicate their view of the social order there. Puritanism failed in the northwest, but contributed to the rise of Quakerism which displayed a receptivity to the Puritan idea of reform, while rejecting, in particular, its expensive and foreign

notions of religious polity. Northwestern society was relatively poor and remote from England's major markets. Existing parishes were unmanageably large, and middling people were forced to look beyond the nuclear family household, to the larger community to meet their basic needs, and to provide for their children's futures. Fox's and Fell's brand of reform religion was grafted onto the structure of northwestern tribalism, and resulted in a hybrid community based on familial interdependence and the presence of the Holy Spirit. This structure provided an inexpensive way for poorer communities to solve familial and spiritual problems. Instead of building up costly institutions, early Quakers proceeded to spiritualize informal household and extra-household relations in an attempt to make Quakerism into the "Royal Household of God." So, where Puritanism sought to purify the Anglican church at the level of the divinity school and the parish, Quakerism sought to infuse the entire extended kin network of northwestern families with purity and love. It has been asserted that Quaker spiritual tribalism formed the basis of Anglo-American domesticity. In America, this kind of organization, combined with economic scarcity, the lack of evangelical drive, and quietistic tendencies produced a religious culture that focused most of its energies on community discipline, and survival.[14]

The structure of Quaker polity and discipline changed very little from the late 1660s to the end of the eighteenth century, when American Friends began to emigrate to Upper Canada. What did change was the severity with which the discipline was enforced. From the 1750s to the 1780s, Quakerism was purified as a reaction against the attempt by some Friends to separate religious faith from secular behaviour. During this period, Quakerism departed from its outward-looking, politically active and "worldly" ways. It withdrew from American society in protest against the directions it was taking. In order to maintain group purity, and to ensure that their religious testimony did not die out, Quaker leaders sought to strengthen disciplinary enforcement. It was also a way of ensuring that religious impulses would infuse all elements of community life.[15]

Quaker church polity was pyramidal in structure and consensual in function. All business meetings were divided by gender. The smallest unit of the larger church, or "The Family of Love," was the Preparative Meeting. Under its care was the maintenance of the local meeting-house where a single congregation worshipped. Preparatives were responsible for maintaining burial grounds, settling minor offenses and for reporting violations of the discipline to the Monthly Meetings, which comprised several Preparatives in a given area. Most of the business was conducted at the level of the Monthly Meeting. Overseers appointed by the Preparatives would report on disciplinary infractions and the Monthly Meeting would in turn appoint committees of overseers to visit offenders and report back to the meeting. Monthly Meetings dispensed charity, created libraries, supervised schooling, placed out apprentices, inspected into meeting-house titles, and dealt with removals to or from the Monthly Meeting's jurisdiction. Delegates from each Monthly Meeting attended Quarterly meetings comprising all the Monthly Meetings in a particular area. Until 1810, when the Canada Half Year's Meeting was formed under the jurisdiction of New York Yearly Meeting, delegates from quarterlies in Niagara and the vicinity of York would report directly to the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting, while those in eastern Upper Canada were accountable to the New York Yearly Meeting. Yearly Meetings, held over several days, were the final court of appeal for those members who felt that they had been unfairly disciplined. Yearlies composed epistles to be read and distributed in monthly meetings, and answered questions on the state of local meetings. All Yearly Meetings were autonomous but they kept in close contact with each other by means of advices, letters and consultation on social and political problems. However, the Philadelphia and London Yearly Meetings were viewed as "first among equals," and their advices held the greatest weight.[16]

The leadership of the society was provided by meeting clerks, elders, overseers, and ministers of both sexes. Ministers were unpaid, and were recognized as having superior spiritual gifts, evidenced by their ability to testify spontaneously to the power of the light within during

silent meetings for worship. Ministers worked for a living like the rest of their brethren, and because Quakers believed in a free ministry, they did not perform any special religious rites such as Baptism and the Lord's Supper. They believed that the coming of Christ in Spirit at Pentecost had put an end to the old dispensation that was characterized by outward observances and ritual. The ideal form of worship was inward-oriented, and directed towards continual communion with God. Ministers would often make religious visits to meetings in other jurisdictions to ensure that their brethren continued to uphold Quaker religious traditions. But these peregrinations were not centrally directed or formally organized. Rather, they were based on the spontaneous, Divine call to duty. Elders were often "weighty" Friends of "advanced religious experience" whose duty it was to advise ministers, and ensure that they and others were living in accordance with the discipline. While it was the duty of all community members to "advise and admonish those guilty of unbecoming or disorderly conduct," this task was the special responsibility of overseers, culled from the ranks of "faithful and judicious Friends." They would periodically visit Friends' homes to inspect the state of the family's religious life, and would investigate disciplinary infractions, being advised not to keep cases "unseasonably...from the meeting."[17]

Generally speaking, the discipline provided the Quaker community with a standard of behaviour designed to guide the individual Friend from cradle to grave. Because Quakerism did not depend on new converts for growth—it was not an evangelical religion—it was imperative that children be nurtured successfully in the faith, so that they would avoid the temptations of the world, and continue to take part in community life. In this way, the discipline assisted in the creation of an alternative culture based on a common opposition to the larger culture. Quakerism maintained that the foundation of successful child nurture lay in the practice of endogamy. Quakers were not allowed to marry out of the Society, on pain of disownment. It was feared that mixed marriages were a burden to the couple, and rendered any offspring of such a union "unfixed in principle, and unsettled in practice." The insistence on "marrying-in" placed a great strain on the

Society, and over the years, was responsible for the loss of many Quakers to other faiths. Quaker couples were responsible for training their children in the values of the faith, teaching them the virtues of meekness, self-restraint, and simplicity. Parents, in conjunction with the entire community were responsible for providing children with the rudiments of a "useful" education as well. Children were expected to obey their parents in all things, but ultimately, parents were responsible for their children's behaviour, and could be disowned for disregarding their duties.[18]

Quakers were expected to attend all meetings for worship and discipline, and to avoid all diversions including drinking, dancing, chiverees, etc. They were expected to dress plainly and to avoid "vain fashions." They were to speak plainly, using the singular when addressing a single person, avoiding all titles, and guarding against calling days and months by names derived from Heathen deities. Quakers were not allowed to observe public fasts, feasts or "holy days" because of their belief that no religious act was acceptable to God unless it was produced by the influence of the Spirit. Plainness in dress and address would be as a "hedge" around the Society, which although "it may not make the ground it encloses ...fruitful, yet it frequently prevents those intrusions, by which the labour of the husbandman is ...destroyed."[19] Through their prohibition of diversions and their commitment to plainness, the Quakers were harkening back to a long tradition of Dissent against ancien regime cultural values, rooted in the formative experience of the English Civil War. Their attack on luxury, pleasure-seeking, and social distinction constituted a rejection of the aristocratic way of life, and assisted in the creation of an alternative to elite culture, based on the ascetic values of Protestant Non-Conformity. Their refusal to celebrate public holidays symbolized their rejection of the cultural uniformity on which State-Churchism was premised, and of the assumption that the political decisions of governing elites were supported by God.

The discipline was designed to dissuade individuals from lying and gossiping, and from creating scandal that would defame the Society's good name. All personal or business differences between Quakers were to be dealt with in the context of the disciplinary meeting which replaced

external courts of law as a forum for arbitration. The Quaker community was also responsible for the education and apprenticing of children, and for poor relief. As such, it was intended to be economically and morally self-sufficient. Moreover, it acted as a state in miniature insofar as it provided a standard of law and order, and systems of community policing, welfare, and education. Combined with injunctions against taking offices of profit and honour in government, the Quaker discipline served to create an alternative community based on ties of faith, kinship and mutual assistance, and united in quiet protest against the dominant society.[20]

It was precisely this kind of community religion that contributed to the success of Quakers as pioneers. Early accounts of Quaker settlements in Upper Canada attest to the difficulties of pioneer life and to the material and spiritual benefits of Friends' unique brand of family faith. For example, the autobiography of Uxbridge Quaker Joseph Gould emphasizes the importance of mutual assistance in the work of homesteading in the early nineteenth century. Despite the significant distance separating homesteads, the early pioneers worked with each other in cutting paths through the woods and clearing the land. Early settlers would come together for barn raisings and logging bees, and during haying and harvest time, neighbours would assist each other via work exchanges. Years later, Gould recalled that "their helpful sympathies were awakened towards each other, and...Friends, as they mostly all were, composing one little community, their offices of good neighbourhood, were extended to each other in constant acts of...kindness.[21] Although somewhat fragmentary, the descriptive evidence suggests that the faith of early Quaker settlers to Upper Canada was a prime means of maintaining group cohesion during the pioneer period. Some of the Quaker migrants to Upper Canada were loyalists, but a great many more were neutrals and pacifists who refused to defend the new nation. As a result, they suffered double taxation and loss of their civil rights. Their troubles continued after the war as many Quakers were penalized by seizure of property and fines. But a significant number of Quaker migrants to the Niagara area were motivated by land scarcity and increased land values in the long-settled areas of

New York state, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Faced with abandoning farming as a way of life, or subdividing family farms, Quakers chose to migrate to Niagara. In this way, they could maintain their unique form of community faith while prospering economically. Quaker settlers to Niagara chose to settle in a "compact Quaker rural neighbourhood" with few choosing lands in isolation from the larger community of faith. Although economic factors played a role in the decision to migrate, religious considerations dictated the form that settlement would take, and the norms that would guide community life.[22]

In some areas, such as Adolphustown, Quaker land-owners contributed to the creation of town government, and participated in the civic life in significant numbers. In other, more remote settlements, Quaker communities created their own order and cohesion in the absence of any meaningful state presence. For example, in his reminiscences of growing up in Yarmouth, in the western part of the province, in the 1820s, Samuel Haight recalls that the nearest court house was at Victory Village, 70 miles to the east. Taxes were low in those days because there was "no court house to build, no officers to pay." In early Upper Canadian communities, Quakers often provided the only institutional presence of religion as well.[23]

In order to avoid painting too rosy a picture of Quaker life in early Upper Canada, it would be useful to discuss some of the contradictions of Quakerism, and to illuminate the gap between the ideals of the faith and the reality of its operation. On the one hand, the core tenet of Quakerism was the belief in the power that the Inward Light could exercise on the individual. In this sense, Quakerism was a meritocracy of the spirit. Theoretically, anyone, regardless of gender, education or position could come under the influence of the Spirit, and become a vessel for God's continued revelation. This emphasis on inward illumination and progressive revelation was strengthened by the fact that the Quakers never had a formal creed. In the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries, Quakerism continued to be a mystical faith in that it provided support for those who experienced visions and the direct visitation of the Spirit. This is certainly the case

with Timothy Rogers, founder of the Quaker settlement on Yonge Street. Rogers followed what he believed to be the Spirit's leading in coming to Canada in 1801. But his mystical sense of mission did not begin with his decision to leave Vermont for Upper Canada. Reflecting on the religious experiences of his young manhood, in the late 1780s, Rogers tells of a manifestation of light that appeared to him while praying alone in the woods at night. It rose to 100 feet or more above the trees. He also mentions seeing a small light one night while he was in bed. It was

> as big as the end of a man's thumb, perhaps, very bright, that caused me to stop talking. The Lord then appeared to me by His power, in a small light, to convince me He was God. After this I was a little intimidated, thinking of it too much in the domination of nature, but soon found relief.

Rogers also mentions having had "some remarkable dreams" which gave him foreknowledge of events. His visions were experienced in the context of Rogers' introduction to Deism, a philosophy which the Quaker claimed had gained ground among various philosophers, lawyers and "men of natural studies." Rogers believed that these experiences were "to show that the Lord doth sometimes show by visions what He suffers to come to pass. This, Deists do not believe. But it could all at this time be proved by living evidence."[24]

Although it was theoretically true that all Quakers could testify to the light within, in practice, the experience was defined and controlled by the ministers and elders of the local meeting. According to Albert Schrauwers, for the men's Yonge St. Monthly Meeting from the time of its foundation to 1812, 42 of 100 men served on committees, but of these 42, only 10 men filled 55% of all committee positions. Schrauwers contends that Quakerism did not officially recognize the existence of groups on family, class or status lines, but that in reality, these things were extremely important in determining who was nominated to serve in positions of leadership. Although the decisions that meetings for business and discipline arrived at were theoretically based on the consensus of the entire group, in reality, consensus was much more narrowly construed: it tended

to represent the interests of "weighty" Friends, of the elites, who through force of godly character, and social status ruled their "lesser" brethren.[25]

In sum, the levelling potential of the Inward Light doctrine was tempered by the impulse to control and legitimize individual experience. Ministers and elders were presumed to have the ability, under Divine influence "to discern when offerings proceed from the right source...and thus experience a qualification to be nursing fathers and mothers to those who are young in the ministry."[26] But the ability of elites to control the subversive power of the Inward Light was not complete. Indeed, the 1812 schism of the Children of Peace from the Yonge St. Monthly Meeting, and the 1828 division of Quakers into Hicksite and Orthodox camps attests to this fact.

The schism of David Willson and the Children of Peace will be discussed later on in this chapter. Generally, the Hicksite schism, or the "Great Separation" arose over the issue of doctrinal uniformity amongst American Quakers. In the early nineteenth century, Quakerism in England and America was influenced by the rising tide of evangelicalism caused by the Second Great Awakening. Quaker leaders in England and America found many of the evangelical doctrines appealing, and began to push the Society toward a clear formulation of fundamental belief, especially with regard to the doctrines of the Trinity and Christ's Atonement. Around Elias Hicks, a farmer from Long Island, and a gifted prophetic preacher and quietist of the "old school" there gathered a coterie of Quakers who opposed evangelical innovations and who sought to retrench of the doctrine of the Inward Light. At the Philadelphia Meeting in 1819, Hicks asserted – contrary to the evangelical creed – that the Inward Light was superior to the Bible as a source of revelation. Moreover, he did not believe in the Trinity, and felt that Christ's mediatory role should be reduced. On a more social level, Hicks endorsed a strident otherworldliness, and a rejection of secular culture rooted in the traditional behavioural codes of the Quaker discipline and in Christian action. Indeed, Hicksites maintained that godly activity, not belief was the key to salvation.[27]

After this, the Philadelphia Meeting charged him with the Quaker equivalent of heresy, and soon the entire society was engaged in arguments over what constituted proper faith and discipline. These arguments only penetrated into Upper Canada in the mid-1820s. But the ground for dissension in Canadian Quaker ranks had been prepared for several years by the spread of Methodism from the US to Canada, and in more recent years, by the work of evangelical American and British Quaker itinerants. In October of 1827, the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting split, and in May of 1828, so did the New York Yearly Meeting. Quakers on the Canadian side of the border followed suit, and schism spread throughout the Monthly Meetings of Pelham, Yonge Street, West Lake, Leeds and Adolphustown, and the Canada Half Year's Meeting. In 1834, the Genesee Yearly Meeting was formed. It comprised the new Hicksite Canada Half Yearly Meeting, which in turn was made up of Hicksite meetings at Yonge Street, Pickering, West Lake, Pelham and Norwich. After the schism, Hicksitism was particularly strong in the western settlements of Pelham, Norwich, Black Creek, Yarmouth, and Malahide.

Although it is impossible, in this thesis, to study in detail the appeal of separation in Canada, it is possible to offer some hypotheses by referring to the work of both American and Canadian historians of Quakerism. Robert Doherty has argued that Hicksitism constitutued a rural, populist backlash against a "mainstream" and increasingly urban Quakerism that had become worldly, and anxious to shed the more conspicuous elements of Quaker peculiarism in favour of evangelical orthodoxy. Hicksitism appealed to those who were alienated by the theological directions that Quakerism was taking, but also to the economically disenfranchised— individuals who sought an outlet for their fears in sectarian religion. Other Hicksites were reform-minded religious liberals who felt that the new orthodoxy created a climate of intolerant dogmatism. In the main, however, Doherty's assessment focuses on Hicksites' fears of social and economic change. Hicksitism emerges more as an agglomeration of negatives, rather than an affirmation of the unique genius of eighteenth-century Quakerism. This unique genius was

particularly suited to the rural way of life, as is evidenced, in the American case, by the success of Hicksitism in the more recently-settled areas of western New York and beyond.[28]

In The Quakers in Canada, A History, the standard reference on the history of Canadian Quakerism, Arthur Garrat Dorland argues that the Canadian schism would not have occurred had the Americans not taken the lead. Prior to 1828, the Society of Friends in Canada adhered to the standards of eighteenth-century Quakerism with its distinct mystical and quietistic features. Dorland suggests that early Methodism was similar to Quakerism, and as such, its influence would have gradually prevailed amongst Canadian Friends, especially considering the fact that evangelical Quaker itinerants from England and the US had been visiting Upper Canada with the purpose of swaying their brethren in this direction. He argues that the separation drained Quaker resources, and combined with the decline of American immigration and the increase in British immigration, it tended to marginalize the Quakers as a group. Dorland's assessment is tinged with the modern-day Quaker's regret that the separation contributed to the eventual declension of the Society. Increased mobility, and the departure of many younger Quakers from the agricultural way of life of their pioneer forefathers, defections to other faiths, along with prohibitions against "marrying out" which continued until 1859, drained the Society of its former strength. By the late nineteenth-century, many meetings were being laid down, and in some orthodox meetings, Friends no longer cared whether or not their marriages were solemnized by a "hireling priest."[29]

Contrary to Dorland's assertions, Canada's potential for creating a Hicksite separation of its own was made evident through the schism of David Willson and the Children of Peace in 1812. In many ways, this was a precursor to the challenges the Society would face in the late 1820s. This will be discussed later on in this chapter. The fact that Hicksite ideas appealed to a significant proportion of the Upper Canadian Quaker population is reason enough to take the schism seriously in its Canadian context. However, very little descriptive evidence regarding the circumstances of the separation has been left to posterity. What is required is an in-depth,

statistical study that tracks the demographic movements, settlement patterns, and means of employment of the thousands of Quakers forced to take sides during the schism. Unfortunately, this is far beyond the scope of this thesis. Thus, the reader is left with fragmentary evidence which suggests that Hicksitism in Upper Canada gained ground amongst those Quakers who continued to pioneer new tracts of land in the western part of the province. These individuals saw great utility in maintaining the purity of a way of life that had contributed to Quakers' material and spiritual success for so many years.

From a purely cultural point of view, the Hicksites formed the more radical edge of Quakerism in Upper Canada. Through their belief in the primacy of direct revelation via the inward light, over the Bible and man-made creeds, the Hicksites expressed a more resolute variety of opposition to ancien regime culture than did their Orthodox brethren. Hicksites' greater openness to the movement of the Spirit, and their hostility to creedalism made it more likely that they would adamantly oppose the corrupt and worldly manifestations of church-statism including a hireling ministry, the setting aside of Church lands, etc. This is not to say, however, that Orthodox Quakers did not share many of the same concerns. Comparatively speaking, during the Upper Canadian period, Orthodox Quakerism remained less encumbered by creedalism than did most other Non-conformist faiths. Both Hicksites and Orthodox Quakers did not believe in "natural hierarchies" which separated the gentlemanly from the plebeian. Despite the fact that they created their own forms of hierarchy and order, all Quakers sought to base claims of religious and social leadership on a meritocracy of the spirit, and on proven character. As such, regardless of their quietistic and isolationist tendencies, the Society of Friends formed part of a culture of opposition against establishmentarian culture, based on the common values of Protestant Dissent, which included a voluntarist conception of the state, and egalitarian notions of the social order.

III

The schism of the Children of Peace from the Quaker Yonge St. Monthly Meeting in 1812 was rooted in the spiritual inclinations and experiences of David Willson. Willson was born in 1778 at the Nine Partners' Tract of New York State. He was the son of 'poor but pious presbyterian parents'—recent immigrants from Northern Ireland. As a child, he was given the rudiments of education and at the age of fourteen, after the death of his father, Willson was apprenticed to a carpenter until 1798, when he moved with his brother and the family to New York City. There, he married Phebe Titus, the daughter of a Quaker minister. Phebe was disowned for marrying Willson, a non-Quaker. In 1801, following his elder brother, Willson moved with his wife and several of his kin to Upper Canada, and obtained a farm in the new Quaker settlement that was being established in East Gwillimbury Township by Timothy Rogers. In 1805, after several years "tribulation" he decided to seek admission into the Society of Friends. At the same time, his wife reapplied for membership, after acknowledging her error in marrying a non-Quaker. From this time to 1812, Willson lived two lives. To the outside world, he was one of the most active members of the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting, donating the land for the Queen Street Preparative Meeting house, serving on numerous committees, and acting as overseer, librarian and keeper of the records. But unbeknownst to those around him, Willson suffered intense spiritual trials which led him to abandon the Scriptures in seeking relief from his anxieties. Instead, Willson felt called by God who told him to depend totally on direct inspiration—the leadings of the Inward Light. Willson also began to experience intense visions in which he figured as a prophet chosen by God to lead his people into the new dispensation.[30]

Willson's early reluctance to share his experiences with other Quakers gave way in August of 1811 when he communicated his thoughts to Rachel Lundy, his neighbour and an active member of the Queen St. Preparative Meeting. Her cautious acceptance of his message encouraged him to speak out in a Meeting for Worship on 15 September 1811. Willson's message must be viewed in

the context of the changes that were taking place in American and British Quakerism at the time. Influenced by trans-Atlantic evangelicalism, Quaker leaders in Philadelphia, and later on in New York, began to move the Society in the direction of doctrinal "orthodoxy" which embraced several elements of the evangelical creed, including a belief in Trinitarianism. This movement towards increased "orthodoxy" resulted in the publication of the Uniform Discipline, prepared by the Philadelphia Yearly Meeting in 1806. Willson challenged this new orthodoxy by stating that he did not believe in the divinity of Christ. Rather, Jesus was a man who had been given divine power. He also attacked the Discipline's support of biblicism, by asserting that true faith could only be found in the unmediated, mystical experience of God's grace. The Bible was useful for those who were weak in the faith, but for the spiritually advanced, revelation was progressive and superseded the authority of Holy Writ.[31] In delivering this first sermon, Willson harkened back to the days of early Quakerism when the doctrine of the Inward Light was the community's preeminent guiding principle, and when Friends were open to revelations that moved beyond Scripture to directly touch those living in the present day.

In the succeeding months, Willson's utterances divided the meeting in two. On one side were those Friends who objected to Willson's attack on biblical inerrancy, and who interpreted his anti-Trinitarian views as bordering on blasphemy and Deism. On the other side were his supporters. Both groups included more or less equal number of "weighty" or influential Friends. The issue came to a head at the quarterly Select Meeting of the Fourth Month of 1812, when a number of male elders called on Willson so that he could address the objections circulating against him. Willson's supporters spoke in his defence, and urged him to defend himself, which he refused to do, saying that debates about the biblical record were unimportant. The meeting broke up over the issue of censuring Willson in his public ministry until the matter was duly settled. Willson's supporters thought that the motion of censure was unacceptable. The meeting could have no hand in preventing any member from witnessing to the divine light within. As a result, the meeting

adjourned in disorder with Friends being unable to reach a consensus amongst themselves. Later, at the regular Meeting for Worship, Willson resigned from the Society, and was eventually joined by one quarter of the Yonge St. population, numbering nearly three hundred souls.[32]

Although the Children of Peace survived until 1889, its most important historical role was played out from 1812 to the 1840s, when it functioned as part of a culture of opposition based in the experience of Dissent, and directed against State-Churchism. However, this community displayed contradictory tendencies on the question of hierarchy and power. On the one hand, Willson's dramatic 1811 testimony voiced an opposition to creedalism, and an advocacy of the individual's right to freely explore and express his or her deepest spiritual impulses. This early commitment to egalitarianism was manifested in Davidites' rejection of church offices in 1816 which served to re-focus community life on the testimonies of those who were moved by the Inward Light. As a result, the spiritual autonomy of the individual was strengthened. On the other hand, however, Willson's own messianic sense of mission contradicted the denomination's egalitarianism. His theology expressed opposition to the power of the state, and to the culture of the "gentleman" while attempting to legitimate his own role as prophet in a new millennial kingdom. Moreover, as time passed, the community's egalitarian idealism began to fade due to the gradual tightening of elder control by the 1840s. In addition to Willson's individualistic theology, and his sense of himself as an enlightened prophet, the Children of Peace retained a number of Quaker practices which supported a traditional communitarian ethic. These included meetings for worship, prohibitions against oath-taking and suing fellow members; limitations on the amount of profit one. could make on the sale of goods to fellow members; a tempering of the rights of free enterprise and private ownership of property by kin ties, an overarching concern for the welfare of the community; and a commitment to the practice of almsgiving and charity to fellow members, and plainness and austerity except during times of worship.

Until the period of the Rebellions of 1837-38, the Children of Peace represented a distinctly Upper Canadian expression of Dissent. Willson's theology blended a democratic antipathy to various elements of Georgian cultural life, with a theocratic conception of the ideal state in which a "tender-hearted" monarch, possessed of great wisdom, would rule with the interests of his subjects in mind. The very existence of the monarchy depended upon the consent of the governed, but in practical terms, the ideal king, a godly man of liberal and tolerant principles, would become so acquainted with the hearts of his subjects that he would treat them as would a loving father, guiding his dependent children through the trials of life.[33] Willson's vision attempted to combine a democratic rejection of the culture of hierarchy and deference, with theocratic notions of "responsible government." As such, his theology parallelled and supported the political ideas of the Reform movement, which rose up in the 1820s and 30s as a direct challenge to the ancien regime order. This will be elaborated upon in the next chapter. At this point, it is necessary to examine Willson's peculiar theology in more depth in order to arrive at a better understanding of Davidites' position within the spectrum of Dissent.

JCD Clark argues that the anchor of British ancien regime culture was not just Anglican orthodoxy, but Trinitarian Anglican orthodoxy. To reject Trinitarian orthodoxy was to reject establishmentarianism's intellectual underpinning of Church, King, and Parliament. In early modern England, all forms of radicalism were religious in origin, and as such, attacks on the state were usually directed at its primary agent, the Church. Clark asserts that in England in the 1740s, it was the older "heresies" of Arianism and Socinianism that continued to be resilient. Arianism held that although Christ was divine, he was created by God the Father as a subordinate, and non-eternal being. Socinianism was a more "advanced" position in that it denied the divinity of Christ altogether, reducing him to the status of a moral exemplar. Arians and Socininians felt themselves to be Christian, but their denial of the Trinity made them radical in the context of ancien regime society. For Socinians, a denial of the divinity of Christ fundamentally undermined the Catholic

doctrine of the Atonement, which was premised on the belief that nothing less than a mediator who was both human and divine could save fallen humanity from sin, original and otherwise. In the orthodox economy of salvation, only infinite goodness—a divine Christ—could expunge infinite sin. If Christ was human, he did not have the power to redeem humanity. In this way, the Atonement was either meaningless, or robbed its grandeur. If the high moral example of a human Christ was enough to "save" mankind from sin, the logical implication was that men's sins were not so great. Thus, individuals were assumed to be both fundamentally good, and capable of managing their own affairs in all areas of life. More ominous, in the eyes of Trinitarians was the Arian and Socinian rejection of the doctrine of Apostolic succession, on which the mediating, hierarchical power of the Anglican clergy was based. If Christ was not divine, he could not have founded a priesthood that exercised mediatory, sacramental powers based on that divine right. This meant that the Anglican clergy had no special privileges, and had no greater authority, in the eyes of God than Dissenting clergy, or private individuals. Anti-trinitarianism constituted a radical challenge to the order of ancien regime society.[34]

In some ways, David Willson's theology was a half-way house between Arianism and Socinianism. Unlike Arians, he did not believe in the subordinate divinity of Christ, and unlike Socinians, he did not believe that Christ was merely a glorified role model. Instead, Willson asserted that while Christ was not God incarnated, God had entered the flesh of a human Christ, who, because of his sinlessness, was the ideal man, or the new Adam. Christ had the power to save humans by example. Because he had ruled over sin and Satan in his own life, he had proven to God that he was fit to rule over all people, while he was still living. Christ's death on the cross was a way of dramatizing the deadness of mind that is created by sin, and of demonstrating the necessity of being "raised up" or mentally elevated before entering the Kingdom of God.[35]

To Willson, the drama of sin and salvation was played out in the mind, or soul. God had created man in three parts, and Willson interpreted the creation narrative of Genesis in a

metaphorical sense in order to explain this tri-partite division. The serpent in the garden of Eden represents the carnal spirit which tempts the mind to sin. Because Eve followed the serpent's advice in taking the forbidden fruit, she represents the mind of man drawn by the temptations of the flesh. Just as Eve was the one who offered Adam the apple, so does the mind influence the state of the soul. Eve's wilfull state of mind mirrors the state of mind of the sinner, who in following his own inclinations succumbs to temptation. This state of sin, rooted in an independence of mind, sullies the soul and alienates the individual from God. Despite this, sin and its attendant mental anguish is God's way of impressing upon people the necessity of obeying his will. It is through temptation and through the tortures resulting from sin that humans begin to know God. When individuals are thus afflicted, they begin to realize that God is greater than them, and that his power will rule forever. Humans have the free will to choose sin or salvation.[36]

The wages of sin lead to the direct experience of hell in the present day. Willson defines hell as the absence of God. It is the result of sin, or indulgence of the passions, and is characterized by a woeful state of mind. Hell is only eternal as long as people continue to despair. When Christ was on the cross, and he cried out in supplication, believing that God had forsaken him, he experienced, for a moment, the "extreme pains of hell" and the weight "of all iniquity."[37] Thus, Willson's hell is not a physical place, but a "deformity...of the soul," a condition in which

> we are alienated to God...where nothing comforts the mind....This is but...thirsting in the flame, this is teaching us where we are - it is not redeeming us...we must...[submit]before God - this is the use of the affecting furnace... The whole heart must say, make of me what thou will...release me from these bonds. These are the symptoms of a preparation to leave this lower kingdom, where thousands of the gentry of this age are now dwelling... [N]othing short of the whole heart is the price of our salvation.

Hell was a bottomless pit of sin and despair. Heaven, on the other hand was a state in which the mind or soul was sinless and in peaceful unity with God.[38] The moment of salvation was wedged between these two experiences. A "mind of woes" was saved "from this...consuming flame" by repentance and God's mercy. God accomplished this by changing human minds, much in the same

way that He changed the weather and the tides. Just as Christ was once the mediator between God and humanity, so now, in the present dispensation of the Spirit, man's mind was the mediator, standing between flesh and sin, and the Divine.[39]

Willson hastened to underscore that it was only through personal experience of the Divine and not through Biblical study that one's soul was saved. Moreover, he made the social dimensions of his theology crystal clear: sinfulness and the pains of hell were inextricably linked to the gentry whose adherence to the arid teachings of the Established Church did nothing to loosen them from the bonds of this "lower kingdom." By implication, common folk such as the Children of Peace had opened their hearts and minds to God's saving grace. Although comparatively lacking in education, wealth and authority, such humble individuals were spiritually superior. Claims of greater plebeian piety formed the basis of Davidite attacks on the compact between Church and State, a subject which is more thoroughly explored in the next chapter.

Willson believed that knowledge of Christ, and fidelity to his commandments would result in knowledge of God. But, after attaining enlightenment, individuals did not need the person of the Son anymore, for they had received him in Spirit. This Spirit was the direct operation of God on the human mind or soul. Once God was internalized, humans had no need of "any outward operations on the mind" such as Scriptural revelation, doctrines or creeds. In this sense, Willson's theology harkened back to the early days of Quakerism, when Friends, immersed in the mystical experience of the Inward Light testified to God's progressive revelation. Willson believed that his spiritual revelations would complement the sacred writings, which he described as "lines of experience, and books of great information...." Through knowledge of Scripture, and more importantly, by means of experience, Willson believed he had internalized the principal teaching of the Bible, that is, that one suffers sorrows for sinning and attains joy through righteousness. But

Willson's spiritual self confidence did not end there, for he believed that he possessed a unique understanding of the Divine mind. However, his sense of himself as a prophet was attenuated in theory by assertions that he had "no supremacy amongst men."[40]

Willson's self-image was linked to his millennialist economy of salvation. He believed that every individual experienced the Apocalypse on an individual, symbolic level. Just as Biblical descriptions of hell were metaphorical, so too was the Apocalypse as described in the Book of Revelation: Willson believed it referred to the internalization of the spiritual teachings of Christ, and the ability to commune directly with the Holy Spirit. When individuals, on a mass scale experienced the personal apocalypse and second coming, the result would be the dawn of millennial peace. In a play on names, Willson envisioned himself as a modern-day King David, leader of the Israelites.[41] Because Christ had been merely a prophet, and not divine, he was not the Jewish Messiah. As such, all Christians were in reality "Jews." This term served as a metaphor for the millennial unity of all Christians.

The seeds of the community's radicalism were contained in Willson's anti-Trinitarian vision. In contrast to the ancien regime model of right religion, which sought to mediate the faith of individuals through a hierarchy of learned priests possessing sacramental powers, Willson's theology premised salvation on the personal experience of the individual, and the direct workings of God on his/her soul. His "unitarianism" directly attacked the legitimacy of the Anglican priesthood, based as it was on the doctrine of the Apostolic succession. Because Christ was not divine, he could not have instituted this ordinance. Moreover, because of the fact that Christ had become internalized in the mind of the redeemed individual through the agency of the Holy Spirit, all external mediators were unnecessary. Each man could become his own "priest", for the human mind was the true mediator between God and sin. This was the source of Willson's egalitarianism.

What is significant is that Willson's vision was both republican and monarchical. Although he attacked the legitimacy of the system that linked Church and State together in an unholy alliance, and vehemently criticized the culture of hierarchy, gentility and deference, Willson placed his hopes in a new millennial kingdom. Also, he had visions of grandeur regarding his own leadership role within the new dispensation. Willson attacked the present incarnation of State-Churchism as corrupt, but instead of advocating disestablishment, he called for the purification of the system. In his view, Church and State could be united in perfect harmony under the theocratic rule of unpaid ministers. Additionally, temporal and religious power would be based on a meritocracy that placed the highest value on spiritual experience and enlightenment. This coalesced with his vision of himself as God's prophet: although he maintained that spiritual gifts were available to all, Willson believed that God had singled him out for a special prophetic and leadership role, based on his extraordinary spiritual merits.[42] This will be discussed in more depth in chapter two. For now, it is sufficient to say that the Children of Peace constituted a uniquely Upper Canadian variety of Dissent in that it attacked several of the tenets of _ancien regime_ culture, and called for a radical purification of the system, the name of egalitarianism, but with the hopes of retaining establishmentarianism's essential form.

Had the Davidites retained Friends' emphasis on quietism and isolation, their message would have made little impact outside of their own peculiar religious group. Willson and the Children's forays into the "public world" beyond East Gwillimbury and the village of Hope, where the their activities were focussed from 1819 onward have been well documented. Willson itinerated to York Mills, Markham, and York in order to evangelize and conduct meetings for worship. The Children of Peace were also known for carrying brightly-coloured banners rife with religious symbolism on their way to meetings, and in public processions to services held outside

their local community. And, in contrast to the reticence of Upper Canadian Quakers to publish material relating to the spiritual experiences of its members, David Willson published several tracts and books in an attempt to promulgate his views. These activities attracted the attention of radical reformer William Lyon Mackenzie, who provided favourable reports of the denomination and publicized its activities in his newspaper, the Colonial Advocate.[43] As a result, the Children of Peace had a higher public profile than the Quakers, and to the 1840s, their rejection of the state was more explicitly political.

Historians have put forth several interpretations of the nature of the Children of Peace that have enriched our perception of its place in Upper Canadian society. As it pertains to Davidite "theology," this thesis has highlighted the radical implications of Willson's anti-Trinitarianism. This interpretation is complemented by the extensive research and analyses of other historians, some of whom have dedicated several years to the singular study of this particular group. Quaker historian Arthur Garratt Dorland views the Children of Peace, and particularly, David Willson with some suspicion. While casting aspersions on Willson's self-proclaimed piety, he asserts that the denomination was appealing to the majority of Queen St. Friends because it relieved the monotony of Quaker pioneer life by attacking its colourlessness and quietism. He argues that Willson's religious ideas "were a confused hodge-podge of Quaker mysticism and Jewish ceremonialism" and that the religious leader left nothing of permanent value to religious life in Upper Canada. In his view, Willson was more political polemicist than prophet.[44] Dorland's assertions are flawed in several respects. First of all, he betrays a marked preference for orthodoxy which leads him to dismiss the Children of Peace as a peculiar aberration, led by a Presbyterian parvenu/religious charlatan whose impertinent actions served to sully the good name of the Society of Friends, and to create disunity. Perhaps this is because Dorland himself had approached the

question from the point of view of a latter-day Quaker assigned with the task of explaining why

Quakerism ultimately declined. In so doing, Dorland suggests various means by which the Society

of Friends could have prevented declension, one of which was a commitment to unity at all costs.

Moreover, Dorland does not properly understand the meaning of Willson's political outspokenness.

In the context of Upper Canadian establishmentarianism, the mere existence of Dissent was

political. Additionally, religious groups such as the Children of Peace suffered from a number of

civil disabilities based on their Dissenter status, including the inability to solemnize and hence

legitimize marriages. As such, they had a vested interest in opposing the unfairness of a system

that was designed to make them second-class citizens. Furthermore, viewed in isolation, the

Children of Peace may seem to constitute merely an interesting episode in Upper Canadian

religious life. But it is only by viewing Dissent in several of its manifestations that one can truly

appreciate its role in creating a climate of opposition to ancien regime culture.

Recent monographs have taken the Children of Peace more seriously. In Awaiting the

Millennium: the Children of Peace and the Village of Hope, Albert Schrauwers argues that the

schism was based on a struggle between wealthy Quaker elders, and the less well-off members of

the Yonge St. Monthly Meeting. The former endeavoured to use the doctrinal standard of the

uniform discipline to strengthen their control over the larger flock. This movement toward

increased elder control was rooted in an erosion of the traditional Quaker moral economy of

reciprocal exchange due to the incursion of market capitalism. Schrauwers argues that Willson's

objection to the elders' increasing creedalism, and his championing of the doctrine of the Inward

Light as superior to all other forms of revelation, represented an attempt to maintain Quakers'

status as a people apart, and to allow for the continuation of Friends' traditional moral economy

based on ties of kinship, reciprocity, and the "non-capitalist social relations of production typical of

a peasantry." Traditionally, Yonge St. Quakers were subsistence farmers who decided what to grow based on the consumption needs of the family, and not on the potential salability of the crop. As such, Quakers acted with little regard for the demands of the market. Rather, economic choices were made with reference to an alternative value system, or "moral economy."[45] This traditional way of life was threatened when Friends found themselves ill-equipped to compete in an increasingly capitalist world, due to the burden of their testimony which dissuaded them from seeking the highest price for their produce that the market would allow.

This sense of economic crisis was exacerbated by the War of 1812. Quakers along Yonge St., a military road, were forced to pay fines in lieu of military service, but because such fines would go toward supporting the military, many Friends refused to pay and had their goods confiscated instead. Army requisitioning and expropriation threatened the basic subsistence of many Quakers: Willson supporters were particularly affected by military harassment during the war, because most of them lived on farms that bordered on Yonge St. And unlike other Quakers who sought a rapprochement with the ways of the world, Willson's group responded to the war, and to economic change by rejecting all secular strife, and by seeking shelter in a re-working of traditional Quaker isolationism.[46] In this sense, Willson's commitment to egalitarianism was rooted in a "backward looking" vision of the ideal society. The community ultimately declined from the 1850s onward, because it was unable to maintain its traditional moral economy in the face of progress and the rise of commercial farming. As the group became more conservative, and divorced from its initial importance, it was transformed into a church like any other.

Although Schrauwers' work provides a compelling paradigm for understanding the Children of Peace, its main problem is that it tends to treat the denomination in isolation from other traditions of Upper Canadian Dissent. As such, the Children of Peace appear to be somewhat of

an aberration. This thesis hopes to correct this deficiency by linking the Children of Peace to other

Dissenters who shared similar values. In addition, Schrauwers has a tendency to see religion

almost exclusively as a "superstructure" that depends for its existence and expression on the nature

of its material or economic basis. As a result of this, religion is interpreted as little more than a set

of rationalizations used to legitimize a given economic system. This is exemplified in his treatment

of the Davidites' support of the Reform Movement of the 1820s and 30s. Although Schrauwers

links the group to Reform opposition versus an ancien regime political and social system, he

suggests that religious issues only became the focal point of violent debate because the Reform

movement lacked a strong ideology and organizational base around which to unite a disparate

membership. It seized on the unfairness of the Clergy Reserves as a means of rallying Dissenters

to the cause. The Children of Peace assisted in Reform's attempt to define its agenda, and as such

filled the ideological gap.[47] Schrauwers tends to ignore the intimate relationship between

establishment politics and religion which made strange bedfellows of Reform supporters. Upper

Canadian Reform was largely based on Protestant Dissent, in its variety of religious forms, not

because it lacked a strong political ideology, but because establishmentarianism, premised as it was

on the marriage of Church and State, dictated both the terms of elite membership and opposition.

While it is true that the establishment was weaker in Upper Canada than in Britain, the colony was

also home to a significant number of American settlers and their families, several of whom were

prone to viewing even relatively "moderate" expressions of establishmentarianism with suspicion.

In short, to be a Dissenter was to some degree to be an opponent of the state. This was the basis of

the intimate relationship between Reform and Dissent. Furthermore, this relationship was the

logical corollary of the relationship between the Anglican establishment and the state. As such, I

am asserting that the relationship between Reform and Dissent was less calculated and mechanical

than Schrauwers has suggested. Reformers tapped into a shared culture of belief that was moulded, in large part by the experience of Dissent. They did not just calculatedly appeal to the religious impulses of the Dissenting rabble to attain their goal of patronage redistribution, and to justify their own market activity. This assessment is too cynical, and assumes that Reform leaders were beyond the reach of faith, and somehow above the influence of the pervading religious culture.

W John McIntyre, author of The Children of Peace, essentially agrees with Schrauwers' assessment of the economic context of the 1812 schism, and with the "moral economy" argument, but his work is more subtle in that he supplements his analysis with a larger variety of historical variables. McIntyre takes the religious content of Willson's writings and prophecies, and of the denomination's architecture, art and public processions more seriously. He seeks to decipher the symbolism inherent in these things, with the goal of understanding the peculiar psychology of Willson and his followers, and their place within the fabric of North Atlantic religious life. McIntyre links the schism of the Children of Peace during the War of 1812, to the birth of other millennial denominations such as the Southcottians and the American Shakers, and to the upsurge of millennial angst created by the American Revolution, and the Napoleonic Wars. He suggests that the trauma of war has often been responsible for the creation of new millennial sects. In his view, Willson's millennial visions, which displayed a desire to escape worldly troubles, and to oppose temporal corruption with a child-liked purity, were rooted in the profoundly disturbing experience of the War of 1812.[48] Although he concedes that Davidites were reacting to local circumstances such as the decline of traditional Quaker testimonies caused by the incursions of evangelical orthodoxy, and the rise of profit-seeking amongst wealthier Friends, McIntyre's central focus is on the shared horrors of war and the trans-Atlantic dimensions of millennialism.

McIntyre's discussion of Davidite architecture is particularly interesting. He argues that because the community did not have a specific creed, the buildings that Davidites constructed took the place of doctrine by embodying group beliefs. By comparing the various buildings that members constructed, from the first meetinghouse in 1819, to the completion of the Sharon Temple in 1832, to the the last meetinghouse erected in 1842, he concludes that the Davidites' initial egalitarianism, and their focus on experiential religion eventually gave way to formalism, order, and a palpable decrease in egalitarianism. The group was only able to maintain its communal ethic of mutual assistance, which was expressed through restrictions on free enterprise and private ownership, and through a commitment to charity, personal frugality and the support of their own schools, as long as village life was relatively isolated. By the 1850s, railway building, the rise of schools, and increased economic development mitigated against the continuation of the community's peculiar culture. This coincided with the achievement of responsible government, and the aging of the prophet Willson. Davidites lost one of their main rallying points, at the same time that their leader lost his zeal and fire.[49]

McIntyre's work is solid, and his argument is well-rounded in that it places the Children of Peace in the larger context of North American and British millennialism. What is lacking, however, is an assessment of how Davities operated in relation to other Dissenting groups during the Upper Canadian period. In this sense, The Children of Peace suffers from the same deficiencies as Schrauwers' work, for in treating the community in isolation from other Dissenters, it appears to be merely a manifestation of a foreign brand of religious peculiarism on Canadian soil. In examining evidence on several Dissenting groups, one sees that they contained elements of a common culture with roots far deeper than the particular history of a single sect.

IV

The faith of the Disciples of Christ or Christians was in some ways similar to that of their Unitarian brethren. They eschewed creedal statements as illiberal and divisive, claiming instead that Christians could find unity in the simple facts of the New Testament. Moreover, they believed that the individual's relationship with God was unmediated and personal and that all Christians were equal in the eyes of God: there were to be no distinctions between clergy and laity. The Disciples greatly emphasized the ability of the individual to read the Word of God, and to be saved by its power. The Bible was perceived as a book of facts, accessible to all seekers, regardless of education. Salvation was a rational proposition: a right and plain reading of Scripture would propel the individual to seek baptism by full immersion for the remission of sins, afterwhich he/she would live in obedience to God, reaping the rewards of increased love and happiness. Influenced by the Restorationist movement of the eighteenth century, the Disciples of Christ wanted to purify Christianity by basing faith and practice on the example of the Apostolic era. As such, Disciples believed that they were continuing the work of the Reformation in the present age by cleansing the church of unscriptural accretions and Romanizing tendencies.

The Disciples of Christ find their Upper Canadian origins amongst Scotch Baptist settlers who brought with them from the old country a pronounced disaffection for establishmentarianism. The Scotch Baptist faith was an amalgam of Glasite anti-establishmentarianism, Sandemanian rationalism, and Haldane liberalism. In the 1820s and 30s, with the assistance of self-appointed leaders in evangelism, Scotch Baptist settlers in Elgin, Halton, Middlesex, and Wellington Counties began to move toward "advanced" Scriptural views. In the early 1830s, these leaders became attuned to the ideas of Alexander Campbell, through his writings which began to circulate in the colony. Alexander Campbell and his father Thomas immigrated from Scotland to America in 1807, and from 1813-30, although they were nominally Baptist, they ran a radical church in

conformity with New Testament ideals, and with the individual right to private judgement in interpreting Scripture. They believed that Christian unity should be premised on the essentials of belief and practice set forth in the clear dictates of Scripture, and that people should be free to make up their own minds on non-essential matters. By the late 1820s, Campbell's quest for a pure and primitive Christianity led him into union with Barton Stone's Christians who were based in Kentucky. They held similar ideals with regard to the Bible, and believed that all church structures were suspect. The Stone and Campbell movements were part of a loose network of religious radicals and populists who rose up from 1790-1815 on American soil, and who, in light of the American and French revolutions, demanded that Christians participate in a new dispensation based on a religion of, by, and for the people. Scotch Baptists in Elgin, Halton, Middlesex and Wellington counties moved with relative ease to the Campbellite point of view. This contrasts with the experience of Disciples at Toronto who were forced to leave their Scotch Baptist congregation in the mid 1830s when differences of opinion arose over questions of church polity and doctrine. At around the same time, the Campbellite message was brought to the Niagara Peninsula, and to the south shores of Lake Ontario by American itinerants, so that by 1839, two churches were established, one at Clinton and one at Louth. Moreover, settlers east of Toronto, in Pickering, Whitby, Cobourg, Port Hope and Bowmanville were drawn to the faith by Joseph Ash, a former Anglican who had been proselytized by members of the Christian or New Light movement who had come to Upper Canada from New England, by way of New York.[50]

Nathan Hatch has argued that the Christian Movement was intimately linked to the larger culture of turn-of-the-century America, which united in opposition against the authority of mediating elites, social distinction and hierarchy in the name of voluntarism, egalitarianism and personal choice. They were part of the radical Jeffersonian impulse that rejected the assumption that society was based on an organic hierarchy of ranks in favour of the view that the social order was a heterogeneous mixture of divers classes, interest groups and occupations. By the 1840s, the

aims and goals of the Christian movement had permeated the wider culture: Christianity had

become democratized, and it was taken for granted that biblical authority emanated from the will of

the people, not from elites.[51] In Canada, the movement faced greater opposition in the form of

State-Churchism, and an official culture of hierarchy and deference. In the main, they acted as

part of a vast, Dissenting opposition to ancien regime social and political life based on the values

of individualism, egalitarianism, independence and voluntarism. Despite some notable exceptions,

the Canadian Disciples of Christ were culturally republican, like their American counter-parts, but

their republicanism was a distillation of their predominantly Scotch Baptist heritage, the Canadian

pioneer experience, and Campbell's religious populist message.[52] What this suggests is that after

1815, cultural republicanism in Canada continued to be fed not only by American Dissenters, but

by Britons. Those mainly Scottish settlers who became Disciples in the 1830s and 40s attest to the

fact that British settlers did not always support the conservative values of the Canadian regime.

The rest of this section will discuss the Scottish and American influences on the denomination, its

local development, and the key elements of the faith. Due to the availability of documents, this

thesis will focus on the Disciples of Christ in Canada, to the exclusion of those congregations in the

Niagara region which called themselves "Christians."

Writing about the early history of the Disciples of Christ in 1883, Joseph Ash recounted

that by 1825, Scotch Baptists in Eramosa East had been "preaching advanced views" for some

time, but that the circulation of Alexander Campbell's writings, and the missionary efforts of

Disciple preachers "opened their understandings greatly." The Calvinist errors of the faith were

cleared away as "baptism and God's converting power [were] put in their proper places – baptism

for the remission of sins; and the gospel, God's converting power." Soon, the whole church,

"exchanged the name 'Baptist' for that of 'Disciples of Christ.'"[53] In other records, David Oliphant

Jr.,[54]—the denomination's premiere publicist—suggests that the historian examine the influence of

Glasite and Sandemanian teachings on the Scotch Baptist denomination in order to better understand the context from which early Canadian Disciples emerged.[55]

The beginnings of the Scotch Baptist faith can be traced back to the Restorationist movement of eighteenth-century Britain which arose in opposition to the formalism and doctrinal tyranny of the state churches. During this time, several small, independent movements arose with the goal of patterning their congregations on the model of the Apostolic church. One of the leaders of this movement was John Glas, a former British Presbyterian minister whose democratic opposition to State-Churchism led him out of that body and into the Independent camp in 1728. He went on to established several churches in Scotland "on the Apostolic model" based on a belief in strict congregational autonomy, and a rejection of fixed doctrinal standards. Glasites, or Old Scotch Independents believed that individuals could understand Christ's dictates without the assistance of educated clergy. They believed that the Scriptures, not preachers had the power to convert people, which led them to decline the services of evangelists.[56]

John Glas' son-in-law, Robert Sandeman was responsible for giving the Glasites their theological substance. He refined Glas' view that the Word of God held the power of conversion by emphasizing that people did not need a special act of grace, or an emotional experience to assure them of salvation. Saving faith was an act of the mind. The human power of reasoning would lead the individual to accept the evidence of the Christian testimony as a rational proposition. Accepting the evidence would lead to a change in life emanating from salvation by faith, repentance, baptism for the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Sandemanians were distinguished from mainline Presbyterians by their weekly observance of the Lord's Supper, love feasts between morning and evening services on the first day of the week, an emphasis on mutual exhortation among members, weekly contributions for the poor, and an insistence that the Christian community had a claim on private goods.[57]

The Old Scotch Baptist denomination traces its origins to the 1760s when Archibald McLean and Robert Carmichael, two former Glasite ministers came to the conclusion that the New Testament taught believer's baptism by full immersion. But from the Disciple point of view, the Old Scotch Baptist faith was limited by its refusal to offer fellowship to those who would not submit to their doctrines and practice. Oliphant believed that Canadian Scotch Baptists were more liberal than the Old Scotch Baptists, due to the influence of the Haldane brothers on the faith after 1807-8. Robert and Alexander Haldane were wealthy evangelical laymen who seceded from the Church of Scotland in 1799 to set up an Independent Church in Edinburgh, based on the "New Testament" order of congregational autonomy, and on believer's baptism by full immersion. They maintained that the key to the reformation of Protestantism was in making the church conform exactly to Apostolic teaching and practice. This led them to promote evangelistic revivals in Scotland, and to organize the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. They developed a liberal attitude to Christians of other denominations based on the ideal that evangelicalism was less an adherence to specific doctrines than "a way of thinking and a quality of life."[58]

Thomas and his son Alexander Campbell, founders of the Disciples of Christ in North America were strongly influenced by the Scotch Baptist heritage and the Restorationist movement. The former was brought up in the Anglican faith in County Down, Ireland, but feeling that the church of his youth was too formalistic and lacking in evangelical piety, he joined the Seceders of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland, and later became a minister. He studied classics at Glasgow University from 1783-1786, and soon after he established an Academy near Rich Hill, Ireland. During this time, he often frequented an Independent Church where he imbibed the teachings of the Haldanes. He was impressed by the tolerance of the Independents, in a context that was rife with religious division. His son Alexander was also influenced by Scotch Baptist views during his studies at the University of Glasgow in 1808. During this period, the Campbells inherited several beliefs and practices from the Scotch Baptists which contributed to the intellectual formation of the

Disciples of Christ on American soil after 1807. These were: the belief that Christianity had to be restored to New Testament standards; a reliance on sola scriptura as the core of faith and practice; an insistence on individual spiritual freedom, and on congregational independence; a zeal for evangelization and missionary work; and the firm conviction that believer's baptism by full immersion was the most Scriptural method of Christian initiation.[59]

Nathan Hatch has argued that Thomas and Alexander Campbell and the Disciples of Christ were part of a larger movement of radical Christianity that was in the process of synthesizing its position from 1790-1815. The Christian movement included a diverse array of leaders, in addition to Pennsylvania-based Alexander Campbell, that included Elias Smith of New England, James O'Kelly of Virginia, and Barton Stone of Kentucky. They were a "motley crew" with little in common, "[but] they all moved independently to similar conclusions within a fifteen-year span. A Calvinist Baptist, a Methodist, and two Presbyterians all found traditional sources of authority anachronistic and found themselves groping toward similar definitions of egalitarian religion." Together, they spear-headed a cultural movement of democratic opposition against the authority of vested interests, and notions of hierarchy and deference, based on a radical reformation of Protestantism in the name of the common man. By the 1840s, the religious and cultural impulses of the Christian Movement became representative of "mainstream" American opinion. Christianity had been democratized, and popular culture had been Christianized.[60]

When Thomas Campbell immigrated to America in 1807, he was assigned by the Presbyterian Anti-Burgher Synod to Washington, Pennsylvania In 1809, he withdrew from the synod. Soon after, Thomas, Alexander and their followers organized the Christian Association of Washington as an agency that worked to reform the various churches, and to promote Christian unity based on the plain truths of the New Testament. Because each person had a right to interpret Scripture according to his/her own conscience, Christian unity had to be based on strict conformity to New Testament faith and practice; man-made doctrines would be stripped away as divisive, and

individuals would be guided by liberty of conscience when it came to the "non-essentials." The two Campbells organized the Brush Run Church, and in 1812, through contact with local Baptists, they embraced believers' baptism by immersion. From 1812 to 1826 they united with the Baptists, but retained the right of teaching whatever they gleaned from Scriptures regardless of creed. The Cambells' association with the Baptist body created several tensions which resulted in the separation of their group and the official creation of the Disciples of Christ.[61]

A detailed account of the local histories of Disciple congregations in Canada cannot be attempted in the context of this thesis. The next few pages will attempt to provide a brief sketch of the contours of Disciple faith in Upper Canada from the 1820s to the 1850s. As mentioned, most of the Disciples congregations in Canada grew out of Scotch Baptist congregations, which were peopled by individuals who came to the new world with an antipathy toward church establishments, formalism, and creedalism. In Canadian Discipledom's formative period, there were several pioneer preachers who led the way in the promotion of "advanced views," the most influential of whom was James Black. Black was instrumental in the formation of Disciples congregations in the Niagara Peninsula, Elgin and Wellington Counties, and later on in Grey and Bruce Counties. Active for most of his life as an itinerant evangelist, Black was largely responsible for the cooperative effort of the 1840s which succeeded in organizing Disciples congregations in Eramosa East for the purposes of more effective organization and evangelization. Black was born on August 15, 1797 in the parish of Kilmartin, Argyleshire, in western Scotland, to Presbyterian parents In 1817, at the age of nineteen, he converted to the Baptist faith after hearing Dugald Sinclair[62] preach: this caused Black to lose his position as a parish school teacher, for he could no longer assent to the doctrines of the Church of Scotland. In 1820, with his parents and some of his siblings, he sailed for Canada, and settled in Aldborough Twp., Elgin County, where he took up teaching, preaching and farming.[63] There, Black found a thriving settlement made up of Prebyterian and Scotch Baptist families, largely from Argyleshire and Perthshire. The Scotch

Baptists assembled together as a church, meeting in congregants' homes and barns in 1818, under the ministerings of Donald McVicar. For several years, this church relied on the evangelistic trips of James Black, and several other itinerants who later became Disciples, including Alexander Anderson,[64] James Kilgour,[65] Dugald Sinclair and Edmund Sheppard.[66]

In 1825, Black followed several of his kin from Aldborough to the Niagara region, taking up farming in Nassagaweya, while teaching in Esquesing, Nelson and Clinton. He continued evangelizing the area, travelling to Eramosa, Beamsville, and Grimsby, and marrying Lois Humphrey in 1828. Through his travels, he met John Menzies and others who had established a Scotch Baptist church at Norval, in Esquesing Township in 1820. Later on, Menzies would become acquainted with Disciple views through copies of Campbell's Millennial Harbinger. By the early 1840s, this church switched from Scotch Baptists to Campbellite affiliation.

In 1830, Black moved to Lismore, near Eramosa in Wellington County, where he would remain for the next 56 years of his life. He resumed subsistence farming and he also taught and preached. Black worked amongst the Scotch Baptists of the area, associating most closely with church leaders who, with Black, would eventually become Disciples. These men included David Oliphant Sr., Alexander Stewart, Thomas Stephens and Donald McLean. David Oliphant Sr. had a particularly strong impact on Black, and first introduced him to Campbellism. Oliphant had been a pastor of a Baptist church in St. Andrews, Fifeshire, Scotland, and had married Sophia Watt whom he met at a Haldane chapel there. In 1821, he moved to Upper Canada, settling first near Dundas. In 1832, he moved to Eramosa and joined the East Eramosa Scotch Baptist church, which had recently been established on James Black's farm, and which was used as a primitive worship site by several denominations of Christians in the area. By 1840, Black, Oliphant, and the others assembled at Eramosa embraced the Disciple faith.[67]

The same pattern linking the Scotch Baptist heritage with the eventual acceptance of the Campbellism was also evidenced in the western part of the colony, namely in Lobo Township,

Middlesex County, where Scottish settlers established a church in 1820, based on a strict adherence to the Word of God as the only rule of faith. They derived this idea from their experience as Baptists under the tutelage of Dugald Sinclair, the minister who had baptized James Black in Scotland. In 1831, Sinclair immigrated from the old country and settled in Lobo to minister to the congregation. In the 1830s, Sinclair imbibed Campbellite ideas through correspondence. Soon, Lobo Baptists began to call themselves "Disciples of Christ."[68]

Aside from a small centre of Disciple activity in Toronto that dates back to the 1820s and 30s, there were two other loci of restorationism in Upper Canada. Here, conversion to Campbellite views was due to somewhat different factors than in the rest of Upper Canada. In the Niagara Peninsula, restoration churches were influenced much more directly by geographic proximity to the United States. Moreover, they were rooted in patterns of settlement that were based less on immigration from Scotland, than on American immigration dating back to the turn of the century. In the Niagara region, American Daniel Weirs, minister to the Baptists at Beamsville was ousted from the congregation in the late 1820s when his acceptance of Stone's and Campbell's Restorationist views led him to reject the validity of all creeds. In the next few years, he began to preach in Clinton Township, and with the assistance of American itinerants from New York and Ohio, a small but solid base of Restorationist religion was formed.[69]

The Restorationists east of Toronto, in centres such as Pickering, Whitby, Cobourg, Port Hope and Bowmanville constituted another exception to the basic pattern of conversion to Campbellite views from a grounding in the Scotch Baptist faith. Joseph Ash, tireless worker on behalf of the cause in Upper Canada, separated from the Church of England in 1833 and "accepted Christian Baptism" through the efforts of Christian or New Light itinerants hailing from New England and New York. Exposure to these views led him to subscribe to Barton Stone's <u>Christian Messenger</u> and Campbell's <u>Millennial Harbinger</u>. After intensive study, he became an itinerating preacher for the Disciple cause, and later on, an early historian of the movement.[70]

It is clear that most of the early leaders of Restorationism in Upper Canada had been moving toward Campbellite views for several years. Indeed, both the Campbells, and the majority of Canadian proto-Disciples shared certain cultural and ideological roots in that they tapped into the late seventeenth-century Scottish Restorationist Movement, as mentioned previously. In a Jeffersonian and Jacksonian republican context, the Campbells had been able to expand this legacy into a full-scale onslaught versus elite views of religion and culture, and versus any residual ancien regime tendencies toward social and political hierarchy. In the Canadian case, Black's proto-Disciple views gained a modest but significant audience in the 1820s to 1840s in recent rural settlements due to several possible factors. First of all, due a lack of institutional church presence, particularly in newly-settled areas, even unordained lay evangelists like James Black were relatively unfettered in their preaching efforts. As a Sunday School teacher near the city of Guelph, Black wrote to a mission board in Scotland to send out an ordained minister to preach and to baptize new converts. One was promised, but was several years in coming. Black "kept on with his good work, and added preaching to his teaching," until a great number were ready for baptism. His study of the new Testament showed him that no true follower of Christ was "debarred from preaching the gospel or administering its ordinances." Thus, he "baptized the penitents, and formed a Christian church in apostolic fashion." At this point, the "Baptist missionary arrived, and proclaiming Black's course to be unauthorized, he insisted that his converts "be baptized by himself as a lawfully ordained baptist minister." Black responded that "these people were already Christians" and there was no need "of their becoming Baptists." Ash claims that Black began to learn about Campbell shortly afterwards.[71]

In some ways, this assessment echoes SD Clark's explanation of the appeal of Campbellite views in western Upper Canada. He has argued that the shift of Scotch Baptist congregations to the Disciple position attested to the "failure of the main Baptist body to promote sufficiently rapidly processes of assimilation." This is partly true: the Baptists' loss was the Disciples' gain.

However, Clark has suggested that due to the close relationship that existed between the views of the Haldanes in Scotland, and of the Campbells in the United States, people had difficulty in distinguishing between Campbellite and Scotch Baptist positions. As such, he asserts that many Scotch Baptists were influenced by Campbellism without being aware of the fact that such teachings were contrary to Baptist principles, a factor that was only exacerbated by the isolation of Scotch Baptist settlers on the western Upper Canadian frontier.[72] The problem with Clark's assessment is that it assumes that Campbellism was appealing by default to those who were too desperate for religious succour to reject its teachings, or to those who lacked the intellectual and religious sophistication to know the difference between orthodoxy and heresy.

Many of Clark's points are valuable. Indeed, this thesis does not seek to supplant Clark's theory of the role of religion in Canadian history with an equally rigid explanation of the appeal of Dissent. However, in the case of the Disciples of Christ, Clark undervalues the movement's cultural appeal. He seems more intent on explaining how the Baptists could have avoided the challenge of Campbellism, than in exploring the movement's own particular dimensions. Moreover, he suggests that the independence of Scotch Baptist congregations mitigated against attempts to keep Baptist doctrines pure.[73] Canadian Campbellite thought was partly derived from Scottish Restorationism which operated in a context that lacked a frontier, but which had stronger establishmentarian church structures. In Canada, Scotch Baptists in new areas of Upper Canada drew not only on their experience of the primitive conditions of pioneer life, but also on the cultural training that they received in the "old country," and on the anti-establishmentarian milieu of western Upper Canada. The tendencies inherent in their brand of Restorationism were reinforced and magnified by exposure to Campbellite teachings

The development of Disciples of Christ congregations at Toronto underscores this point. If Campbellism was strictly a product of frontier sectarianism, then it should not have made any inroads into Scotch Baptist congregations in this city. The fact that it did suggests that Clark's

theory is at best reductionist, and at worst, fatally flawed. Like so many of their brethren across the colony, Toronto Disciples could trace their roots back to the Scotch Baptist faith. But, unlike the experience of their co-religionists, the Toronto Disciples did not convince the entire congregation to follow their lead. From 1820-1833 proto-Campbellites and Scotch Baptists worshipped together in one church in the city. In 1836, however, differences arose in this group which led to the secession of several members. After several years of conducting home worship services, a Disciples of Christ congregation was established in 1841, on Shuter Street. The core of the secessionist group included James Beaty Sr., and James Lesslie. In 1842, Thomas Chalmers Scott arrived from Scotland and began to worship with the group. Soon he became the leader of the more liberal faction of Disciples who separated from the original group in 1846-7. James Lesslie joined the Scott group, while James Beaty Senior remained with Shuter St. congregation.[74]

In the late 1840s, there were approximately one hundred Disciples living in Toronto, out of a population of more than 19,000. However, because of the key involvement of two Disciple leaders—James Lesslie and James Beaty Sr—with two of the city's major newspapers, the Toronto group wielded an influence that was disproportionate to their numbers. James Lesslie was born in 1802 in Dundee, Scotland and he arrived with other members of his family in Canada in 1822. Soon after, he opened a store in Kingston, while his father and his brothers opened a store in York, and one in Dundas. When the Lesslies arrived in Toronto, William Lyon Mackenzie, who was also from Dundee, went into partnership with them to sell books, drugs, hardware, jewellery, cutlery, toys, tools, etc. James Lesslie moved from Kingston in 1826 and took over the store. Lesslie was a radical reformer, and in 1834, both he and Mackenzie were elected on a Reform platform as city council aldermen for St. David's Ward. Mackenzie was chosen as the first mayor of the city of Toronto, and Lesslie served as his closest advisor. In addition to this, Lesslie was involved in the creation of a number of mutual assistance and charitable organizations, and in 1835, he founded the Bank of the People as an alternative to the government-supported Bank of Upper Canada.[75] In

1842, James Lesslie and his brother Joseph purchased The Examiner from Unitarian, Francis

Hincks who had founded the weekly in 1838 to fight the battle for responsible government. Until

1855, when the paper was bought out by the Globe, it functioned as one of two key proponents of

Clear Grit views in the city.[76]

James Beaty Sr. was born in 1798 in County Cavan, Ireland. In 1818, he immigrated to

Upper Canada with his brother John and went into the leather business, establishing himself as a

force to be reckoned with in both business and politics. Although raised in the Episcopal church,

after marrying a woman of Scottish heritage in the 1820s, Beaty began to search the Bible, and

soon he became convinced of the scriptural basis of adult immersion for baptism. Like Lesslie, he

was active Reformer in the 1830s and 40s. He held a number of important positions during his life

including membership on the second council in Toronto, director of the Mutual Insurance

Company, director for nine years of the Grand Trunk railway, Commissioner of the Provincial

Lunatic Asylum, and Trustee of the Toronto General Hospital. He was elected to the first federal

parliament of Canada in 1867 and served to 1873. He founded the Toronto Leader in 1852 as a

moderate Liberal organ. After 1854, however, it espoused the Liberal-Conservative ministerial

cause against the Globe and the opposition forces of Reform.[77]

In Toronto, the original Disciple churches did not survive past the 1870s, and although

other congregations grew up in Toronto, Toronto Junction and West Toronto Junction in the late

1870s and 1880s, Campbellism ceased to have the cultural relevance there that it had in earlier

years. The roots of this demise are perhaps due to a general decline in Disciple numbers across the

province. More to the point, however, during the 1850s, the radical reform impulse of Toronto

Discipledom as represented by James Lesslie and his followers petered out, in favour of the Beaty

vision that was much more conservative. The demise of the Examiner in 1855 signalled the death

of the Clear Grit option in Toronto. The death of the Lesslie vision, rooted in the experience of

liberal, progressive Discipleship coincided with the rise of the Leader, Beaty's more moderate,

conservative answer to reform. This hints at the general direction that metropolitan political culture was taking in the years leading to Confederation, and it also suggests that on a political level at least, Discipleship had been co-opted by the Liberal-Conservative mainstream. This will be discussed in greater detail in a future chapter.

There is some evidence to suggest that the Disciples of Christ, particularly in areas west of Toronto favoured Clear-Grit reform in opposition to the more conservative tendencies of moderate reform. But, it is difficult to make assertions about the Disciples of Christ as a whole because of the fact that their ideals were highly individualistic, and because the pioneer leaders of the movement left few written records detailing their political tendencies and cultural perceptions. The early Disciples in the rural regions of Upper Canada were people of action, busy in the work of homesteading, farming and evangelization. Aside from some local church records and local histories the historian must depend on the considerable publishing efforts of David Oliphant Jr., James Lesslie, James Beaty and a few others. Oliphant's work began in the late 1840s, and as such, for the period from the 1820s to the mid-1840s the documentary evidence is relatively sparse. The evidence suggests, however, that the Disciples of Christ formed part of a larger movement of opposition to State-Churchism, and to the culture of hierarchy and deference rooted in the Scottish experience of Dissent and refined by the Campbells' radical American gospel.

In order to be clear about the position of the Disciples of Christ in central Canadian society, one must revisit the theological ideas and assumptions that assisted in defining their opposition to ancien regime political, cultural and religious structures. The Disciples' rejection of establishmentarianism in all of its manifestations informed their particular answer to the question "what must I do to be saved?" In answering this question in the negative, Disciples argued that blind assent to man-made creeds, or participation in religions that sought to mediate between the individual believer and his/her God were hostile to the achievement of salvation. Formalistic and creed-bound religions challenged the Disciple vision of truth on several fronts. First of all, the

expectation that all people should adhere to a uniform system insulted their faith in liberal

individualism. History had demonstrated the futility of attempts to effect perfect agreement among

men in matters of opinion, particularly in regard to the minutiae of Christian doctrine. One

Disciple expressed his view on the subject as follows

> ...[H]ow preposterous it is to expect uniformity of opinion in a world like this, where the minds of men are as diverse as the leaves of the forest! - a world in which no two states can have the same political government; no two families the same regulations; no two individuals the same tastes and habits![78]

It was contrary to human nature, and to liberty to force all people into the same theological mould.

This tendency, which had not subsided since the Protestant Reformation had liberated

Christendom from the tyranny and oppression of the Church of Rome, had produced a rank

sectarianism that was repellant to the pure ideal of New Testament Christianity. The Disciple view

of history maintained that the purity of the early church was sullied by Constantine the Great in

325 AD. From this point onward, ministerial and official function was unduly elevated; religion

and politics were united by the authority of the state; and God's word was nullified by councils,

creeds and ecclesiastical courts which polluted Holy Writ by blending it together with fallible

human teachings. From the fourth to the sixth century, apostasy increased as the Catholic Church

or the "Mother of Harlots" began her rule among nations, enslaving the civilized world and

delighting in acts of cruelty. The light of the Reformation began to shine in Scotland, England and

Germany as Wickliffe, Knox, Jerome and Huss rose up in protest against the Church of Rome, but

it was only with the rise of Luther, Melancthon, Zwingli, and Calvin that real reformation began.

After this, "the old parent Lady, the mother of sects, as well as of...tyranny... is consoled in her

decline by a daughter family of sects which arise and aspire to parental independency with

improvements." Lamentably, "sects multiply with the progress of the times, so that three hundred

years have given us more than two hundred different sects.[79]

As if to underscore the errors of creedalism, Disciples attempted to link the sins of

sensualism and corruption with churches bound by confessions of faith. Not only were creed-

based churches repulsive because of their rejection of individual freedom, and their contribution to

the atmosphere of rabid sectarianism, they were also repulsive because they had forsaken the

frugality of true piety for the worldliness of materialism. This attitude was integral to the

Disciples' perception of themselves as the true inheritors of the Reformation, and modern-day

soldiers battling against the Hydra-headed beast of ecclesiasticism. All Protestant churches had

breathed in the "pestilent atmosphere which comes from the city of abominations" - Rome.

"Conductor," writing in The Witness of Truth in 1848 exclaimed," O popery - popery - popery -

thy charms are matchless, and thy forms many, to suit the times. Naked indeed would popular

protestantism appear if stripped of the ornamental which Rome has supplied.[80]

The question of how salvation was to be achieved, in a more positive sense was bound up

with the problem of arriving at "truth" within the context of a mental culture that championed

liberal individualism. Disciples were aware that individual liberty, in its extremes, could lead to

the atomization of society. As such, they suggested a new cultural consensus be based on the

Reformation ideal of sola scriptura. The Scriptures, particularly the New Testament were the

expression of God's will.[81] Human contrivances and speculative philosophy led to false dogmas

which oppressed the conscience of the individual, and which led to divisions amongst God's people.

Both the necessity of Christian unity and of individual liberty could be served by a strict adherence

to Scripture, and to the "facts" contained therein. Indeed, the Bible was viewed "primarily as a

Book of facts," which were "reliable and intelligible to the rational mind." It was "not a document

of abstract texts for gendering opinions or inferences." Facts were "indisputable"whereas opinions

could be received or discarded "at will" for one man's opinion equalled another's. This meant that

"the Bishop of Canterbury's opinion [was] as good as elder Davidson's, and elder Davidson's opinion as good as the Bishop's." Disciples were confident that the New Testament provided all Christians—regardless of social standing, wealth or education—with the essential elements of unity in the following areas: Christ's life and spiritual mission; the forgiveness of sins; and the way of salvation.[82] As such, their vision was emphatically democratic. Moreover, it radically challenged the primary assumptions of establishmentarianism. The Disciples had great confidence in the ability of every individual, possessing basic literacy to consult the New Testament, and find the empirical evidence of the faith, in plain terms. Disciple liberty was rooted in this confidence, and in the supposed simplicity of God's word. God had given humans the gospel as an intellectual anchor to prevent individuals from being tossed "upon the billows of uncertainty." Thus, human liberty was bound by the a priori laws of Scripture.[83]

Disciples in Canada West used other means to moderate the centrifugal tendencies of their religious belief and local church polity. In the 1840s, there arose a movement, headed by James Black to draw together various Disciple congregations in a cooperative effort for the purposes of greater organizational and evangelical effectiveness. The First Cooperation was organized at Eramosa East around 1843, and this was followed by the creation of the Wellington Cooperation which took in all the churches of Eramosa Township. The latter contributed funds toward David Oliphant's publishing efforts. Disciples at Pickering, Oshawa and Bowmanville created the Provincial Cooperation in 1845, but after a shaky start, it was re-organized in 1849. Under the auspices of this organization, two itinerant preachers were sent out to evangelize the province, but due to the vastness of the mission field, they reported indifferent success. Soon after, the seat of the Co-operation was moved to Wellington County, and it then continued under this name to 1888. In 1870, a new cooperation was formed comprising Wellington, Halton, King Township and

Toronto Churches, and it lasted well into the next century. The cooperative movement did not succeed in uniting all Disciples congregations, and several important leaders in the movement opposed its centralizing tendencies based on the fact that it had no New Testament precedents.[84]

Similar to SD Clark, Brian Boden has argued that the rise of regional and provincial cooperations coincided with the decline of frontier areas in Canada West. The austerity of frontier life began to give way to affluence and consolidation just as the Disciples began to gain momentum in the province. In the 1840s, the Disciples numbered 4000, the majority of whom were concentrated in Wellington County, and north of Lake Erie. By the 1880s, there were more than double that number of Disciples in Ontario. As the frontier ebbed away, the Disciples became a rural sect on the margin of larger towns and cities. As second-generation Disciples joined the movement to towns and cities, they accommodated themselves to the surrounding culture, so that by the 1890s, the denomination's numbers declined precipitously. He attributes the success and growth of the de-centralized Disciples in the earlier period to a reaction amongst a minority of settlers to the political, social, economic and religious centralization of Canada.[85]

In the context of the United States, Nathan Hatch has placed the Disciples of Christ on the vanguard of the movement to democratize American Christianity, in the context of the Revolution's overthrow of the old order. Starting out from the position of "outsiders," Disciples soon defined the "mainstream" of American religious life in several important ways. In a non-republican social and political context such as Upper Canada, the Disciples took part in a larger movement of cultural opposition based on the experience of Dissent against the "old order" which was represented by the compact between Tory elites and the Church of England. Although Boden is correct in asserting that the Disciples appealed to those people who opposed the centralizing tendencies of the culture, his assessment is incomplete. The Disciples were part of the reason why

establishmentarianism continued to be an unsuccessful proposition even after 1815, when

American immigration declined in favour of British immigration. In addition, they constituted the

"rougher" populist edge of anti-establishmentarianism. Their religious ideas fed into the Clear Grit

faction of the movement for political reform from the 1830s to the 1860s.

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This chapter has put forth the view that from 1791-1854 the struggle between

establishmentarianism and Dissent constituted the primary divide separating Anglo-Protestants in

Upper and Lower Canada. As the very "image and transcript" of the British Constitution, the

Constitution of 1791 was designed to create an ancien regime social order on colonial soil: it

worked to ensure the monopolization of power by men of property, who would function as a kind

of colonial aristocracy, loyal to the Crown and to the Church of England, which served as the

system's primary buttress. Anglican elites encouraged individuals to perform the duties of their

various stations, so as to contribute to the happiness of the whole society. Moreover, they believed

that social and political hierarchies were divinely ordained, and that God's power was not

experienced directly. Rather, a learned, sober and settled clergy acted as mediators between God

and man, thus ensuring that the flock behaved in an orderly and deferential manner. Both the

salvation of the colonial British family, and the continuation of elite privilege depended upon this

marriage of religion and politics, Church and state.

This vision was challenged, however, by patterns of colonial migration which ensured that

the Established Church, and later Churches, were outnumbered by Dissenters who flooded into

Upper and Lower Canada from the late-eighteenth century to the 1840s. The Dissenters

considered in this chapter -- the Quakers, Children of Peace and the Disciples of Christ -- drew

upon a set of values which constituted Protestantism's radical, democratic core and which took

distinct aim at the compact between Church and state. By articulating their beliefs in liberty of

conscience and sola scriptura or alternatively mystical experiences of divine power, by challenging

the definition of orthodoxy, and by disparaging the cultural traditions of ecclesiasticism, Dissenters

struck at the foundation of the entire political and social order, questioning its divine sanction. In

the following chapter, these themes will be discussed at greater length within the context of

Davidite and Campbellite attempts to reform the Constitution, and thus to reconstruct the compact

between religious faith and political life in their own images.

Endnotes

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[1] Curtis Fahey, In His Name: The Anglican Experience in Upper Canada, 1791-1854 (Ottawa: Carleton University Press,1991); See also Westfall; JS Moir, Church and State in Canada West: Three Studies in the Relation of Denominationalism and Nationalism, 1841-67 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1959).

[2] See for example, SF Wise, "Upper Canada and the Conservative Tradition," in God's Peculiar Peoples: Essays on Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century Canada.eds. AB McKillop, Paul Romney (Ottawa: Carleton University Press,1993); Gordon T Stewart, The Origins of Canadian Politics: A Comparative Approach (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1986); Donald Creighton, John A Macdonald: The Young Politician (Toronto: Macmillan, 1952); Recently, Jeffrey McNairn has argued that the conservative consensus was challenged by Tory Republican ideology in the period 1848-54. See: Jeffrey L McNairn, "Publius of the North: Tory Republicanism and the American Constitution in Upper Canada, 1848-54," CHR 77, no. 4 (December 1996): 504-37.

[3] See Westfall, 3-11; SD Clark, 233-71.

[4] Lower, 127.

[5] R Douglas Francis, Richard Jones, Donald B Smith, eds., Origins: Canadian History to Confederation (Toronto: Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1992), 197. See also Fahey, 6 and Stewart, 25-6. Stewart argues that the Canadian constitution of 1791 was more or less the same as the British constitution, but that in Britain, the constitution worked because the Crown was willing to choose its chief ministers from the House of Commons. This practice was not inscribed in law, but rather, it was rooted in custom and usage.

In the Canadian case, the Governor and Council ignored the assemblies, arguing that it was their constitutional right to do so

[6]Clark, English Society, 216. Francis et al., 226. Fittingly, John Strachan arrived in Upper Canada on the last day of the eighteenth century. After spending three years as the private tutor to Richard Cartwright's family, he was ordained and moved to Cornwall where he served as a parish priest and master of a school he founded to train the sons of gentlemen. In 1812, Strachan's ambitions led him to York where he displayed great courage in response to the American invaders. Rewarded for his service with government patronage, Strachan served as an Executive Councillor from 1818-36, as a Legislative Councillor from 1820-41; moreover, he was appointed the Archdeacon of York in 1827. From 1827-49 he was the ex-officio President of King's College, and in 1839 he was appointed Bishop of Toronto, a position he held until his death in 1867. See Fahey, 62; Lower 165.

[7] Fahey, 4; Jane Errington, The Lion, the Eagle, and Upper Canada, A Developing Colonial Ideology (Montreal/ Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987), 28; Clark, English Society, 78-9.

[8]Errington, The Lion, the Eagle, and Upper Canada, 19-27.

[9]Fahey, 1-16; Westfall, 30-7. Strachan was more flexible than other proponents of the Great Chain of Being. He himself had come from a humble background, and through study and personal effort had risen to a position of power. As such, he believed in a certain measure of social mobility: those with merit could be brought into a higher social circle through education. Most of the poor, however, would not be able to rise above their station. See also Fahey, 116-19.

[10]Arthur Garratt Dorland, The Quakers in Canada, A History (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1968),42-104.

[11]Barry Reay, The Quakers and the English Revolution (Southampton:The Camelot Press, 1985), 7-20, 33-39.

[12] Reay, 15-18, 33-5. See also J William Frost, The Quaker Family in Colonial America: A Portrait of the Society of Friends (New York: St Martin's Press, 1973), 12-16.

[13]Reay, 33, 103-117; Jack D Marietta, The Reformation of American Quakerism, 1748-1783 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1973), 3; Levy, 53.

[14]Ibid., 6, 50-75.

[15]Marietta, passim.

[16]Frost, 4, 64. Ontario. Pickering College Archives (PCA), Arthur Garratt Dorland Friends Historical Collection, [hereafter DFHC], Discipline of the Yearly Meeting of Friends, Held in New York, for the State of New York, and Parts Adjacent: As Revised and Adopted, in the sixth Month, 1810 (New York, 1810) [hereafter Discipline],4, 88-106.

[17]Discipline, 20-31.

[18]Ibid., 59-60, 78-9.

[19]Ibid., 64-9.

[20]Ibid., 21-5, 26-7.

[21]WH Higgins, The Life and Times of Joseph Gould (Toronto: C Blackett Robinson, 1887; reprint Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1972), 21-35.

[22]Richard MacMaster, "Friends in the Niagara Peninsula, 1786-1802," in Faith, Friends and Fragmentation: Essays on Nineteenth-Century Quakerism in Canada, ed. Albert Schrauwers (Toronto: Canadian Friends Historical Association, 1995), 9-10. Gregory Finnegan's work points to similar conclusions for Quaker community development in Adolphustown, Upper Canada from 1784-1824. In addition, he argues that landed families provided the financial and spiritual support for less advantaged Quaker families. Compared to non-Quakers, proportionally more young Quaker couples created their own households, retained longer residence there, and acquired land in the township. Finnegan attributes this to the significant financial and spiritual assistance such couples derived from the larger Quaker community. Both MacMaster and Finnegan point to the inability of Quaker communities at Niagara and Adolphustown to maintain their numbers via chain migration after 1816 when American migration was effectively shut down. In any case, prospects for land in both areas were declining in favour of settlements in other areas of Upper Canada such as York County, and the Ohio country. See Gregory Finnegan, "People of Providence, Polity and Property: Domesticity, Philanthropy and Land Ownership as Instruments of Quaker Community Development in Adolphustown, Upper Canada, 1784-1824," in Faith, Friends and Fragmentation, ed. Albert Schrauwers, 23.

[23]Young Friends' Review (London, Ontario), Twelfth Month, 1888; Hugh Judge, Memoirs and Journal of Hugh Judge (Philadelphia: John and Isaac Comly, 1841), 221-3.

[24]Canada. National Archives (NA), Archives of the Religious Society of Friends, Microfilm Reel M 3850, Timothy Rogers, "Timothy Rogers: An Autobiography, 1756-1818," 8-11.

[25]Albert Schrauwers, "Consensus Seeking, Factionalization and Schism in the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting," in Faith, Friends and Fragmentation, ed. Albert Schrauwers, 83-7.

[26]Discipline, 27.

[27]Robert W Doherty, The Hicksite Separation: A Sociological Analysis of Religious Schism in Early Nineteenth-Century America (New Jersey: Rutgers University Press, 1968), 25-31.

[28]Ibid., 77-89.

[29]Dorland, 127-145.

[30]Children of Peace: The History of a Novel Sect in York Co., Established in the Early Part of this Century (1898). Albert Schrauwers, Awaiting the Millennium: The Children of Peace and the Village of Hope, 1812-1889 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 27-30..

[31]Ibid., 30-1.

[32]Ibid., 30-37.

[33]AO, Sharon Temple Papers [hereafter STP], MS 834, Reel 1, Section 1, Books and Pamphlets, David Willson, Moral and Religious Precepts, Church Ordinances, and the Principles of Civil Government (Toronto: WJ Coates, 1836), 13-16.

[34]Clark, English Society, 281-5.

[35]STP, Reel 1, Section 1, Books and Pamphlets, David Willson, A Lesson of Instruction, Written and Published for the Cihldren of Peace, More Particularly the Rising Generation, With all Others Who May Approve or Receive the Same (East Gwillimbury: n.p., 1815), 9-14.

[36]Ibid., 11-18.

[37]Ibid., 20-1.

[38]STP, Reel 1, Section 1, Books and Pamphlets, David Willson, The Impressions of the Mind to Which Are Added Some Remarks on Church and State Discipline, and the Acting Principles of Life (Toronto: n.p., 1835), 29, 135; STP, Reel 1, Section 1, Books and Pamphlets, David Willson, A Sinner's Friend or Guide to Life (Toronto: n.p., 1836), 2.

[39]Willson, Impressions of the Mind, 129, 9-13.

[40]Ibid., 142, 130-5.

[41]Ibid., 26, 70-4; AO, The Davidites, MS 854, Acc. no. 21044, Series B, "The Children's Blessing," n.d.

[42]Willson, Moral and Religious Precepts, 9-13.

[43]W John McIntyre, Children of Peace (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1994), 31-2 See also Colonial Advocate, "A Visit to the Village and Chapel of the Children of Peace," 18 September 1828; "The Children of Peace," 16 October 1828; "A Religious Discourse Written by David Willson of Hope," 25 July 1833.

[44]Dorland, 104-11.

[45]Schrauwers, Awaiting the Millennium, 20.

[46]Ibid., 44-7.

[47]Ibid., 156-77.

[48]McIntyre, 35-49.

[49]Ibid., 84-5, 179-85.

[50]Reuben Butchart, The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830 (Toronto: Canadian Headquarters Publications, 1949), 47-53. See also: Brian F Boden, "The Disciples of Christ and Frontier Religion: The Scotch Baptist Roots of the Restoration Movement in Nineteenth-Century Ontario," in The Campbell-Stone Movement in Ontario: Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Churches of Christ, Independent Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, ed. Claude E Cox (Lewiston: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1995), 1-4, 27-32; Hatch, "The Christian Movement and the Demand for a Theology of the People," Journal of American History 67, no. 3 (December 1980): 547.

[51]Hatch, "The Christian Movement," 562-66.

[52]This is similar to what Brian F Boden argues in his article, but he does not use the term "republican" in reference to the Disciples of Christ.

[53]Christian Worker, December 1883, as quoted in Reuben Butchart, Old Everton and the Pioneer Movement Amongst the Disciples of Christ in Eramosa Township, Upper Canada from 1830 (Toronto: Published by the Compiler for the Church of Christ [Disciples], 1941), 3.

[54]David Oliphant Jr. and David Oliphant Sr. are both important figurs in the history of the Disciples of Christ. The latter was a Baptist pracher in St. Andrews, Fifeshire Scotland and immigrated to Canada in 1821. They settled in Esquesing, and then Dundas and in 1823, David Jr. was born. When David Jr. was ten, the family moved to the wilderness of Eramosa Township. Oliphant Sr. was instrumental in leading several men who would eventually become Disciple leaders to Campbellite views which were introduced to them through issues of the Millennial Harbinger, Alexander Campbell's paper. In 1841, the elder Oliphant died, and David Jr. proceeded to the Campbellite Bethany College. At the age of 21, he returned to Upper Canada and preached in the Niagara region and in the western part of the province. In 1845, he began a publishing career that would last until his death in 1885. (See Eugene C Perry, "David Oliphant: the Person, Editor and Preacher," in The Campbell-Stone Movement in Ontario, 143-57.

[55]Butchart, The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830, 50.

[56]Ibid., 54; Boden, 9-11.

[57]Ibid., 11.

[58]Ibid., 12; David Bebbington, Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s (Michigan: Unwin Hyman, 1989), 77.

[59]Butchart, The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830, 53; Boden, 16.

[60]Hatch, "The Christian Movement," 547, 566-7.

[61]Boden, 21.

[62]Sinclair was born in Argyleshire, Scotland, in 1777, and although he was brought up Presbyterian, he converted to the Baptist faith in 1801. He began to preach after this, and from 1806-1810 he studied at Bradford College, afterwhich he preached in the Highlands, and then in England. In 1831, Sinclair immigrated to Lobo Twp., Upper Canada and took up the task of tending several churches at Lobo, Mosa, Howard, and of evangelizing the wider area. An ardent proponent of the Disciple faith in Upper Canada, he died in 1870, having been absent from his pulpit but two Sundays. (See Butchart, The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830, 139-140.)

[63]Toronto. Victoria University Archives [hereafter VUA], Ontario Evangelist, May 1886.

[64]Alexander Anderson was born in Perthshire, Scotland in 1812, and was raised in the Presbyterian faith. He immigrated to Canada in 1832, and after hearing John Menzies, of Esquesing church preach, he converted to the Scotch Baptist faith. In 1836 he settled in Eramosa township where he took up itinerant preaching, along with James Black and James Kilgour. According to Reuben Butchart, they covered most of the ground between the Great Lakes, and from Windsor to Kingston. In his later years, he served the Disciples of Christ in Hamilton. He died in 1897. (See: Butchart, The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830, 140.)

[65]James Kilgour was born in 1812 in Kirkcaldy, Scotland. He received a liberal education, and until he immigrated to Canada in 1845, he taught at his own private seminary. Once in Upper Canada, he settled in Eramosa, where he took up farming. He worked as an itinerant evangelist for the Disciples of Christ, and became the first pastor of the Disciples church at Guelph. He became an inspector of schools in 1875, and died in 1893. (See Ibid., 138-9.)

[66]See: Geoffrey H Ellis, "The Life and Times of James Black," The Campbell-Stone Movement in Ontario, 104-7; and Ron Payne, "The Story of Eagle's Union Church," The Campbell-Stone Movement in Ontario, 207.

[67]Butchart, The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830, 54-58; Ellis, 118-119.

[68]Boden, 30-32.

[69]Edwin L Broadus, "The Beamsville Church at the Beginning of the Twentieth Century: A Study of One Congregation's Response to Division," in The Campbell-Stone Movement in Ontario, 271-4.

[70]Boden, 32.

[71]160.William H Trout, The Trout Family History, (1916) 49, as quoted in The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830, 403.

[72]SD Clark, 304-5.

[73]Ibid., 306.

[74]Thomas Fountain, "Toronto's Early Disciple Churches," in The Campbell-Stone Movement in Ontario, 214-217.

[75]Ibid., 216-220.

[76]JMS Careless, "Mid-Victorian Liberalism in Central Canadian Newspapers, 1850-67," CHR, XXXI, no. 3 (September 1950): 222.

[77] Steve May, "The Church of Christ at Omagh: A Restoration Miniature," in The Campbell-Stone Movement in Ontario, 251; Thomas Fountain, "Toronto's Early Disciple Churches," in The Campbell-Stone Movement in Ontario, 218; Careless,"Mid-Victorian Liberalism," 222; May, 251-63.

[78]VUA, Witness of Truth, June 1848.

[79]Ibid., August 1849.

[80]Ibid., September 1848.

[81]Disciples generally believed that although both the Old and New Testaments were inspired by God, the New Testament was part of a progressive revelation that superseded the former testament, in the same way that a new last will and testament in human affairs renders the previous one null and void. The Old Testament was based on the law of Moses given to the Jews, while the New Testament was based on the law of Christ given to the Christians. The former was useful in explaining the origins of man, sin, and human history, but it was only a preparation for the greater gospel of God's son. Disciples were suspicious

of clergy in particular who displayed too much zeal in trying to show that the "old oracles" were equal to the new. They feared that reliance on the Old Testament was intended as a means of fooling people into accepting their priestly authority. (See Witness of Truth, April 1849.)

[82]Witness of Truth, August 1849.

[83]Ibid., June 1848.

[84]Butchart, The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830, 77-82.

[85]Boden, 33-9.

Chapter II: Revisioning the Constitution:Central Canada and the Politics of Dissent, 1812-1854

Introduction

In contrast to their British and American counterparts, historians who have studied the

political development of central Canada from 1791-1854 have tended to neglect the subtle interplay

between religious belief on the one hand, and political discourse and action on the other. Aside

from references to the struggle between Strachan and Ryerson, particularly in the period leading up

to the Rebellions of 1837-38, the student of history is left with the impression that for the most

part, religion was a private matter. Furthermore, the role of non-Methodist Dissenters in the

political life of the Canadas has been almost entirely overlooked. There are several possible

reasons for this gap in the literature. First of all, some Canadian historians have inherited the

legacy of SD Clark who asserted that the inherent "otherworldliness" of new sects dictated their

principled abstention from political participation.[1] Others have been prone to viewing

"metaphysical" mindsets with suspicion, preferring instead to explain changes and continuities in

Canadian political life with sole reference to less intangible or unwieldy factors such as economic

shifts or ethnic rivalries.[2] In addition to this, the consensus among political and intellectual

historians that Canada had been moulded along quintessentially conservative lines by mid-century,

has relegated more radical expressions of political and thus, religious Dissent to quaint

insignificance.[3] Some such historians have written on this broad conservative consensus with the

caveat that they have had to rely on the documents of colonial elites to the exclusion of the popular

political voice, due to the dearth of literature produced by the subaltern classes.[4] Although this is

understandable, the conclusion that Upper Canada and later Canada West was some kind of

conservative juggernaut is misleading. This is particularly so when one broadens one's conception

of the political beyond direct participation in government councils or assemblies; public

processions, sermons, religious treatises, poetry, and contributions to the "secular" press can and should be used as evidence of popular political participation.

Between 1791-1854, Upper and Lower Canadians grappled with the central political question of how the British Constitution should operate on colonial soil. The debate became particularly heated from the 1830s to the 1850s, during which time a range of possible solutions were debated: some were eventually cast aside or crushed, while others mutated and adapted over time to fit new conditions. This chapter will focus on how two Dissenting Protestant groups conceptualized the Constitution during the period in question. The Children of Peace, whose main contribution was made in the decade or so prior to the Rebellions envisaged an experiment in monarchical egalitarianism in which the guiding hand of Providence would assist in the purification and reformation of the Upper Canadian church-state so that individual liberties would be protected. Closely associated with William Lyon Mackenzie's radical Reformers, several members of the group participated in the Rebellion of 1837. During the 1840s, and especially in the first half of the 1850s, leaders of the Disciples of Christ contributed to the debate on the relationship between Church and State, and on the future of the Reform movement. Despite some differences of political opinion that arose within the denomination during this period, the Disciple experience contributed to the articulation of the Clear Grit agenda based on a marriage of Protestant Dissent and radical liberalism.

Although this thesis does not dispute the essentially conservative nature of Canadian political development, what the study of the politics of the Children of Peace, the Quakers and the Disciples of Christ points to is the close relationship between religious Dissent and radical reform options. Because Upper Canada had been created at the end of the eighteenth century with an *ancien regime* mindset predicated on the unity of Church and State, expressions of Dissent, particularly in heterodox form, were viewed with suspicion for their ability to disrupt the divinely-ordained, hierarchical political and social order. In the Canadian context, the system showed signs

of strain almost immediately, largely due to the influx of American, and later British Dissenters who began to challenge its ancien regime assumptions. As in Great Britain and the United States in the years leading up the Revolution, Canadian Dissent, rooted as it was in the Reformation shibboleths of liberty of conscience and sola scriptura or alternatively, mystical notions of the individual's ability to receive divine guidance, contributed to popular, democratic attacks versus ancien regime conceptions of politics and culture. Unlike their more orthodox counterparts, Dissenters challenged the view that the common good was predicated on the maintenance of order, hierarchy and the subordination of the individual to the needs of the state. This sytem had produced corrupt, luxury-loving aristocratic and priestly classes who had bartered away the experience of personal religion for worldly power. Instead, they argued that political power should be extended on the basis of virtue and merit, terms that were bound up with Dissenting definitions of faith and morals. Because virtue and merit were independent of claims to superior wealth, social status and advanced education, they contained the seeds of democratic opposition.[5]

In short, this thesis contends that at least until the dawn of Responsible Government in 1848-9, a fundamental divide within Upper Canadian life was based on the religious and political rivalries pitting colonial elites against their popular opponents. While it does not wish to challenge the historical importance of social and economic developments, due to the limits of space and time, it is more principally concerned with the creation of cultural and ideological frameworks. In a previous chapter, it has been asserted that the relationship between religious Dissent and Reform acted as a kind of reverse image of the relationship between the Anglican Church and the Upper Canadian state. But because of the plurality of Dissent compared with the relative unity of establishmentarian religion, it is not possible to speak as definitely about the Reform-Dissent connection; no one Dissenting denomination constituted the preeminent theological incarnation of political Reform. Reform unity, although often quite fragile, was based on the broad cultural notions of Dissent and it was able to hold together until the achievement of Responsible

Government, after which latent class and religious divisions precipitated its fragmentation and partial demise.

'Stars of eternal glory': The Children of Peace and the Vision of Monarchical Republicanism

From the 1820s to the 1840s, the Children of Peace participated in the creation and support of the Upper Canadian Reform movement, and in the articulation of a political theology of Dissent which incorporated eighteenth-century notions of monarchy and natural rights. In the next several pages, I will expand upon David Willson's peculiar theocratic and meritocratic conception of the ideal state, and I will argue that his support of the institution of the monarchy, and his vision of a godly, benevolent king were not incompatible with his egalitarian and meritocratic beliefs, nor with his excoriation of actual priests and rulers. That Willson did not experience much dissonance when the reality of Upper Canadian social and political life failed to measure up to his ideal was due to his belief that governments and kings should be guided by their divinely-mandated responsibility to act justly, and to guard individual liberty against the incursions of tyranny and oppression. Kings were to put the interests of the "common" folk first. As long as they did, Providence would smile upon Great Britain, and her power over nations would be protected. When they did not, however, Britain was sure to be punished. The talisman of the church-state connection was reformation; it would be protected as long as kings endeavoured to purify both church and state of corrupt thoughts and deeds. This peculiar combination of monarchical and democratic concepts can be linked to eighteenth-century British transmutations of the indefeasible right of kings into Bolingbroke's ideal of the Patriot King on the one hand, and into Thomas Paine's divine right of "the people" on the other; moreover, it was likely influenced by the experience of democratized Christianity both on American and Upper Canadian soil.

The second part of this section will attempt to link Willson's theology to the participation

of the Children of Peace in the political life of the colony from the late 1820s to the 1840s. The

denomination's participation in reform political conventions, its links with William Lyon

Mackenzie and his causes, along with the involvement of several "Children" in the Rebellion of

1837 will be examined in context. The events leading up to and including the Rebellion acted as a

catalyst for the radicalization of Willson's theology of government; by the mid-1830s, the

attenuated apocalypticism of his earlier writings emerged full-force in an explosion of alternately

foreboding and triumphant visions that presaged the collapse of the present order to make way for

the millennial kingdom. By the 1840s, however, Willson's radical zeal had diminished. He put his

trust in Robert Baldwin's moderate approach to reform, and regained his faith in Britain's

providential role.

    *   *   *   *   *   *

In one of his earliest published writings, The Rights of Christ according to the principles

and doctrines of the Children of Peace (1815) to which was appended an address to the crown of

England, David Willson puts forth his somewhat ambivalent theory on Britain's providential

mission. Written in the context of war, and as "false accusations" were being circulated against the

community, by the Quakers and others, Willson calls upon his accusers to "repent of their iniquity"

and asks the authorities to treat them with fairness as loyal subjects of Britain, for whom they

"both labour[ed] and suffer[ed] reproach with joy."[6] Writing with humility, as "the least among thy

subjects in the sight of men," Willson declares that God is peace, and that in peace, he created the

world and also the "very ground on which [England] standest, and which yields up thy support."

He then states that he is writing according to the "wisdom of God which I have received respecting

thy nation and kingdom in the earth." Having established his authority, rooted in the godly

simplicity of the divinely-called yeoman farmer, he asks Britain to consider how the Lord has allowed it to become great, reminding them that its enemies were right then attempting to overthrow its kingdom. In the process, Willson drew upon a sense of history that Britons and many colonists would have shared. Indeed, Linda Colley has argued that Britons of the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries were encouraged to believe that God watched over them with extra care: they were his chosen people on a mission to defend the gains of the Reformation against Roman Catholic tyranny and the excesses of radical Dissent.[7] To date, their righteousness had been rewarded. In the following passage, however, he suggests that such fortunes could easily be reversed. In alternately supplicating and threatening tones he states that God has the power "to curse a nation for injustice done to one man" just as he has "the power to bless the same for kindness and justice" done to the least of his people, "of which I am one...."[8]

This early example of his writing sketches out several themes which Willson revisits time and again over the next twenty-odd years; moreover, it underscores not only the potentially radical implications of his brand of Dissent, but also his sense of his own prophetic role. Claiming direct revelation, Willson condescends to the British crown and reverses the hierarchical assumptions of establishmentarianism by informing England of God's impression of its position. Moreover, he suggests that Britain's continued good favour depended upon a truly pious but tolerant attitude towards himself, and a desire to protect popular liberties. Just as God has given to Britain, so could it take away, particularly if it ignored the individual in general, but the lowliest individual in particular.

The Children of Peace shared with other radical Dissenters a world-view that was premised on the belief in the primacy of the individual's relationship with God, and on the insistence that the legitimacy of civil government should be measured by the yardstick of truth and virtue. In this scheme of things, there was no disjunction between the ends and means of civil government. Morally suspicious means could never contribute to the desired end of the common

good, because corrupt intentions and actions were evidence of inexorable sinfulness which spread like a cancer through the body politic. The virtuous were called upon to resist sin in all of its forms, with the knowledge that God would inevitably punish the transgressors if they persisted in their erroneous ways.

But what separated the Davidites from other Dissenters, radicals in particular, was their belief that while truth and virtue had to be embodied in government, they transcended any particular form or system. The Commonwealthmen of the 1770s, and indeed most Non-conformists of a latter day spoke out vehemently against the marriage of Church and state. An established church was emphatically not the proper foundation of government. Rather, it was the "bloated, arrogant instrument of state control." As such, the Commonwealthmen espoused the voluntarist model of government. Church and state were to be separated, and while monarchy was "sometimes praised," more often it was "merely tolerated": the hope of England's future lay in the "representative nature of the House of Commons."[9] In contrast, David Willson placed his hopes for Upper Canada's and Britain's future in an idealized establishment, led by a wise and virtuous Patriot King whose responsibility it was to ensure that government and society were ruled by egalitarian principles, and that the liberty of individuals was protected. This was the source of all manner of desired reforms, including the abolition of the Clergy Reserves, and responsible government. The radical potential of Willson's vision lay in his impossible expectations of civil government; if the virtue of kings, priests and administrators failed, and if government showed too many signs of sin and corruption, God's chastising hand would smite those who attempted to deceive the people in his name.

It is difficult to isolate the component parts of Willson's religiously-based political views due to the fact that he did not always write in a systematic fashion. As for what constituted virtue and truth, it is instructive to review Willson's attempts to answer this question by referring to what happened in their absence. Willson believed that an ideal church of Christ would be purged of

"human craft and society craft" which was like a "hidden snare, wherein the unwatchful are taken, and their bodies made servants to honour those that sit above them in what is called the house of the Lord." In such a situation, the property of these individuals, as well as their persons "becometh tributary to feed the priest, fatten his offspring, and other officers pertaining to the church."[10] In common with many other of his Dissenting brethren, Willson believed that the hireling priest was the very image of vice, and the arrogant root of corruption at the heart of the establishment. As long as priests were made into "hired servants... serv[ing] the world for wages," the church and government would remain sinful and unreformed. Hireling priests could not be trusted for several reasons. First of all, they professed humility, "but practic[ed] not her precept." Their real pleasure lay with the "deluding and alluring daughters of an unreformed world" whom they embraced in their homes, in secret places, and in the street, "rid[ing] with them in gaudy apparel." They had become worldly and proud, foresaking God's everlasting covenant—the gospel of eternal truth— and were "found with unlawful rights and pleasures, like so many mariners with a band of harlots." In short, hireling priests were invariably hypocrites who preached a false humility while participating in the pleasures of an unreformed world. Characteristically for the time, this sin is construed in sexual terms. Willson's equation of priests' sins with the evils of fornication underscored the gravity of the situation: their pride and desire for wealth were rooted in the most profound lusts of the flesh, and had led to the worst kind of sacrilege against Christ's everlasting covenant. This covenant gave rise to a new dispensation that was given its fullest expression during the Apostolic era when Christ's disciples lived in communal poverty with the sole purpose of preaching salvation to all people. Covetous hireling priests—those who believed in tithing more than true Christianity—were sullied not only by their pride and rapacity, but also by their association with the "most ancient churches in Christendom, and those that have persecuted others unto death for the privileges they now enjoy." Priests, as successors of "those who stained their hands with blood" were closely linked to the "Romish" legacy of many of the present-day

Protestant churches.[11] To recapitulate, because priests in the employ of the state lacked virtue, the common good was not being served. In attacking the established church as corrupt—both in its past legacy and its present tendency – Willson also challenged the legitimacy of the civil government to which it was inextricably bound.

Willson believed that the pleasure that one took in worldly things was inversely proportional to one's godliness or virtue. "God possesses the hearts of those that love him; if he hath redeemed us from vain and transitory enjoyments he possesses the whole mind" and guides human actions. But just as God would feed the hungry and those who longed for his comfort, so would he conceal from those "that are exalted in the world and sin." Willson writes:

> Like a man waiting for the judgments of God to be overthrown by his power in a future day, there he stands...exhibiting ...what the world has engraven upon his heart. One says a thousand pounds a year of this world's goods, and the things of time; we pass a little farther and read twice the sum on another; another tells us great education, he has been to school with men, and he is worthy of a title; and the next corner we see Bishop written in the forehead of a man, with his arm leaning on the crown of England... [T]he king's head is lower than his, he teaches at court, and reveals the will of God on the Sabbath, and I believe him to be as far from being a redeemer as a bullock is from being cheese...

Willson's criticisms of priests, of the nobility, of educated gentlemen, indeed of the very structure of ancien regime society are based on the view that the lust for power corrupts, and that it leads to religious hypocrisy and tyranny. In Willson's eyes, worldly priests lacked the spiritual legitimacy that would make their leadership authoritative because they had foregone the opportunity to be tested by the chastising hand of experience, in favour of externals. Hirelings made the fatal mistake of privileging man-made doctrines and formal learning over a direct, personal and even mystical relationship with God. As a result, they threatened to lead the entire flock astray, and to incur God's wrath against the system they presumed to represent. As long as priests lacked "experience in the cause" of faith, they would persist in flattering and justifying one another, oblivious to the fact that "they did not know the way." Through their greed, and singular disregard for the truth, they would continue to "impose on the world, afflict the poor...bear the orphan's bread

away, and leave the widow to mourn without her due." Willson asks: "How far are these from

being the salvation of the world, that wounds the heart and leaves the mind to bleed, passing

forward with the spoils of the poor?"[12]

The hireling's lack of true spiritual authority was bound up in a larger critique of class.

But prior to disestablishment, religious profession and class were not entirely separable. It would

not be an over-simplification to say that in Willson's mind the socially and politically entitled-- the

"gentry" as he called them – made up a large class of the spiritually disenfranchised. His insistence

that priests should be the poor servants of the earth served a dual purpose. First of all, priests

would be stripped of the corrupting influences of worldliness and pride, which when combined with

a real experience of faith would give them spiritual legitimacy (virtue) and the power to save souls.

Secondly, priests would be on par with the mass of the population, and this would exercise a

beneficial, levelling effect on society, civil government and religious institutions. This was one

means by which the Children of Peace attempted to reverse the hierarchical assumptions of ancien

regime life: the exalted were to be humbled. Similar to Eugenio Biagini's plebeian liberals of the

Gladstone era, the Davidite Dissenters "exercised the classically Weberian function of

'compensating' for the social and political disadvantages which characterized the mass of the

poor."[13]

Despite all of his criticisms of priests, Willson believed that they had a crucial role to play

within the establishmentarian system of government as long as they were guided by truth and virtue

as opposed to worldly interest. Willson had faith in the power of truth to "make peace on earth and

bring the distant city near." He believed that kings and counsels would one day give way to God's

love, vengeance and truth.[14] This brings us to Willson's peculiar conceptualization of government:

just as one might hold a parent responsible for a child's actions, he placed the burden of good

government squarely on the shoulders of the "church." By "church" Willson did not mean any one

particular denomination, but rather the larger body of believers that constituted the one, universal

Christian church. Indeed, he doubted the fitness of some of the "ancient churches" to either save

souls or govern the land because of the fact that they were marred by past attempts to persecute

Christian brothers and sisters who differed from their narrow view of the faith. And often,

Dissenting churches were no better. Willson's ideal church would be made up of "free-agent[s] in

well-doing, that the best talents of the nation should be selected into one body, to govern the people

and enlighten the unimproved mind." Christians of different denominations would cooperate in

charity and love; they would become a plural manifestation of that one great "body or principle."[15]

As long as the church was corrupt and unreformed, so would government be. When the church

was purified, good government would be the happy result. Whether that government was

monarchical or republican was of secondary importance. According to Willson, equality, justice

and brotherly love were not limited to any one form of government. The following quote from

Willson's Impressions of the Mind (1835) further elucidates these points.

> Government doth not consist in form or system, any more than true religion doth in
> ceremony – nevertheless, religion hath a form, and government system. The error of
> government lieth not in form, nor religion in church discipline. As one of these systems is
> not without the other, it is impossible to do justice to either of them without quoting to both
> these operating systems. Our Crowns and Congress, and their subordinate adherents, are
> the offspring of the churches - where the church is out of order, the government cannot be
> good. I acknowledge that priests ought to be at the helm of government, but not at the
> head of interest. It should be the interest of the priest to keep the nations at peace, and the
> flocks reconciled one to another. But the present acting church system is, one above
> another, and who shall be at the head-end of things in a religious capacity, and whose
> members shall govern the state? The national churches have given great dissatisfaction in
> this capacity to the sister churches - her dissenters; so are things in Europe but not in
> America. There have been many dissentions from the church of Rome, and some
> improvement, but the principles of superiority are still remaining in the bosom of the
> various branches of the Christian church, and here lie the pillars of bad government, and
> many there are that build theron. [sic] A republic is a dissention from a monarchical
> government, but the desire for wealth and power is still remaining in the republic of the
> United States, and these are the principles of home destruction every where. Equality is the
> principle of the greatest glory in the world; the proceeds are justice to the whole earth. I
> am content with a monarchical government, but not with unequal interests and power. If a
> man's mind is a little redeemed from the love of wealth and power, which are the proceeds
> of these lower kingdoms, love and fellowship would abound.[16]

Passages such as these are problematical for the modern-day historian for they do not respect the traditional distinctions that separate monarchism and republicanism. To Willson, the crux of the matter lay not in the external forms of civil governance, but in the motive forces of any given government. Truth and justice were not inherent to any particular system, rather, they transcended external forms with often surprising results: monarchical government could be the guarantor of equality, while republicanism could be corrupted by the desire for wealth and power. This passage is made all the more difficult for those accustomed to interpreting political movements in the North Atlantic world through the dichotomy of "court" or "country" ideologies. Representatives of the court view were proponents of a highly centralized government, led by the king and his appointed secretaries and officials, and complemented by a narrowly-defined established Church to assist the state in maintaining social stability; when push came to shove, individual liberties would be sacrificed for the common good. Representatives of the country view were suspicious of centralized authority and wanted to check the power of the king and the royal administration by means of an independent Parliament. Monarchs and the centralized state were viewed suspiciously; it was believed that centralized power was inherently corrupting, and that it would lead to tyranny and oppression.[17] The "court" ideology found its highest expression in late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century Britain, while the "country" ideology was taken to its logical extreme in American republicanism, particularly after the demise of the Federalist option in 1800. Where does Willson's monarchical democracy fit in?

In his idealized scheme of government, Willson combines the "court" impulse to structure government around the figure of the monarch, and to maintain the unity of the Church-state connection, with the "country" impetus toward less centralized control, greater equality and individual liberty, and a critique of the corrupting tendencies of worldly power. Hence the seemingly contradictory term "monarchical republicanism." But because good government directly depended upon a godly church and virtuous priests, the monarch did not bear the brunt of Willson's

criticisms; rather, the clerical representatives of the established church were blamed for an abuse of wealth and power that led to scandal and inequality. Perhaps one of the reasons why Willson treated the king more leniently was due to his belief that a monarch could pattern himself on the "wisest of kings, Christ Jesus" and on the precedent set by King David in Israel.[18] Interestingly, Willson's conceptualization of the kingly role strongly resembles mid-eighteenth-century notions of the Patriot King. JCD Clark argues that Bolingbroke's Patriot King was constructed as a means of building up an alliance of dissident Whigs and Tories in 1740s and 50s England, and that it assisted in the transmutation of the idea of the indefeasible right of kings. It was a "conveniently unspecific aspiration" which placed hopes of national regeneration in the rise to power of a highly idealized prince whose rights were not indefeasible or divine. Bolingbroke believed that national laws were sanctioned by God, but that he did not favour a specific type of government. Moreover, God was envisioned not as an arbitrary monarch, but as one whose infinite powers were limited by infinite wisdom. Similarly, the Patriot King would be motivated more by duty than privilege. He would unite Britons by subduing all parties in the interest of the common good. Morally unimpeachable, he would be the nation's paterfamilias.[19]

Clark argues that the ideal of the Patriot King contributed to mid-to-late eighteenth century radical thought, via the movement of the Whigs into opposition in the early 1760s. As the Hanover-Stuart rivalry faded, radicals translated the indefeasible, hereditary right of kings into a legacy for all individuals. Thomas Paine expressed it best as the "indefeasible hereditary Rights of Man." As such, both the defenders and opponents of establishmentarianism sought intellectual recourse in what had originally been the divine right of kings.[20] As is suggested by the following examples, David Willson's political theology bears the imprint of these ideological transitions, and combines the Whig-Tory ideal of the Patriot King with Paine's sense that popular rights had been given divine sanction.

In <u>Moral and Religious Precepts, Church Ordinances, and the Principles of Civil Government</u>, published in 1836, David Willson sketches out his ideas on the nature of just government. Civil government, as an ordinance of the church must be concerned with the administration of justice and equity in an "unreformed and unenlightened world." It must rule in Christ's name, "from the throne, to the lowest station in existence, that every soul should have cause to rejoice" in the peace that resulted from just government. In particular, "the poor and ignorant should be peculiar objects of the king's favour, or his servant's administering government, that their talents may be increased, their necessities cared for, and that thereby they may have a heart-known cause to love God and bless the king." Although it would appear that the church-state was invested with the lion's share of power and authority, a more thorough reading of Willson's writing demonstrates that monarchical or state authority depended upon the consent of the governed, and on the ability of kings and administering men to protect individual liberties, including freedom of conscience, and the right of individuals to attain positions of power within church and state based on merit. Willson believed that wise "children" regardless of social station should rebuke worldly priests, and by "the same gospel privilege be full at liberty to draw out the errors of a prince...and lay them before the throne for the mediation of his councils, as the best means of winning his subjects to his love.... As the good master delighteth in the improvement of his scholars, so should the king in [his] subjects...." Clearly, the king's power was to flow from his humble wisdom, and from his ability to rule justly, according to egalitarian, Christian principles. In theory, the leadership of a wise king would lead to a smooth-running theocratic utopia; the people's loyalty to their monarch would only increase in proportion to the love they were shown. In reality, the power of the monarch was necessarily reduced by the dictates of individual conscience. Willson reminded the monarch that his title was "empty" and his crown [was] of no value" were it not for the people whose "sweat is the oil of both church and state institutions."[21] Willson's ideal monarch would be at best first among equals.

As long as the king and his councils were merciful and open to receiving wisdom from the "ends of the world" and from the "least of their servants," with the pure intent of "being vigilant in the righteous cause ... [of] the well-being of Church and State," the king would begin to know the hearts of his "depending subjects," and they would become acquainted with "the mind of their king." The king could choose to be either a "tender-hearted prince, or a speculating monarch who feasts himself, his counsels, and his favorite priests, in the sweat of the poor, and laborious classes in life." But the message was clear: the people would not countenance oppressive monarchs whose corruption made a mockery of the gospel, or even direct revelation. If a king was found to be in opposition to gospel dictates, and oppressive of Christian liberty the people would publicize his errors.[22]

Willson's conceptualization of the relationship between the wise king and his people tapped into the larger tradition of political radicalism based on the experience of religious Dissent. James Bradley argues that Non-conformist supporters of the patriot cause during the American Revolution articulated their radicalism with reference to Dissenting theology (and polity). In terms of the power of the state, the accent was placed not on the divinely sanctioned authority of the magistrate, but on his God-given responsibility to rule justly and fairly. Ultimate social authority was rooted in the individual's relationship to God via Scripture, and as a result, Christian rulers were bound by an authority greater than themselves to be true to the gospel, and to protect liberty of conscience upon which public virtue was based. The sanctity of popular rights was buttressed by Locke's natural rights theory: the "actuating principle" of England's Constitution was based on natural human rights. The rights to life, liberty, property and freedom of conscience were God-given, and self-evident. Power originated with the people and governments ruled only with the consent of the governed. Laws and leaders were sinful insofar as they infringed upon individuals' natural and Scripturally-based rights; and if oppression was deemed to be sinful, then submission to unjust laws and tyranny only compounded the error.[23]

Both Albert Schrauwers and John McIntyre have grappled with the seeming contradictions of Willson's dual support of the monarchy, and of his radically egalitarian principles. Schrauwers has suggested that because the continued existence of the Children of Peace depended upon community loyalty, David Willson phrased his egalitarian views and Dissenting prophecies "within the hegemonic discourse of a colonial government" – that is, within the parameters set by a constitutional monarchy. Moreover, his "support" of the monarchy only served to mask his true intention of placing himself at the head of the new millennial kingdom.[24] While it is true that Willson had an exalted idea of his own role as prophetic leader in such a kingdom, it is inaccurate to suggest that he supported the monarchy and the Church-state connection for mainly pragmatic reasons. In this case, McIntyre's assessment is more accurate. He asserts that Willson's support of the monarchical system of government was based on his desire to follow Old Testament models of faith and government. As such, monarchy was preferred because it was premised on divine decree and best exemplified by the rule of King David. Moreover, McIntyre traces Willson's support of the British monarchy, particularly in the context of the mid-1830s, to Britain's recent efforts to reform its constitution to allow for greater liberty and a wider circulation of "just principles." More intriguingly, McIntyre argues that Willson's view of the king as the "champion of liberty in opposition to an oppressive Parliament" harkened back to similar notions expressed by reform-minded Americans in the years leading up to the American Revolution. Upper Canadians could demand their traditional rights as British subjects without abolishing the monarchy and the ties that bound the people to the motherland.[25]

Keeping these things in mind, it is instructive to review the content of David Willson's 1834 publication "A Friend to Britain." Similar to Willson's earlier work, The Rights of Christ, it discusses Britain's providential role in terms that are both threatening and laudatory. Predictably, Willson lashes out against the clergy as having no Scriptural foundation, and against the ancient churches of Rome, Scotland and England which had produced "a hostile reign over the consciences

of men." Most direly, these churches had stood in the way of personal improvement when "the time of repentance is at hand." Willson believed that the millennium was yet to come, but that when it did come, Britain would play a particularly important role in leading the world to salvation. But before Britain could take up its mantle, before that "great day of restitution" when peace would reign, the "high places" were destined to fall. Willson writes:

> Britain will become as a saviour to the world...and crown her offspring with peace. She has conquered her deepest foes, the clergy. She has got the helm in her hand; she is steering a right course for a happy kingdom in this world....There will be great tribulation before the coming of these days, such as has not been or ever will be again. There is that born into the world that will become the pillars of the millennium, and the sons of Britain will build upon them. Truth establishes justice, justice mercy, and mercy love, and the forgiveness of sin....The day cometh that no government shall boast over Britain.[26]

Perhaps, as John McIntyre has suggested, while writing this piece, Willson felt buoyed by the progress of Constitutional reform in England. The Test and Corporation Acts had been repealed, and thus, those who stood in the way of the reign of truth and justice in the world— the clergy— had been put in their place. Moreover, the Reform Bill of 1832 suggested that Britain was "steering a right course...in this world" but with the view that the work was not yet complete: there would be a great tribulation before Willson's egalitarian vision would come to fruition.

Before the links between the Children of Peace and Radical reform are explored, it is necessary to briefly comment on the gendered elements of Willson's political theology, a subject discussed in greater detail in the subsequent chapter. The most current model that Canadian historians have for understanding the links between gender and politics in Upper Canada has been put forth by Cecilia Morgan in Public Men and Virtuous Women: The Gendered Languages of Religion and Politics in Upper Canada, 1791-1850. Morgan's central assertion is that participants in Upper Canadian politics: "relied heavily on the notion of 'true manhood' to validate and legitimate claims to political power, while using concepts of woman and the feminine to undermine their opponents."[27] In contrast, Willson's criticisms of the government and his notions of reform lacked these specific gender connotations. Although he equated the worldliness and corruption of

the hireling priest with the sin of concupiscence, committed in secret with "the alluring daughters of an unreformed world," neither clergy nor leaders in government were criticized for being effeminate. Nor did Willson consider concepts of woman and the feminine to be inherently sinful or inferior. Additionally, Willson did not validate his own claims to prophetic and political leadership by underscoring his "true manhood." Quite the contrary: questions of manliness were ignored, while the central gendered icon of the community's political theology was a lowly woman, chosen to build God's temple both for her humility and superior piety. As chapter three will more thoroughly demonstrate, the woman as temple-builder was intimately linked to Willson's vision of social and political inversion, in which the humble would be exalted and the exalted humbled.

*   *   *   *   *   *

Willson's theological and political speculations were not articulated in a vacuum, and had he and his co-religionists not actively participated in Upper Canadian politics, one might dismiss them as quaint and esoteric. Although the historical record is by nature fragmentary, there is strong evidence of Davidites' politicization beginning in the late 1820s, and its close links to the Radical reform option in the 1830s. Indeed, several of the younger members of the community participated in the Rebellion of 1837, much to David Willson's chagrin, but perhaps not to his surprise. Both Albert Schrauwers and John McIntyre have discussed the denomination's political involvement; as such, the narrative of events that will be presented here is not entirely new. Nonetheless, it is important to briefly review several facts in order to demonstrate how Willson's brand of Dissent was actually translated into political action.

Although David Willson had published many books and tracts by the mid-1830s, one cannot be sure how far they had been distributed; publication alone could not guarantee that his works were read, even by members of his own community. That is why the several articles and

letters pertaining to or written by Willson and his followers, which appeared in William Lyon Mackenzie's Colonial Advocate and later The Constitution are so important: such journals were a vehicle for the publicization of Davidite views. These articles are valuable not only for what they tell us about the group's activities and political opinions, but also for what they say indirectly about the relationship between the Children of Peace and Mackenzie as Radical reform leader, and member of the Assembly for the constituency comprising East Gwillimbury. Mackenzie drew upon the support of the Children of Peace in order to advance his particular vision of how the Constitution should operate; in the process, he endorsed several of Willson's assumptions and conclusions regarding the affinities between political egalitarianism and religious righteousness.

The first public record of Mackenzie's relationship with the Children of Peace appeared in the September 18th edition of the Colonial Advocate. Mackenzie begins his article entitled "A Visit to the Village and Chapel of the Children of Peace" with a long preamble on the virtues of religious toleration, and on the evils of establishment churches which are not based on the Apostolic model of Christianity. He then mentions that Davidites had recently "become conspicuous (even to our legislature) less by the peculiarity of their doctrines (for they have no written creed) than for their outward form of their worship which is very splendid." The article chronicles Mackenzie's visit to Hope where he stayed with Enos Dennis for two nights. It also contains favourable descriptions of the town and of its industrious inhabitants. The author suggests that the Children of Peace are a living testament to the direct relationship between the "intelligence, virtue and morality" of a district and its opposition to "fanaticism, bigotry, superstition, [and] intolerance."[28]

In the following years, through the pages of Mackenzie's newspapers, the reading public would become well acquainted with the actions of the Children of Peace, and their essential political and religious beliefs. Mackenzie recognized the group's ability to stir up controversy, and he took several opportunities to criticize opposition to both religious Dissent and

disestablishmentarianism by juxtaposing the supposed virtue and simplicity of the Children of

Peace with the bigotry and intolerance of the governing elites. Sometimes, he would allow David

Willson's sermons to speak for themselves. This was the case in an article that appeared in his

paper on October 16, 1828. Mackenzie's response to many recent disputes "in the last House of

Assembly concerning the tenets of this religious society" was to "give place to an authentic copy of

a sermon delivered on a late occasion by their ...principal teacher...." In the sermon, based on Job

11:14, Willson spoke out against religious and social distinctions as human inventions, stating that

God did not distinguish between "the King and the Beggar, the great and the small...men in office

or out of it," regarding salvation. The world was in a state of sorrow and pleading not because of

the forgiveness of sins, but "because the poor sow, and the rich reap, because the lower classes

bear all the burden that Jesus bore...."[29]

Such excerpts served the dual purpose of vindicating the denomination's virtue in the face

of persecution, and of bolstering Mackenzie's own arguments in support of constitutional reform.

Indeed, during the late 1820s there began a period of intense sectarian debate in Upper Canada

caused by Strachan's accusations against the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the overblown

claims of his Ecclesiastical Chart. In the spring of 1828, a Select Committee of the Reform

Assembly forwarded an address to the King, and adopted a report that refuted Strachan's claims to

Anglican numerical supremacy in the colony, defended the loyalty and integrity of Methodist

preachers, and expressed the people's desire to dismantle the established church and transfer Clergy

Reserves funds to advance education and internal improvements. At the same time, a group of

reformers banned together as the "York Central Committee" and secured 8,000 signatures to a

petition in protest against the Church of England's claims to established status; it was delivered via

George Ryerson to Joseph Hume, a radical member of the British parliament who was sympathetic

to the reform cause in the colonies.[30] Viewed in this context, the publication of Willson's sermon

that called for the levelling of social and religious distinctions was an expressly political act.

Early in 1831, in the columns of his paper, Mackenzie rushed to defend the Children of

Peace from Solicitor General Hagerman's attacks on the Children of Peace, uttered in the context

of a debate on the Marriage Bill, tabled by the Reform Assembly with the intent of expanding the

list of clergy eligible to legally perform marriages. The Bill made provisions for denominations

such as the Methodists to celebrate marriages, but the rights of other groups such as the Children

of Peace remained open to question. Such groups were constrained to have their marriages

solemnized after the fact by an approved clergyman or a justice of the peace; if they were not, the

marriages were deemed invalid under the law. As a result, children of such unions were

categorized as illegitimate which jeopardized their rights of inheritance. Mackenzie quoted

Hagerman as saying that he Children of Peace were "not the inheritors of God's word, and not

entitled to the privileges of [C]hristians." Moreover, Hagerman recoiled at the idea of giving the

right to perform marriages "to every ignorant person, who, having addressed a number of people at

Ancaster, Port Hope, or *some other place*, may please to call himself a preacher!" Mackenzie

chided the Lieutenant Governor's legal adviser for using his position to "wantonly ... indulge

himself" and regretted the use of such language "concerning any religious denomination in the

colony, more especially concerning a quiet and unoffending sect like the Children of Peace."[31]

Such an example demonstrates how religion was by nature political in the context of ancien regime

Upper Canada: in the eyes of Family Compact members, extending the ability to perform

marriages to Dissenters such as the Children of Peace was tantamount to placing their doctrines on

the same level as Anglicanism, and thereby to giving into the forces of religious and social

disorder. It also demonstrates Mackenzie's positive approbation of the denomination, and his

willingness to use his association with them to dramatic political effect.

But Mackenzie's association with the Children of Peace was not limited to questions of

religious privilege. By the late 1820s, the Reformer became one of the most bitter opponents of the

Welland Canal Company; he feared the effect of granting large subscriptions and loans to a

company that was so closely allied with the executive government. Suspecting that such arrangements would only add to the "overgrown influence of the crown" and fearful of increasing public debt, Mackenzie insisted that the company not be eligible for government loans. By the 1830s, an increasing number of reformers began to oppose the Canal, fearing that it would allow American farmers to benefit at their Canadian counterparts' expense. Farmers urged the government to improve the quality of roads and bridges as the best means of facilitating their ability to transport their produce to market. On February 19, 1831, the Children of Peace, led by George Hollingshead, presented a petition to Mackenzie in the House of Assembly, before the passage of the Canal Loan Bill. Speaking for "common people and cultivators", it complained that the government was ignoring the wishes of the people in spending public funds to support the Welland. Although delicately phrased, the petition charged the government with taxing the people while not representing their concerns. The problem was that the "rule of the present gentlemen of the age" in questions of politics and religion was based on "interest." It called on the government to use the people's money wisely: this meant forcing those who profited from the canal to pay for improvements to it.[32] Such an example demonstrates how the Children of Peace, as a Dissenting religious community, wedded their political and economic concerns with those more metaphysical in nature: Mackenzie's brand of radical Reform was attractive to them, because it operated on multiple levels in attempting to address the problem of Constitutional reform.

John McIntyre has argued that in the early 1830s, Davidites became divided in their support of Mackenzie's brand of reform. He asserts that the crisis began in the summer and fall of 1831, when Mackenzie began to solicit the support of his constituents for grievance petitions against the actions of the conservative-dominated Legislative Assembly, which established a civil list guaranteeing salary payments to certain colonial officials. Despite British government promises to allow the Assembly more power over customs revenues, Mackenzie and other reformers were incensed at this assault on Assembly prerogatives. When Mackenzie used his

newspaper to vitriolically attack the Assembly and its willingness to be used as a tool of a "mean and mercenary" Executive, it voted to expel him and call a by-election. Mackenzie and the Children of Peace had joined forces in the past based on a shared opposition to government abuses, but now, Willson began to reconsider his support of the fiery reformer, fearing his volatile tendencies. The documents suggest that some members of the Children of Peace did not share Willson's caution; they began to challenge his leadership of the community over the question of political involvement. Although the elders eventually reaffirmed their commitment to Willson, this would not be the last time that political questions would challenge group stability. In the context of Mackenzie's repeated expulsions from and reelections to the Assembly in early 1832, Willson urged his followers to be cautious and to abstain from political controversy. But Willson's reticence did not prevent him from contributing religious discourses, dealing with several of his favourite themes, to the <u>Colonial Advocate</u>. These sermons, along with a public statement issued by Willson in November of 1833 hint at the reasons for his ambivalence with regard to Mackenzie: it was not so much the radical reform message that troubled him, but its medium. In "To the Public" he announced, "We will take our part in providing just men to parliament, and influential men may turn aside from our gates.... [W]e will receive no courting from electioneering parties." In Willson's view, "just men" were those who had cleansed their minds in order to see things clearly and exercise "right judgment" in the world. Only those who were motivated by such purity of heart and mind would be capable of legislating policies productive of social peace. It was already abundantly clear that government elites fell far short of this goal, but Mackenzie's recent actions suggested that even a reformer, sound of policy, could sin if he pursued the "vain thought of his own imagination."[33] As was mentioned previously, to Willson, morally suspicious means did not justify the end of the common good; it is possible that he viewed Mackenzie's vociferous <u>ad hominem</u> attacks on members of the government as evidence of an unclean mind. This led him to proceed cautiously, but not so cautiously as to abstain from continued reform agitation.

After Mackenzie returned from England, he began to lose his faith in the British Constitution's ability to cure colonial ills. Instead, the best solution to the province's political problems was cheap, elective, representative government on the democratic model which would allow the people to control the public purse. In February of 1834, he allied with a group of more radical reformers in York and environs to organize a general convention of delegates. On March 13, nominated candidates pledged their commitment to Mackenzie's new plan. In the following weeks and months, radical reformers held meetings around the province to hash out the details of their new political agenda.[34]

It was in the context of this renewed agitation that Mackenzie published an account of a Reform convention that took place on February 27, 1834 at York. That afternoon, a "grand procession left the York Hotel for the Old King's Bench Court House" led by the Children of Peace and their band. "The Standard bearers carried two flags... a black one with white border, and 'the constitution' inscribed in silver, and a sky blue one, with an amber border, motto 'Peace and Justice,' in gold, shaded." At a packed court house, with standards "suspended over the tribune," a song was sung which lamented the state of political affairs in the colony and the abuse of the Constitution at the hands of the colonial oligarchy. It suggested that this oligarchy had been able to hide its wicked deeds from a reform-friendly King William IV, and it placed hope in the ability of this patriot king to right the colony's political wrongs. What follows are two of the song's most pertinent verses:

> We truly wish King William knew
> One half the mischief that ye do.
> He'd send Lord Goderich o'er to you
> And he would make their numbers few
> That break our Constitution....

> And for a Parliament we'll try
> That's just and true, not prone to lie.
> Then with their prayers we will comply
> And stand for 'William' till we die

And for our Constitution.

The song was likely written by David Willson. His exasperation with the current state of political affairs was what still allied him with Mackenzie and his group. Willson continued to believe that reform was possible under the British Constitution through the combined efforts of the people and their Patriot King. But his views echoed those of reform-minded Americans on the eve of the Revolution who appealed to the King and the constitutional rights of British subjects versus the abuses of Parliament and corrupt local officials. Mackenzie himself ascertained as much in his commentary on the convention which David Willson addressed. He noted that "wicked governments" required established churches "to give a religious appearance to their knavery," and that these in turn required the "support of established armies." Together these led to "heavy taxation," mass ignorance and poverty, and "bloated wealth...to the few. Predictably, "violence and revolution [would] close the hateful scene."[35]

Over the next couple of years, politics in the province became increasingly polarized as Mackenzie continued to lead the charge for sweeping constitutional change against a consistently intransigent local oligarchy. The arrival of Lieutenant-Governor Sir Francis Bond Head early in 1836 only made things worse: his imperious demeanor and the bad faith that he showed to Robert Baldwin and the other Reform appointees to the Executive Council angered an already disgruntled reform majority in the Assembly. As reformers throughout Upper Canada mobilized their "formidable political organizations into a line of battle," discovery of the fact that previous Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Colborne had established 57 new Anglican rectories sent them into a fury that temporarily united the party's discordant elements. In despair over this state of affairs, the Assembly voted to stop the supplies. Head dissolved the legislature and used dubious tactics to ensure a conservative election victory.[36]

On July 4, 1836 Mackenzie initiated the publication of a new newspaper entitled The Constitution through which he engaged in bitter attacks against the government. The year before,

Willson had published several books and tracts in an attempt to clarify his religious and political views for the benefit of his followers; these included Letters to the Jews, Impressions of the Mind, The Acting Principles of Life, and A Friend to Britain. Willson contributed distillations of his theories to The Constitution; in the January 18, 1837 edition of the paper, there also appeared a letter that reported on a political meeting held at Hope and the resolutions adopted by the community regarding the Clergy Reserves, and other contentious issues. This suggested that as of the beginning of 1837, relations between the Children of Peace and Mackenzie were friendly. In July of that year, news of Lord John Russell's Ten Resolutions and the subsequent intensification of Patriote agitation and organization spurred Mackenzie to directly attack British authority; he and several other radicals met in Toronto and adopted a Declaration consciously modelled on the American Declaration of Independence. It called upon Upper Canadian reformers to join efforts with Papineau's Patriotes, and select delegates to form a Congress for the redress of colonial grievances.[37]

By the summer of 1837, Willson experienced a profound disillusionment with the state of affairs in the colony that caused him to have several apocalyptic visions which expressed his complete loss of faith in Britain's providential role. Willson's reading of the social and political signs of the times convinced him that he was living in the latter days in which "the poor shall bleed for them and be plain in battle, and their little ones shall Cry without a father." Crowns would be unable to pay their debts, lawlessness would increase, and "Governments [would] be broken as a vessel that none can repair. "The people" would rise up in rage versus unjust dominion, and princes would be "disregarded as the poor hath been and none shall pity their Cries."[38] These latter days were the end of the old order. It would be judged and found wanting before the establishment of a millennium based on egalitarian principles and Divine rule. In several of his visions, Willson intimates that God has chosen him as a kind of messiah, or new Moses who would lead Israel, God's true Church out of captivity and darkness and into a spiritual promised land [39]

Although these passages refer to some of Willson's favourite themes, what is different

about them is their urgency, and their sense that events in the province had reached a political point

of no return; the machinery of government had been so badly damaged by scheming priests and

faithless princes that the only alternative was to discard the old Constitution. Only an act of God

could put an end to corruption in church and state, redress popular grievances, and establish a

kingdom based on justice, mercy and egalitarianism. At about the same time that radical reformers

such as Mackenzie had lost faith in the British Constitution, spurring them onto rebellion, Willson

turned his back on the mother country. He prophesied that Britain would "fail in the Conquest,"

and her "Crown of Glory" would be taken away. Heeding the cries of the poor and the afflicted,

the Lord would strip England of "her" dependencies. Her "towers and castles" would fail, "her

hunting grounds... would be turned into ramparts and her own sword [would] pierce her breast."[40]

Willson's fusion of monarchy and democracy could only work if the established church

was put in is place, making way for a truly Christian establishment based on spiritual, not financial

ties to the state. Moreover, it depended on the just rule of kings and their colonial representatives.

As long as they were spiritually enlightened, they would prostrate themselves to the interests of

their people, becoming sentinels of democracy. The events of 1836-7 suggested that neither Britain

nor its colonial appointees were interested or indeed capable of taking on such a mantle. To

Willson, the only solution lay in the rejection of Britain and the old order, and in the establishment

of his utopian vision by means of cosmic cataclysm.

Although Willson himself did not join Mackenzie's rebellion, a number of the younger

members of the Children of Peace did. According to Charles Doan's statement to the authorities,

on November 27, 1837 Samuel Lount met with twenty-two young Davidites in Hope and

persuaded twelve or thirteen of them to join him in taking the capital by convincing them that war

had broken out in Lower Canada, that Martial Law would likely be proclaimed in the upper province and that hundreds of men including Receiver General Peter Robinson and Solicitor General John Beverley Robinson would meet them at Montgomery's tavern on Yonge Street. The participation of members of the Children of Peace in the Rebellion has been chronicled elsewhere. For the purposes of this chapter, it is enough to say that while some of these members may have been duped into following Lount's lead, it was Willson's training and members' experience as Dissenters that contributed to this particular, rebellious outcome. Willson had been an outspoken critic of the political and religious establishment for many years, during which time he and other Davidites had developed close ties to Mackenzie and his brand of reform. Furthermore, in a departure from Quaker pacifism, he had encouraged his followers' to engage in military drills, going so far as to teach women how to use firearms and to rationalize their use for defensive purposes, or in the context of a just national war.[41] As such, it is no surprise that Willson's general advice to avoid political controversy fell on deaf ears in this case.

Davidite links to political reform in the 1840s have also been treated elsewhere. Although Willson continued to be critical of the governing elites, he and his followers once again put their faith in the possibility of reforming the British Constitution, "the cause we had silently forsaken." This time, they rallied around moderate reformer Robert Baldwin, who in 1841 became politically active in the Fourth Riding of York, which comprised East Gwillimbury. During this decade, Willson corresponded regularly with Baldwin, advising him on the strength of Reform sympathies in the riding, and arranging pro-Reform rallies, dinners and services in the newly renamed village of Sharon. Willson and others set their sights on achieving responsible government within the context of the British connection. At the same time however, the Children of Peace became divided along generational lines separating the community's founders from its younger members. The latter

began to challenge both Willson's authority over the group, and its commitment to the cooperative system of village life. This, coupled with the achievement of Davidites' political objective of responsible government served to dissolve its unity, rendering it increasingly peripheral to the political and religious life of the province.[42]

'In Light of New Testament Principles': The Disciples of Christ and Clear Grit Reform

Canadian political historians have typically glossed over the connections between Dissenting Protestantism and the rise of the Clear Grit Reform movement in the late 1840s and early 1850s. For example, although JMS Careless asserts that it was a radical movement whose voluntarism was rooted in the evangelical drive to free the church from worldly interests and the state from religious privilege, he refrains from exploring the relationship between this brand of Dissent and radical liberalism. And although Gordon Stewart isolates the Clear Grits as an example of a genuine "country" ideology based on localistic, anti-statist notions of agrarian democracy and directed toward severing the remaining links between Church and state, he steers clear of any discussion of religion's role in assisting in the formulation of the movement's goals. Perhaps part of the reason for this is that historians have traditionally viewed the Clear Grits as historical losers, "footnotes to an unedifying story of religious, cultural, and sectional strife" whose early radicalism fell victim to the forces of political accommodation that resulted in the rise of the Liberal-Conservatives in 1854.[43]

This part of the chapter will not attempt a general discussion of the relationship between Protestant Dissent and Clear Grit Reform. Rather, it will focus on the links between Clear Grittism and the Disciples of Christ, from the late 1840s to the mid-1850s, during which time Baldwinite Reform began to be transformed into Brownite Liberalism. Just as the Canadian Courant was the exponent of Unitarian politics in early 1830s Lower Canada, James Lesslie's Examiner can be viewed as the political voice of liberal, progressive Discipleship in Toronto and in

parts west. Indeed, both Lesslie and Thomas Chalmers Scott maintained close ties with Disciples west of Toronto, and helped to organize meetings in the city where brothers Kilgour and Anderson were given the opportunity to evangelize.[44] Lesslie's support of the Clear-Grit program was rooted in a view of Christianity that was decidedly democratic, and in a political vision defined by the experience of Protestant Dissent within the North American colonial context. In a culture in which church and state remained united, and in which political privileges were still accorded on the basis of wealth and status, radical liberal Disciples fought fire with fire: they sought to replace the 'outmoded' and 'oppressive' remnants of establishmentarianism and aristocratic privilege with a new and purified compact between democratic Christianity and civil government. Lesslie's vision was ultimately unsuccessful: in the wake of the Reform movement's fragmentation, the rise of the Liberal-Conservatives, and the less-than-palatable settlement of the Clergy Reserves issue in 1854, he resigned his journalistic charge in disgust at the failure of principle in Canadian political life.

In 1852, James Beaty, pillar of the more conservative Disciple congregation in Toronto began publication of the moderate Liberal Leader. From 1854 onward, it supported the Hincksite Liberal coalition with the Conservatives, and as such, it defended the aims of the Liberal-Conservative ministry in opposition to Brown's Globe and the forces of Reform. Beaty's vision was moderately liberal and pragmatic, but above all, it was rooted in the belief that religion and politics should never mix. Unlike the Examiner, the Leader was put forth as an insistently secular, political journal and its success signalled the demise of the Disciples' counter-cultural relevance, at least as far as metropolitan politics were concerned. In the agricultural regions of Disciple strength west of Toronto, however, it is likely that the denomination's members continued to contribute to the resilience of Clear Grittism as a minority political voice within the union in the years leading up to Confederation.

From 1844, when James Lesslie took over the publication of the Examiner, he became engaged in the battle for responsible government and the voluntary principle, as the paper's

masthead suggested. He believed it to be his most profound personal duty to expose the machinations of a corrupt, profligate and irresponsible executive, to free humanity from the "bondage of ignorance and error," to emancipate religion "from the leprosy of State alliances, and ...[to]... deliver... all religious communities from the evils of State patronage or controul." [sic][45] As long as Reformers were engaged in the struggle to achieve responsible government—the key that would open the door to constitutional change—they remained united. Thus, until the end of the decade, divisions within the Reform party remained latent. Once responsible government was achieved with the passing of the Rebellion Losses Bill in 1849, the Reform group began to fragment due to the following reasons. The issue of annexation gave new life to arguments regarding the nature and necessity of constitutional change, as several Reformers on the left began to consider the political merits of American-style democracy. In addition, left-wing Reformers became impatient with the LaFontaine-Baldwin's ministry's prevarication on a number of long-desired reforms such as the abolition of the Clergy Reserves and seigniorial tenure. Furthermore, the end of the decade witnessed the rise of revolutionary ferment on the European continent, and the continuation of Chartist agitation in Britain, both of which may have encouraged the resurgence of a Canadian radicalism that had lain dormant since 1837-38.[46]

In order to appreciate the links between the Disciples of Christ and the left-wing of the Reform movement, a narrative of events leading to the formation of the Clear Grit party must be provided. Its platform must also be discussed in greater detail. Late in 1849, a by-election was held in Third York that led to the victory of Peter Perry, a radical candidate with annexationist leanings. Perry had refused to cave into ministerial pressure to disavow his annexationist sentiments, and as such, he became a symbol of left-wing protest versus ministerial centralization and control. On the heels of this victory, a group of radicals gathered at the Toronto office of lawyer and journalist William McDougall with the desire of creating a platform for what the Examiner called the true "Reform and Progress Party." Included in this group were Charles

Lindsey, a young English radical with Chartist leanings and regular contributor to the Examiner; David Christie, a young and prosperous Scottish farmer with an ardent desire for radical retrenchment; and several other older Reformers including Peter Perry and Malcolm Cameron of Sarnia, a wealthy lumber merchant and the former Assistant Commissioner of Public Works in the Baldwin ministry. Over the next few months, the Clear Grit movement underwent significant growth, as several journals, including the Examiner rallied to the cause; William Lyon Mackenzie became a proponent of Clear Grit views in the press and William McDougall began publication of the North American as a Clear Grit reform organ.[47]

In March of 1850, left-wing Reformers won the Halton by-election. The Examiner interpreted this to be a "landmark of popular opinion.... In giving her verdict for Retrenchment and progressive Reform, Halton has but declared the general sentiment of the country." The Examiner called upon the administration to acknowledge this fact and to "give some assurance that they will carry out their pledges" and to "generously meet the expectations of the people." If they acted with justice, they would encounter no opposition from the Clear Grits who "have but made themselves the organ of the popular will." The Examiner believed that the message of the Halton victory was plain: the ministry had been called upon to "compass a comprehensive reduction in the public expenditure"; disclaim all "bigotted and insufferable toryism their organ has advocated for the last year"; move quickly to secularize the Clergy Reserves; and abolish the usury laws. Moreover, the Halton victory highlighted "the country's" demand for the adoption of the secret ballot; for the extension and equalization of representation; for the election of candidates for local offices; and for comprehensive legal reforms including the abolition of primogeniture. Despite a willingness to extend the ministry one final benefit of the doubt, the Examiner reproached the Executive for attempting to usurp the entire legislative function of government by opposing independent members's efforts to introduce legislation "admitted to be requisite." The Baldwin cabinet was criticized for its oligarchical tendencies and for impeding the "wheels of Legislation."[48]

Soon after the Halton by-election, Grit Reformers staged popular meetings at Markham and Brooklin with the purpose of drafting a radical program. The Grits called for elective institutions: all local officers such as Sherriffs, Registrars and Clerks of the Peace would be elected by the people, in addition to the upper house, and the office of chief Magistrate, the Governor of the colony. Universal male suffrage and vote by ballot were deemed to be the true principles on which elections should be conducted; mechanics and others were just as qualified to vote as land owners. As far as candidates for election were concerned, the Grits asserted that property qualifications should be abolished since what the country needed was not an aristocracy of wealth, but of the mind. Moreover, the platform included provisions for the abolition of the Clergy Reserves, and various other laws and institutions that smacked of ancien regime corruption and aristocratic privilege, including the Courts of Chancery and Common Pleas, primogeniture, and the usury laws. The Grits also articulated a commitment to free trade, direct taxation, and to reforms that would ensure ordinary landholders and mechanics easy access to inexpensive and simplified legal processes. In the ensuing months, Charles Clarke sought to expand upon the principles of this radical liberal platform by publishing a series of articles in McDougall's North American; this resulted in the addition of several new planks including an elective constitution, fixed biennial parliaments, representation by population, and colonial control of external affairs.[49]

Historians of Clear Grittism have asserted that the movement was inspired by the experience of colonists in Canada West, and by both American and British democratic models. The appeal to de-centralized, American-style institutions and practices was obvious. The British influence was perhaps less so, but the points of the People's Charter were discernible in the Clear Grit platform, along with the tenets of the Anti-Corn Law League. This is not surprising, considering the recent British pedigree of leading Clear Grits such as Charles Clarke. The Examiner also supported the Chartist movement and the continuation of reform efforts in Britain. But Clear Grittism did not spring fully formed from the minds of recent British immigrant leaders.

Rather, it had deep roots in the rural democratic traditions indigenous to Canada West, particularly in the areas north and west of Toronto. In these regions, settlers of both American and British provenance supported the Clear Grit drive to purify, simplify and reform the Constitution along egalitarian lines.[50]

The Examiner based the legitimacy of the Clear Grit program on claims that it alone preserved the original aims of the Reform movement intact, and on evidence that elements of the platform were supported by moderate British leaders. In commenting on the Clear Grit platform, Lesslie was anxious to counter the Globe's view that the group was an "extreme faction" of traitors, revolutionaries and annexationists. Thus, it harkened back to the 1834 Reform Assembly of Upper Canada when several "Grit" measures were tabled including provisions for a secret ballot, the equal distribution of intestate estates, and the secularization of the Clergy Reserves. At that time, the wishes of the people were thwarted "by the old ladies of the Legislative Council"; now, despite the fact that responsible government had been achieved, and regardless of overwhelming evidence of popular support for reform on the part of the Hamilton Reform Association, and the farmers who passed the resolutions at Markham, these liberal measures were yet to be passed. The blame was placed on Baldwin and the Reform leaders of Canada West, who prior to 1848 were "the avowed advocates of popular rights" but who changed their tune after obtaining the reins of power. Indeed, in the last few years, the province had been the scene of a "systematized attempt to Whiggify Canadian reform, by grafting upon the trunk a soulless finality – moderatism." The ministry's about-face on the Reserves and Rectory questions, despite the fact that Clear Grit opinion had until recently been indistinguishable from the views of all classes of reformers was particularly galling; Lesslie charged that the "new light discovered by the Ministry on these questions is probably but the glare of Vice Regal effulgence." When forced to address the Reserves and Rectory questions, the ministry evaded action and "declared [it] could only negotiate for the reinvestment of the lands with the Home Government," afterwhich, through Francis Hincks, it

"refuse[d] to admit of a resolution...of the Assembly whereby that negotiation could be made effectual." This was taken as an example of "treachery...and the blackest hypocrisy." The situation was exacerbated not only by the ministry's refusal to simplify the judicial mechanism, but by its insistence on creating the Court of Common Pleas, and on consolidating the power of the Court of Chancery which would increase the numbers of "useless" and "pestilant" functionaries with the power to swindle the public.[51]

The Examiner fended off criticisms that the Grit proposal to make the Legislative Council elective was a first step in the "annexation denouement" by arguing that this measure was introduced by the Whig cabinet in the present British parliament. And as for universal suffrage, the paper supported it, but argued that it should be applied gradually. Immediate franchise reform was necessary, particularly with regard to tenant farmers and merchants who rented their places of business; but eventually all men should obtain the vote. The success of universal manhood suffrage depended upon the general diffusion of intelligence throughout the community. But although "serious evils might arise from admitting, at once and without preparation, the *political slaves* in a community to the full franchises of freemen," the paper echoed Macaulay, the "eminent Whig statesman, essayist, and historian" who argued that the exercise of political rights fostered intellectual growth. Preventing individuals from exercising these rights was akin to creating a class of political slaves with no voice in the making of the laws by which they were governed. For the time being however, the Examiner was prepared to endorse an extension of the franchise to all householders as a temporary "approximation to justice" until the purer principle of universal manhood suffrage could be applied.[52]

At this moment, it would be useful to briefly consider the gendered implications of the Disciples of Christ's political theology. Similar to most political actors of the day, Disciple leaders assumed that women had no place in the public world of government. This view was derived from John Locke who argued that only property-holders could participate in the establishment of

governments. Since property-holders were by definition male, women were totally excluded from official, political debate.[53] Furthermore, explicit references by Disciples linking "concepts of woman and the feminine" – either negative or positive – to the political discourse are startlingly absent. This fact supports those critics of Cecilia Morgan who argue that in early-to-mid nineteenth-century Ontario, "gendered insults were hardly more than a few drops in a flood of primarily political abuse."[54] (Of course, I would add that this political abuse was often expressed in religious terms.) Additionally, it suggests that where the Disciples of Christ were concerned, men's public identity was not constructed with direct reference to women's necessary exclusion from the rights of citizenship, or to the "inferiority" of the feminine character.

In addition to the links between the Clear Grit program and both colonial and British radical liberal precedents, one thing is certain: the Examiner envisaged the platform as the legislative embodiment of the politics of genuine Christianity – that is, of the voluntarist politics of Dissent. Indeed, the paper demonstrated just how strongly Dissenting Protestantism and radical liberalism were allied. Similar to Eugenio Biagini's arguments about the nature of British popular Liberalism from 1860-1880, Dissenters were drawn to Clear Grit reform on the basis of a shared Puritan cultural heritage that fostered a strict moral sense in addition to radical political opposition against the forces of religious and political 'orthodoxy.'[55] In Canada West, disestablishment of the Clergy Reserves was viewed as the essential element to unite all Reformers on the basis of principle, "without which all political combinations are but a rope of sand." The Reserves were seen as the lynchpin of the ancien regime political and social order. They served to divide society into two classes: pitted against a virtuous, industrious, and truly Christian people was a small coterie of corrupt, dissipated, luxury-loving priests, aristocrats and place-seekers whose oppressive hold on political institutions threatened the very fibre of both public and private life. Amongst "the people", the producers of the colony's wealth, there was to be no class struggle, because they were united in support of a common interest versus privilege. Despite British and colonial reform

advances, and the rising tide of liberalism, the Examiner contended that the battle to dismantle the ancien regime was not over. The war between "the popular and the priestly power" had continued into the present age. The masses who had been "long crushed beneath the iron sway of the priesthood" were demanding deliverance from serfdom, while Priests were mobilizing to "hold the people in blind and infatuated subjection to their destructive power." What was worse, governments continued to act as accomplices to the "baleful influence" of priestcraft, keeping the people in ignorance. It was "imperative upon every friend of freedom and truth to mark its approach and to labour to avert the prostitution of such powers for such purposes."[56]

The Examiner suggested that politics in Canada West were divided along religious lines: with High Church tories and their fellow-travellers acting in defence of the ancien regime in opposition to a broader mass of Non-conformist Reformers. The latter hoped that the separation of the material and institutional links between Church and state would result in a more perfect, spiritualized union of Christianity and politics. Beginning in the summer of 1848, the paper published a series entitled "The Politics of Christianity." It sheds light on the intimate relationship between radical liberalism and Dissenting Protestantism. Furthermore, it provides a more nuanced approach to the question of disestablishment by suggesting how the creation of an outwardly "secular" state could lead to a more genuine Christianization of politics and society. The problem with established churches was that instead of defending the "rights and liberties of the oppressed and down trodden many" they have characteristically "stood by in silence whilst men in power selfishly spoiled the people – and instead of rebuking oppression, sided with the oppressors...." When an established church ignored Christ's command to "do unto others as ye would they should do unto you" and was an instrument for the perpetuation of social injustice, it abdicated all claims to political power and influence based on abject moral failure, regardless of recourse to the intellectual sophistry of the Apostolic Succession. Establishmentarianism was intimately linked with state mismanagement in the form of unwise or corrupt legislation, and its effects were

At the heart of this voluntaryist conception of the state was the belief in the ability of the individual to arrive at the correct religious and moral conclusions uncoerced. Despite the dogged persistence of ancien regime institutions, radical liberal Dissenters placed their confidence in the march of progress which linked together several assumptions regarding historical truth, Christianity and the rights of the individual. Protestantism and the printing press were credited with spurring a "mighty revolution" that had liberated the mind from the shackles of Romanism and ignorance. The result was scientific advance, the flourishing of the arts, the circulation of the Bible, the extension of education and the dissemination of knowledge—all of which increased both Christian zeal and liberty of conscience, and extended human comforts and refinements. Holy Writ was regarded "as the seed of all the moral changes which are destined to mark the advancement of society." Its few basic principles would create "wider and wider circles of of [sic] duty and responsibility, as intellect is cultivated, science grows, and human passions are restrained and purified."[59]

The dissemination of Reformation principles had led to an increase in the integrity and intelligence of the "people" to the extent that they were amply prepared to exercise the rights of political citizenship without the assistance of aristocratic and priestly mediators. A correct reading of Scripture led to the indisputable conclusion that social distinctions based on wealth and status were illegitimate and anti-Christian: the "first principles of Divine revelation" dictated that intelligence and virtue were the only prerequisites of political enfranchisement. Property qualifications for the franchise bore the taint of feudalism in addition to contradicting the spirit of Christianity. Furthermore, governments were bound by God to attract individuals with the highest possible talents and character. It was wrong to disregard such individuals "in deference to station, or wealth or party connexion." People were called upon to prefer "not merely the man in his position, but the highest attributes of man in those which are inferior"; in both a political and an individual sense, governments were to rule with an eye to those who were oppressed by inequities

in the distribution of power. In this way, Christian duty ensured that individuals, liberated from the constraints of the ancien regime would not plunge into a kind of social and political anomie. Individual freedom and social responsibility went hand in hand. Indeed, the Examiner contended that the best interests of society were served when all citizens were forced to struggle to attain true Christian virtue, and when they were given every opportunity to exercise their God-given intellectual and moral powers in the political arena. Both right ends and just means were dependent upon virtue of character, which in turn was conditional on the kind of faith that resulted from "frequent conflict, perpetual activity" and slow growth. Virtue was not to be trusted as such "until its muscles have been strained again and again in grappling with temptation." The result of this struggle, and not the blind assent to doctrine was the litmus test of human character.[60] In order for virtuous individuals to attain power in society they were to be encouraged to use and discipline their God-given talents, "ere they can reach the full stature of political manhood." The system that best fostered political citizenship and concern for the common weal was one based on de-centralized democracy. "By rapid strides," warned Lesslie,

> we are departing from...[the] practices of wisdom – substituting a system of centralization, which dispenses with individual care and responsibility, for those municipal and local arrangements which enlisted the best energies of the largest number of men – drawing, in a word, all authority to a focus, instead of diffusing it over as wide as possible a surface. Christianity has laid us an obligation upon men, to think for his fellow-man as well as for himself – to govern his own impulses with a view to the advantage of [others] – and so to pursue his own course...[in] life...[and] to strengthen instead of destroy, the sympathies implanted in him by...[God.][61]

Within such a system, the "machinery of the State" would be constructed "as to further that most valuable of all kinds of education, self-reliance and control – to check thought, to foster independence, and to implant and exercise a feeling of political responsibility." As such, political decentralization gave the maximum number of men the opportunity to exercise their talents, and to build Christian character, not through the narrow didacticism practiced within more centralized modes of governance, but by encouraging the exercise of political citizenship. Viewed in reverse,

dissenting Christianity fostered political decentralization by encouraging men to think and act for themselves not only in matters of personal faith, but also in matters of human governance. In the process, both the moral imperatives of democratic Christianity and its preferred forms were applied to the political realm.[62]

As one can see, liberal Disciples based their support of popular sovereignty, the rights of political citizenship, and de-centralized democracy not on natural rights philosophy but on a marriage of utilitarianism and Protestant Dissent. But it is difficult to distinguish just where utilitarian, liberal support of mass education ended and the Dissenting Christian conception of virtue and character began. Education was integral to the development of the individual and to the progress of society, but education itself was defined with reference to Dissenting alternatives to establishmentarian culture. Similarly, the State was viewed in radical liberal, utilitarian terms as "the organ for interpreting the mind of the people, in all matters touching the protection of life, liberty, and property." Governments would rule according to the will of the people and as such, they would seek support not as an end in itself, but as a means to the end of the common good. The common good was inextricably linked to Scriptural example: in the creation of laws to fix a standard of social morality, in punishing those who transgressed the law, and in settling differences between nations by diplomacy or war, the New Testament would be "consulted with profit" as an oracle to guide the State in the right path.[63]

Dissenting Christianity was fundamental to the creation of the Clear Grit mental universe, and from its official inception in 1850 to 1854, the Examiner contributed to the defence of radical reform based on its precepts and cultural referents. In June of 1851, Robert Baldwin resigned his co-premiership after a majority of Upper Canadian reformers supported William Lyon Mackenzie's motion to abolish the Court of Chancery, an institution that Baldwin had strengthened during his tenure in government. The rise of Clear Grit radicalism contributed to the eclipse of the Baldwin-LaFontaine government, and to the formation of a new ministry led by Francis Hincks in Canada

West, and AN Morin in Canada East. The Examiner applauded Baldwin's decision to resign based on the fact that the Reform leader had persisted in defending the Court of Chancery despite the obvious fact that it had little popular support. In a backward glance at Baldwin's life and career Lesslie revealed that he had been a pupil of John Strachan. Under his tutelage Baldwin likely imbibed High Church principles. Although his efforts on behalf of responsible government were laudable, political office had "fossilized [him] into stand still toryism." As a result, he was "disqualified to be the successful leader of a great progressive party, with high aspirations, and cherishing plans of comprehensive reform."[64]

Shortly thereafter, Hincks began to reconstruct the Reform cabinet when several prominent members followed Baldwin into retirement. He entered into a confidential agreement with the Clear Grit leadership to take two of their numbers, Malcolm Cameron and John Rolph into the cabinet in return for their pledge to set aside their more radical aims; Hincks hoped to absorb the radicals, while Grit leaders such as McDougall believed that this would eventually lead to a triumph of their principles. The Examiner initially supported the move but over the next couple of years, as it became evident that the government was not prepared to act boldly on questions pertaining to the separation of the church and state, it became increasingly critical of its failure to act on principle. In addition to demonstrating a disinclination to secularize the Clergy Reserves, the ministry passed the Ecclesiastical Corporations Bill which approved the incorporation of several religious foundations, colleges, hospitals and charities under clerical direction, most of which were located in Canada East. Moreover, the Supplementary School Bill for Upper Canada, passed in June of 1853 with a majority dependent on Lower Canadian votes further entrenched the legitimacy of and funding for separate schools, alongside non-sectarian public educational institutions.[65] The Examiner and Clear Grits in general greeted these actions with cynicism. They became increasingly convinced that moderate Hincksite liberals had courted the French in order to keep their positions in office and to engage in a series of personally lucrative but publicly costly

railway deals. In September of 1853, their suspicions of ministerial corruption were validated

when it was discovered that Hincks had used the Premiership to profit from railway debentures.

Except for Cameron and Rolph, who were viewed as sell-outs, the Clear Grits divested the ministry

of their support.

The result of the 1853 debacle was the creation of three broad reform groups: the

Hincksite moderate liberals, the Clear Grit radicals, and the liberals led by George Brown. The

latter supported a modified Grit program centring on the principle of "rep by pop," and a more

equitable redistribution of seats so as to account for the expansion of farming areas in the

traditionally radical western regions of Upper Canada. Brown was particularly vociferous in his

opposition to French Canadian "popery" and began to seek a new political combination based on

an alliance between western voluntaryist reformers, moderate conservatives and liberal Canadiens

so as to eliminate both radical and tory options in a drive to secure a progressive liberal

government.[66]

Prior to this turn of events, early in 1852, James Beaty, Toronto leather merchant and

pillar of the city's more conservative Disciples congregation, began publication of the Leader in

support of the Hincksite liberal ministry. Both this paper, and the Daily Leader first issued in July

of 1853, advocated a pragmatic approach to the governance of the colony: it was necessary that

religious and ethnic differences be submerged so that the perils of political deadlock would be

avoided. Expedient compromises on such questions were urged as the best means of ensuring both

the survival of core liberal principles and commercial progress. The prospecti of both papers

succinctly expressed this view. For example, the Leader was touted as a "strictly secular journal"

which would "not encroach on the domains of religion; but be guided by the conviction that with

questions of polemical theology and church government, it is not the province of political

newspapers to interfere."[67] The Daily Leader purported to be the first liberal daily journal ever

published in Upper Canada, and it linked its hopes for future success particularly to the need of

businessmen to be informed regularly "of those ever-changing circumstances which affect the commercial transactions of the world, and are of deep interest to every one engaged in trade."[68]

For its part, the Examiner was outraged at Beaty's contention that the country's political unity could only be secured if the press refrained from commenting on questions of ecclesiastical polity. The "past history and present assumptions of ecclesiastico-political power in Canada, and indeed, throughout the world" were a testament to the fallacy of the Leader's assumptions. As long as church and state were united, liberal political newspapers were obliged by duty to bring the question into public view so that liberty would triumph over oppression.[69] That an adherence to principle divided the colony along sectional lines was a lamentable, but nonetheless secondary consideration.

The session of 1854 brought events in the colony to a head. The ministry continued to stall on several major issues including the secularization of the Clergy Reserves. However, it now maintained that its reasons for stalling were due to pure principle. In 1853, the Representation Act was passed which increased the number of parliamentary representatives in both Canada East and West from 42 to 65, and which would be put into effect in the next election. As such, the Hincks-Morin ministry argued that the settlement of this and other issues should be deferred until a new, larger Assembly was elected. The Leader supported this position and argued that the ministry was "pledged to secularization" but that the entire matter would be decided by the people, many of whom had been recently "conferred an opportunity of exercising their newly acquired [voting] privileges." Precipitous action on the question would be a violation of the people's constitutional rights. Moreover, it charged reformers and reform journals such as the Globe and the Examiner with trying to destroy the ministry, an action which would split the liberal party, drive its leaders from power and make way for a tory ascendancy. Once in power, the tories would distribute the Reserves revenues among the sects, thus sundering the voluntaryist principle. In particular, Brown's overtures to conservative moderates were looked upon with grave suspicion; he and most

other reform opponents of the ministry were viewed as unprincipled factionalists driven by the desire to attain the emoluments of office.[70]

James Lesslie's reaction to the administration's repeated failure to secularize the Clergy Reserves, despite the removal of "every impediment to decisive action" was one of exasperation and disgust: in June of 1854, he announced his resignation as editor of the Examiner and offered it up for sale on favourable terms to any individual or company who would "sustain the great principles it has always advocated." He argued that the Reserves question was "inseparably identified" with Canada's social and religious interests, and that had it not been for his sense of personal duty, he would have resigned in 1851, when the Baldwin government faltered on this issue. He feared entering upon a new political campaign which would likely result in "renewed treachery and defeat" and he lamented the fact that all governments were not "regulated by considerations of principle but by motives of policy, interest and ambition." He charged Hincks, Rolph, Cameron and the entire ministry with a loss of nerve and heart; they had ignored the voice of the people, and instead had joined forces with the opponents of secularization including Lord Elgin, the British Government, the English Bishops, and "the Romish Priesthood in league with the Anglican Clergy in the Provinces." The ministry was charged with stalling in order to allow State Religion to get a permanent foothold in the next election.[71]

The Hincks-Morin ministry came under fire from all quarters, not only for its continued delays on policy issues, but also for its links to railway scandal, corruption and waste. Motions of censure were passed 42 to 29, and the government fell. Parliament was dissolved and an election was called, the results of which were ambiguous. In Canada East, the ministry maintained a slim majority. In Canada West, Hincks supporters were balanced out by an equal number of conservatives; the rest of the western section was made up of Clear Grit seceders and reform voluntaryists. This did not bode well for the ministry, particularly since secularization began to transcend party lines, with a number of conservative members supporting the move. Brown and

several other reformers were willing to make common cause with these members versus the ministry. In September of 1854, Francis Hincks was defeated, but not before frustrating Brown's plans. What resulted was something completely different: the MacNab-Morin ministry which was backed up by a combination of the Morin majority in Canada East, and by the tories, conservatives and Hincksite liberals of Canada West. The emergence of this liberal-conservative coalition, committed to solving the reserves and seigneuries questions signalled the demise of the old reform party and the rise of a conservative mainstream focused on economic growth and preferring compromise on issues that threatened to erupt in sectional rancour.[72]

The Clergy Reserves Bill of 1854 made provisions for the allocation of reserves funds to municipalities, but voluntarists and secularizationists did not bask in the glow of ultimate victory. The legislation guaranteed for life the stipends of existing beneficiaries, and it allowed these lifetime claims to be commuted into capital investments applicable to various denominations. Sixty-four percent of the commuted stipends were applied to the Church of England. The bill was a compromise measure that attempted to balance tory claims to state endowment for religion with voluntaryist insistence that the reserves be used for non-sectarian purposes.[73]

Despite previous support of the voluntarist principle, and of Hincks' pre-election promises for total secularization of the reserves, The Leader backed the new ministry's settlement of the vexed question, and in the process became the champion of the Liberal-Conservative ministerial cause. The Examiner, in its death throes, remained wedded to its original principles, and expressed its abhorrence of the ignominious triumph of the Church and State party. It went down fighting. In 1855, it was bought out by the Globe. Brown's paper eventually absorbed the North American as well. But in becoming the sole journalistic proponent of the reform cause, it jettisoned the more radical doctrines of these two papers; Brown's Free Kirk affiliations and his irascible temperament ensured the continued association of Grit reform with religious and ethnic animosities.[74]   Lesslie's retirement, combined with Beaty's rise to journalistic prominence meant

the loss of a sympathetic political advocate not only for Toronto-based liberal Disciples, but also for a majority of Campbellites living in regions west of the city. The latter's brand of conservative Discipleship was a minority view in the province, despite its increasing influence in the circles of metropolitan political power. Beaty echoed the concerns of Hincksite liberals, and later of liberal-conservatives for the ultimate goal of colonial economic progress; the best way to achieve this goal was to dispense with pure voluntarism in brokering compromise between Catholic and Protestant, francophone and anglophone. But in contrast to Hincks' Unitarian-inspired sense of civil liberty, Beaty's political vision contained the seeds of true secularization. Regardless of the particulars of the 1854 Reserves settlement, it advocated the complete separation of religious ideals from political life; demands on the part of religious communities would be met on an <u>ad hoc</u> basis, but the government itself would do its best to ensure that it did not stir up controversy by a stubborn adherence to religious principle. Beaty's motivations in this regard are not entirely clear. Perhaps his actions sprang from a more conservative conception of the faith that reinforced a view that religion was a private matter. Alternatively, it is possible that Beaty had ceased to define himself according to Disciple views. Due to an absence of documents, one cannot be sure. In any case, Beaty's rise to prominence and Lesslie's decline suggests that on the level of political elites, Discipleship had been co-opted by the liberal-conservative mainstream. At the grassroots level, however, the mass of Disciples west of Toronto likely persevered in their support of Clear Grittism under the leadership of George Brown.

<u>Conclusion</u>

From the 1820s to the 1850s, Canadians were engaged in continuous debate as to how the British Constitution should be applied to best serve the interests of the common good in the colonial context. This chapter has examined two approaches to the question. Both were rooted in expressions of Protestant Dissent that challenged the <u>ancien regime</u> notion that the common good

depended upon the sacrifice of the individual to a state monopolized by members of a tory/High Church oligarchy. In Upper Canada, Dissent provided the impetus for the creation of a popular, Reform opposition to elite rule in an age when religion and politics were linked together in common cause. Although denominationally diverse, the Reform movement drew upon Dissent's defense of the Reformation legacy of liberty of conscience, sola scriptura, and popular mysticism in articulating the view that virtue and merit, as opposed to status, wealth and higher education, constituted the only just basis of political power. Both the monarchical republicanism of the Children of Peace, and the radical liberalism of the Disciples of Christ were rooted in Dissent's common culture.

Willson's and the Davidites' defense of Reformation values resulted in an alternative to state-churchism that sought to preserve the monarchical form of government intact, while changing its mode of operation to reflect a republican interpretation of political virtue. As it stood, the worldliness and superiority of priests, combined with their neglect of personal religion made them unfit to occupy the helm of government, for they could only perpetuate the inequities of power and wealth inherent in a corrupt establishment. In the best of all possible worlds, "priests," or godly individuals of various denominations, would join forces with a benevolent "Patriot King" to steer the ship of state with the best interests of the poor, ignorant and oppressed in mind. If this plan succeeded, social, political, and religious levelling would be the result. If it failed, God would seek justice for the people via more apocalyptic methods, punishing Britain for straying from Willson's interpretation of its providential role.

In contrast to the view that "sects" are essentially apolitical and otherworldly, during the 1820s and 30s, Willson and the Children of Peace developed close ties with William Lyon Mackenzie and the Reform movement. Mackenzie drew upon the support of the Children of Peace to advance his increasingly radical views, and he endorsed Willson's sense that the goal of political egalitarianism depended upon religious virtue. Once again, this underscores the close relationship

between religion and politics, and more particularly between heterodox Dissent and Upper Canadian Reform during the period in question.

Even more than the Children of Peace, liberal Discipleship wielded a greater political and cultural influence than its numbers would have warranted. Within the context of a waning ancien regime, it assisted in the creation of a radical, liberal democratic alternative to both state-churchism and those proponents of "moderatism" who preferred pragmatism over principle, or whose sense of justice dictated that their commitment to voluntaryism be limited. Moreover, it constituted a defense of locally-based expressions of the popular will versus increasing centralization. A study of the Examiner has illuminated the connections between what on face value may appear to be the more marginal expressions of Protestant Dissent and Clear Grittism—the Upper Canadian variant of radical liberalism. Moreover, it has shown how the voluntarist drive to separate Church and state, and to secularize the reserves did not necessarily mean that religion would have to be severed from politics. On the contrary: separation of a temporal church from the state would result in a spiritualization of political life for the good of both individual and society.

Endnotes

[1]See for example Careless, Union of the Canadas, chapter 10.

[2]This is particularly the case with Allan Greer's work. See Greer, "1837-38," and Allan Greer and Ian Radforth, Colonial Leviathan: State Formation in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992).

[3]See SF Wise, God's Peculiar Peoples: Essays on Political Culture in Nineteenth-Century Canada, ed. AB McKillop and Paul Romney (Ottawa: Carleton University Press, 1993). In arguing for the resilience of Upper Canadian political conservatism, Wise examines the role of Anglican, Presbyterian and Roman Catholic Churches in creating a united Tory alliance versus the forces of Protestant Dissent. But Dissent's contributions to Reform are not discussed. This is also the case with Gerald M Craig's Upper Canada: The Formative Years 1784-1841 (London: McClelland & Stewart, 1963).

[4]See David Mills, The Idea of Loyalty in Upper Canada, 1784-1850 (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988), 11.

[5]See Peter N Miller, Defining the Common Good: Empire, Religion and Philosophy in Eighteenth-Century Britain (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 16-17, 312; James E Bradley, Religion, Revolution, and English Radicalism: Nonconformity in Eighteenth-Century Politics and Society (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 417-19; Eugenio Biagini, Liberty, Retrenchment and Reform: Popular Liberalism in the Age of Gladstone, 1860-1880 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 15. Miller argues that Rationalist Dissenters in particular contributed to the reformulation of the "common good" by reverting to theological and metaphysical arguments that rooted the security of the community in the equality, and the right of individuals to think for themselves, and to determine the proper course of action. The Protestant right of liberty of conscience, and the right of private judgment of Scripture mirrored their demand for the individual right to think and judge all issues freely. Bradley enlarges the scope of radical thought to include all Non-conformists, and even Low Anglicans and secularists. Biagini's work demonstrates the continued resilience of the relationship between Protestant Dissent and movements for reform. The shared Puritan cultural background of the various Non-conformist churches contributed to the struggle to achieve both individual and community self-determination against the forces of "religious and political orthodoxy." He argues that "as in the days of Cromwell, radical Dissent constituted not simply a popular religion, but also an example of democracy, a whole frame of mind...which stood up against the aristocratic institutions and values of the day." As such, popular liberalism was in many ways a political projection of Dissent.

[6]David Willson, The Rights of Christ according to the Principles and Doctrines of the Children of Peace (Philadelphia: n.p., 1815), 4-5.

[7]Linda Colley, Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 19-20.

[8]Willson, The Rights of Christ, 25-26.

[9]Bradley, 417-18.

[10] David Willson, Moral and Religious Precepts, Church Ordinances, and the Principles of Civil Government (Toronto: WJ Coates, 1836), 8-9.

[11]David Willson, Impressions of the Mind, 16-17, 36-7, 273-6.

[12]Ibid., 63-65, 74, 106-109. Interestingly, true experience was understood in class terms: it would "simplify their manners...clothe them with the mantles of the ignorant, and like a day-labourer they would be earning bread for their household."

[13]Biagini, 34.

[14]Willson, Impressions of the Mind, 101-4

[15] Willson, Moral and Religious Precepts, 12.

[16]Willson, Impressions of the Mind, 257.

[17]Stewart, 11-12.

[18]Willson, Moral and Religious Precepts, 13-16; Willson, Impressions of the Mind, 278-9.

[19]Clark, English Society, 179-82.

[20]Ibid., 185.

[21]Willson, Moral and Religious Precepts, 9-10; 13.

[22]Ibid., 13-16.

[23]Bradley, 417, 135-56.

[24]Schrauwers, 141-52.

[25]McIntyre, 153-6.

[26]David Willson, "A Friend to Britain," Impressions of the Mind, 277.

[27]Morgan, 57.

[28]Colonial Advocate, 18 September 1828.

[29]Ibid., 16 October 1828.

[30]Craig, 174-5.

[31]McIntyre, 158; Colonial Advocate, 27 January 1831.

[32]Craig, 159-60; Colonial Advocate, 17 March 1831.

[33]McIntyre, 161-3; Colonial Advocate, 17 October 1833.

[34]Craig, 219.

[35]Colonial Advocate, 27 February 1834.

[36]Craig, 232-6.

[37]The Constitution, 18 January 1837; Craig, 244-5.

[38]The Davidites, ACC.21044. A - Vol 1 - Bound Volume of Writings of David Willson, 21 July, 1837 - 23 February 1838, Untitled entry, August 19, 1837.

[39]Ibid., 12 October 1837.

[40]Ibid., 20 December 1837.

[41]"B5, Statement of Charles Doan, 15 December 1837," Colin Read and Ronald J Stagg eds., The Rebellion of 1837 in Upper Canada: A Collection of Documents (Ottawa: The Champlain Society/Carleton University Press, 1985).; McIntyre, 171.

[42]Ibid., 174-6.

[43]See Careless, Union of the Canadas, chapter 10; Stewart, 63-64; Dewar, 235.

[44] In a special report from the "evangelical trail," Witness of Truth noted that in June of 1850, three or four meetings were held in Toronto, two of which were held at the Mechanics' Institute which was secured "through the exertions of Brethren Lesslie and Scott." (Toronto, Victoria University Archives (VUA), Witness of Truth, June 1850.

[45]Examiner, 25 February 1852.

[46]Careless, Union of the Canadas, 166-7.

[47]Ibid., 166-8.

[48] Examiner, 13 March 1850.

[49]Ibid., 20 March 1850; Careless, Union of the Canadas, 169-9.

[50]Careless, Union of the Canadas, 168; Dewar, 234.

[51]Examiner, 20 March 1850; 27 March 1850.

[52]Ibid., 27 March 1850.

[53] Mary Beth Norton, Founding Mothers and Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society (Alfred A Knopf, 1996), 290-2.

[54]Carol Wilton, Book Review of Cecilia Morgan's Public Men and Virtuous Women: The Gendered Languages of Religion and Politics in Upper Canada, 1791-1850, in The Canadian Historical Review, 79, no. 1 (March 1998): 131-133.

[55]Biagini, 15.

[56]Examiner, 23 July 1851;16 July 1851.

[57]Ibid., 2 August 1848; 18 October 1848.

[58]Ibid., 20 September 1848; 16 August 1848.

[59]Witness of Truth, January 1848; Examiner, 1 November 1848.

[60]Examiner, 25 October 1848.

[61]Ibid., 1 November 1848.

[62]Ibid., 25 October 1848.

[63]Ibid., 8 November 1848.

[64]Ibid., 6 March 1850.

[65]Careless, Union of the Canadas, 172-83.

[66]Ibid., 186-187.

[67]Examiner, 4 February 1852.

[68]Daily Leader, 11 July 1853.

[69]Examiner, 4 February 1852.

[70] Daily Leader, 10 December 1853; 3 March 1854.

[71]Examiner, 14 June 1854; 23 June 1854.

[72]Careless, Union of the Canadas, 191-3.

[73] Alan Wilson, The Clergy Reserves of Upper Canada (Ottawa: The Canadian Historical Association Booklets, no. 23, 1969), 21.

[74]JMS Careless, "Mid-Victorian Liberalism," 222-5.

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Chapter III: Dissenting Perspectives on Faith, Family and Community, 1800-60:
The Society of Friends and the Children of Peace

Introduction

The relationship between gender, family and religion in Upper Canada is not well-understood. Indeed, it is only of late that serious, scholarly interest has been given to this multi-faceted subject, most historians preferring either to ignore religion altogether, or to study later periods in Canadian history for which documentation is more readily available. Moreover, Canadian historians, unlike their counterparts in the United States and Britain, have generally limited their study to "mainstream" denominations, a fact which reflects the novelty of the discipline, and perhaps the assumption that these groups embody the central elements of colonial experience.[1] In discussing aspects of gender, family, economy and belief in the lives of Upper Canadian Quakers and Children of Peace, this chapter creates a more accurate sense of the colony's cultural diversity. It also demonstrates how Dissent was multivocal: in addition to influencing political debate within the colony, it was integral to the construction of gender roles that differed significantly from those espoused by the larger culture.

This is particularly the case with separate spheres ideology which was essentially irrelevant to the lives of Quaker and Davidite women and men during the first forty years of the nineteenth century. Domesticity did not function as a defining discourse – a goal to which all colonial women aspired – as Jane Errington has suggested. Amongst both groups, faith was intimately bound up with communitarianism – a way of life in which individuals and families existed in symbiotic relation to the larger community. Quaker beliefs and practices created alternatives to traditional "peasant" family structures, which in North America, as elsewhere, were typically organized along patriarchal, authoritarian lines. Friends communities combined traditional land settlement patterns, and the privileging of the concerns of the many over the desires

of the few with patterns of child-rearing and gender relations that accentuated women's contribution to group cohesion. Because of Quakers' commitment to endogamy, parenthood was viewed as a sacred, public trust, a fact which bolstered both women's administrative and spiritual authority within their communities. At the same time, this emphasis on good parenting encouraged men to assume a nurturing role as both fathers and keepers of the faith. The result was that the distinctions between male and female roles were often blurrred. Moreover, it meant that Friends communities were comparatively less patriarchal than others of the time, though they too bore the imprint of women's traditional social subordination.

On the surface, gender relations amongst the Children of Peace seemed to be even more emphatically countercultural: women played a prominent, public role in the community's ritual life; furthermore, David Willson's political rhetoric drew upon images of feminine strength and spiritual superiority, while in several of his writings he bolstered claims to female independence before marriage, and to wives' authority over their husbands. Upon further examination, however, one finds that the effects of Willson's levelling theology were more apparent than real.[2] This was particularly the case by the 1830s when rising youth independence resulting from increasing market economic involvement challenged Davidite elders' ability to maintain the group's communitarian traditions. During this time, Willson used the special, fatherly relationship that he had cultivated with young Davidite maidens as a means of bolstering community cohesion in addition to his own role as Hope's great patriarch. By appealing to maidens' loyalty to him, love of their parents, and fear of the trials of adult womanhood, Willson sought to control the experience of courtship and marriage within the community, and thereby maintain its traditional moral economy. As both patriarch and prophet, Willson's charismatic leadership embodied, to a significant extent, the aspirations of the founding generation versus the young adults of the 1830s. The latter came of age not only during an era of political turmoil, but during a time when the structure of the family was experiencing a fundamental shift away from its traditional moorings, to

a more modern form that privileged the rights of individuals over the imperatives of the larger community. Central to this shift was the expression of youth independence through the experience of romantic love, and Willson and the elders' desperation at their increasing inability to reign it in.

In the first section, the establishment of traditional, subsistence-oriented Quaker communities in Upper Canada will be explored with direct reference to the ways in which religious values formed the basis of Friends' peculiar way of life, centred on the land. It will also discuss how Friends sought to protect their communities through the enforcement of the Discipline, noting which sins posed the greatest challenge to sect cohesion, to 1840. In the subsequent section, the efforts of the Children of Peace to maintain the traditional Quaker moral economy intact, while accommodating David Willson's prophetic mission will be discussed. Furthermore, the gap that developed between Willson's rhetoric of female equality and Davidite reality will be examined with particular reference to the generational tensions that developed over time, and that ultimately led to the demise of this Dissenting community. Although the two groups will be treated separately within the text of the chapter, the final section will offer concluding arguments for both sections.

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In chapter one, it was noted that most Quaker migrants settled in Upper Canada as a means of maintaining an alternative community, united in peaceful protest versus the dominant society, and based on ties of faith, family and mutual assistance. The economic crux of the rural Quaker way of life was subsistence farming: in older American settlements, a scarcity of new land compelled young men to leave Quaker communities in search of better opportunities. This rent the fabric of rural Quaker life, by shutting off its main source of growth. As a result, Quaker patriarchs settled large, extended families on contiguous land holdings in a process of chain

migration that essentially transplanted Friends' communities from Pennsylvania, Vermont, New York and New Jersey to the Upper Canadian frontier.

Quaker pioneer life in Upper Canada was organized similarly to other subsistence-oriented, "peasant" communities in Europe, New England and the American frontier.[3] In many parts of the United States and Upper Canada, families were organized along traditional, patriarchal lines: patriarchs settled their families on adjacent farms, and directly supervised production for inter-generational family economies. In such circumstances, individual desires were sacrificed for the greater good of the community, which was envisioned in organic terms. Moreover, the boundaries separating families from the larger Christian community were indistinct: meetinghouse and hearth were of equal value in nurturing individuals in the faith and were often interchangeable: families played a crucial religious role; social welfare was the purview of churches and families; and disciplinary cases served to regulate individual behaviour, by emphasizing obedience to authority over harmony and love.[4] As Edward Shorter has asserted, traditional families had "gaping holes in the shield of privacy" which allowed others beyond the nuclear family free access to the household.[5]

Frontier Quaker communities in Upper Canada adhered to many of the cultural standards dictated by economic subsistence. For example, until at least the 1810s, Yonge St.'s Quaker sons worked on their fathers' land, and applied any surplus labour to their own crops grown on a portion of this land, as a means of acquiring a stake for land acquisition in later life. Parents assisted in the creation of new households by providing sons with long-term land loans. When paid off, the incoming cash would be used to buy land for another brother, or to assist parents in their retirement. Under such a system, sons remained dependent to a great extent upon their fathers, at least until they could purchase their own land.[6] But in contrast to Mary Ryan's "Puritans," Friends' unique traditions, polity and testimonies assisted in constructing a qualitatively different settler experience. While it can be argued that both Puritan settlers to the western frontier, and Quaker

settlers to Upper Canada created communities based on the values of spiritual tribalism, the latter's peculiar emphasis on child nurture, in addition to its formal recognition of women's spiritual authority dislodged the traditional, subsistence-oriented family from its patriarchal moorings. On a prescriptive level, rather than emphasizing the coercive power of the pater familias over wife and children, Quakers exalted the role that good parents, but especially mothers played in lovingly guiding and correcting their children. Viewed as a model for Quaker citizenship, the ethic of the good parent was extended to the public realm: through the power of loving mothers and fathers, Quaker communities would grow in harmony.

The vision of parenthood as a sacred, public trust was intimately connected to women's administrative and spiritual authority within Quakerism. And this authority was buttressed by the economic conditions of pioneer farming which made the work of wives and mothers vital to family survival. The example of Upper Canadian Quakerism challenges Jane Errington's proposition that the Cult of True Womanhood, and in particular, separate spheres ideology was a "hegemonic" force in the colony from the early nineteenth-century onward. Although she asserts that the conditions of life for the vast majority of the colony's women mitigated against achieving domesticity, she suggests that most Upper Canadian women felt pressure to conform to its dictates. Moreover, the outside world increasingly judged them by the new standards. Although Quakers were not immune to external pressures, and despite the limitations they placed on women's authority, their vision of gender relations differed substantially from the ethic of separate spheres. By exalting the good parent, Quakerism proposed domesticity as a model for all people. And although the sexes were to follow prescribed roles, the Quaker ideal was less radically dichotomized, with the boundaries between public and private domains being indistinct.

In the following section, Quaker attitudes toward children and proper parenting will be explored. In addition, the gendered elements of Quaker religious and community experience will be discussed with reference to both the prescriptive literature, and to descriptive accounts, including

Friends disciplinary case files. The latter offers some insight into the efficacy of Quaker attempts at social control, which by the 1820s demonstrated increasing signs of fragility. Alongside the divisions caused by the Hicksite schism of 1828, Quaker communities had always had difficulty enforcing endogamy. As the years progressed, the problem became more pronounced, and most individuals who married out preferred to be disowned than to acknowledge their transgressions. The inflexibility of Quakerism's own testimonies were largely responsible for the situation: because it was not an evangelical faith, disowned individuals were not easily replaced. Nonetheless, members' increasing propensity to be lured by the temptations of the outside world, and to neglect Friends meetings were likely related to factors beyond the sect's direct control, including a reduction in geographical isolation, mobility, and the attractions of political agitation.

By the time of the American Revolution, and on the eve of Quaker migration to Upper Canada, the sect was aware of its declining numerical status: even in Pennsylvania, its traditional strong-hold, Quakers made up less than one-seventh of the colonial population. William J Frost suggests that fears of spiritual decline strengthened the sect's child-centred focus as a means of ensuring the preservation of the faith. The same end was served by coinciding attempts to retrench the Quaker discipline, which resulted in a less worldly, more insular and more conservative faith by the Revolution's end. Although Quakerism was guided more by a standard of behaviour – one designed to foster simplicity, self-restraint, usefulness and charity in opposition to unwieldy passions – than a set of theological principles, the sect's concern with child nurture was distinctly related to its ideas regarding sin and redemption. Unlike the Puritans who believed that Christ died for man's sins, justifying him while he remained at the core a depraved sinner, the Quakers believed that Christ died so that he could enter man's heart and justify him, in the present-day, by the Inward Light. The Light was God's call to repentance and a sign of His grace through which humans could attain perfection from sin. And whereas predestination underscored the Calvinist's

powerlessness in the face of God, Quakerism's insistence on individual free will in responding to the Inward Light left greater room for human agency in the cosmic order.[7]

Although both Quakers and Puritans were agreed as to man's fundamental worthlessness, the former maintained that infants were born innocent. The idea that infants were depraved was contrary to the Quaker idea of God's infinite love and justice. Nonetheless, the Fall of Man had a latent, but inevitable effect: after a period of innocence lasting from birth to age four to eight – years which coincided with the beginning of schooling – children were doomed to sin. Originally, the perception that young children were faultless inspired Quaker parents to treat their offspring with greater softness than their Puritan counterparts. Within American evangelical families, fears of damnation frequently inspired parents to attempt to crush any signs of self-assertion and independence in their children, beginning in the first few years of life.[8] Upper Canadian Methodists shared this legacy: children were naturally depraved, and loving parents were encouraged to break their wills.[9] Conversely, Quaker childrearing ideals were more moderate to begin with, and by the late eighteenth-century this tendency was strengthened by the widespread shift toward romanticism, and the sentimentalization of childhood.[10] Although parents were to be authoritative and vigilant in correcting their children, they preferred less radical methods than will-breaking: it was better to bend wills rather than break them. This was achieved by inculcating in children a sense of love and duty towards their parents, as suggested by the following excerpt from the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends, held at New York in 1816:

> And for those...younger mothers, whose 'precious offspring are rising like olive plants around their table,' much solicitude has been felt [and] many are the cares attending this stage of our pilgrimage, and very important its effects, both to the parents and the children: how necessary then to seek for that help which will enable us to possess our souls in patience, while by...restraining love we are labouring to subject the wayward passions of the tender...mind and to suppress the first buddings of evil. Thus we shall become instrumental in preparing the way of the Lord.... We have also believed, that if parents were careful to treat their children, as they advance to riper years, with prudent freedom, it would not only tend to strengthen the bonds of affection, but produce a confidence ... leading to open the heart to a beloved parent....[11]

This example sets out several themes regarding the importance of proper child nurture as a parental trust. The best advice for the raising of "precious offspring" was to be patient and loving, while keeping watch for the emergence of evil tendencies even during the prolonged period of Quaker infancy, and certainly during the "tender" years of childhood that followed. The best means of suppressing the "wayward passions" was to provide a positive example for children to emulate, and to make known the ways of the faith. In addition, a gentle parent's loving correction would assist in leading offspring along a godly path. The emphasis on godly parental example was related, in part, to the practice of receiving offspring of Quaker parents as "birthright Quakers." Unlike outsiders who had to prove their "convincement" of Quaker standards and beliefs, Quaker children were accepted by the meeting because their parents behaved upstandingly. It was assumed that a neglectful and indulgent upbringing might cause a child to deviate from the path of salvation, with the result that birthright membership for children came with a price: parents could be disowned if they disregarded their duties.[12] This sense of responsibility extended to children's growth to maturity during the teen years, and into the second decade of life. During this time, the delicate ministrations of parents would ideally strengthen the bonds of love within the family, to the extent that they would continue to possess their children's confidence. As a result, parents would be able to maintain their position of moral authority even as children became young adults.

Through the epistles produced in men's and women's sections of the Yearly Meetings in both Britain and America, the latter of which select Upper Canadian Quakers attended, one can get a sense of the advice Friends were encouraged to follow. Copies of epistles were carefully preserved, they were frequently circulated and read in meetings, and occasionally, particularly important excerpts were copied into Monthly Meeting records for Friends' edification. Although the epistles of the meetings of both sexes emphasize parenthood as a sacred trust, it was expected that Quaker men and women would approach the tasks of child nurture somewhat differently. Male Friends were encouraged to be obedient to the duty of "stirring up the pure mind" in others,

of pressing "the observance of those things which appear to be neglected" and of "persever[ing] in the way of peace" and in the "humble performance of solemn obligation" for "by this means alone can the parent, guardian, or the master, hope to discharge his important and awful truth to the lambs committed to his care, in the wilderness of this world."[13]

In contrast to fathers, whose direct responsibility seemed to increase as their children grew to maturity, Quaker mothers were acknowledged as having a more influential role to play in their children's early development. In their hands lay the primary responsibility of suppressing their children's "first buddings of Evil," and of protecting their innocent minds from "the enemy, who gilding his baits according to their opening capacities" progressively weans them from the pursuit of divine things. Because mothers were given the primary responsibility for child care during the most tender years of development, when sin made its first inroads in life, women's parenting task was more challenging than men's, despite the fact that duties were shared. In contrast to the more direct methods enjoined upon Quaker fathers, Quaker mothers were to be careful of the differences between benevolent influence and smothering love; between patience and laxity; and between firmness and authoritarianism. Through restraining love, prudent freedom, affectionate correction and self-restraint, mothers were to encourage habits of industriousness, kindness, meekness and wisdom in their children. More concretely, this would be accomplished by assiduous attention to Quaker codes of discipline. For example, children were to be dressed in plain clothing so as not to encourage the growth of vanity and pride. They would be taught to keep their anger in check, and to control their tongues. In more developed communities, where reading material was readily available, they would be prevented from reading fantastical stories and poems which would make them receptive to lies. Furthermore, in addition to taking part in family devotions, they would be brought to meeting at the end of their "infancy" and be made to sit still during silent worship.[14]

Part and parcel of the Quaker concern for their offspring was a desire to have them acquire a "guarded and useful education" in the rudiments of learning. Obtaining qualified Quaker

teachers to instruct children was necessary for outsiders could lead their tender souls astray, betraying them into wrong-headed principles and practices. While both sexes were committed to making provisions for the formal education of children through meetings and committee work, it was felt that Quaker women had a special role in educating children unable to attend Friends' schools. There were few formal, Friends' schools in operation in Upper Canada. [15]

Women's special role as educators was recognized, and indeed reinforced by the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends at New York in 1820. In their epistle, they asserted that women "are under solemn obligations to bestow upon [children] a suitable portion of useful learning." In the abscence of Quaker schools, mothers were expected to "spare time from... domestic engagements" in order to provide their children with the rudiments of literacy, and a firm grounding in Friends spiritual teachings. [16] Indeed, providing children with an education grounded in practical subjects and in Quaker practices and beliefs was so essential that it formed part of Friends Discipline, and meetings were regularly queried to ensure that attempts were being made to fulfil this solemn obligation. In this way, the goals of community cohesion would best be served. Children who were shielded from the dangerous teachings of non-Quakers, and who were solidly grounded and nurtured in the Quaker way would resist the temptations of other faiths, and of irreligion. Children were innocent, yet exceedingly malleable: the Quaker intent was to mould, protect and instruct them by the joint efforts of home, school and meeting so that a barrier would be constructed against the spiritual contamination of Quaker communities. As long as Friends schools were few, the onus of responsibility for children's education was placed on women and mothers.

Ideally, the solicitude adult Quakers demonstrated to their offspring remained consistent as children reached their teen years, and grew into young adulthood. The ages of fourteen to twenty-one constituted the period of Quaker youth, and is similar to the modern period of adolescence. [17] Despite the fact that parents were instructed to guard versus sin's effects in their children from the period of "infancy" onwards, this latter stage was traditionally recognized as being full of both

grave moral dangers and joyous spiritual possibilities. Moreover, it was the time during which

Quaker parenthood was put to the test: young people – males especially – faced the choice of either

indulging their passions, which might include drinking, attending taverns and dances, and keeping

unsuitable company, or of proving their spiritual maturity by upholding the Discipline. Young men

often did both: after a period of sinful indulgence, they sought repentance. This was certainly the

case with Joseph Gould, who confessed to being "a little wild" in early manhood: he was fond of

"balls, dancing and wild company" and of "gallanting, first with one girl and then with another." In

1828, at age 20, his taste for boisterous company caught up with him: he was brought before the

Yonge St. Monthly Meeting for striking a man in anger, and after producing an acknowledgment,

he was allowed to continue as a Quaker in good standing. But it was only several years later, after

meeting his future wife, that he turned his back on his bad ways, with the wish that he could

"obliterate the history of the last five years of [his life]."[18] From the perspective of the Quaker

community, it was imperative for children to make the proper choice, not only for their own moral

welfare, but also for the continued growth of the Society of Friends as a spiritual tribe. Because

the denomination was endogamous, and not conversion-oriented, the continued existence of Quaker

communities depended almost entirely on young adults keeping the faith, marrying within it, and

perpetuating it by raising up good Quaker children. It was expected that conscientious parents

would realize this, and be extra vigilant during this decisive stage. Generally, this meant that boys

and girls were raised in a similar fashion until they were preparing for marriage. Young people's

sexual maturation demanded a different parenting approach based on the peculiar weaknesses of

adolescent girls and boys, and on the same-sex ties between father and son, mother and daughter.

Both men's and women's yearly meetings recognized their solemn obligations, but they

approached the problems of youth in different ways. The former was rather more outspoken, and

addressed young men directly, often at the end of published epistles. "[T]ender youth" were

warned that they were "in that most critical time of life, in which men often receive the bias which

forms them into servants of their God, or warps them away from his fear, and sometimes almost irretrievably...." Young men were chastised for "evidently prefer[ring] the gratifications of nature which is corrupt, and which tends to corruption, to the Cross of Christ which corrects its hurtful propensities." Furthermore, they were enjoined to assist their elders in keeping Friends' testimonies alive, as they "advanc[ed] in the ranks of righteousness,"[19] and they were encouraged to "submit to the gentle admonition and restraint of those who desire for you, above every other attainment, a growth in ... love of God."[20]

In contrast, the superior women's meetings were just as likely to address young women via their mothers, as address them directly. Unlike Quaker fathers, whose responsibilities were coterminous with those of all mature, adult Quaker men, Quaker mothers were encouraged to foster close personal ties with their daughters during this critical phase, so as to shield them from moral danger. This was in addition to the tasks of public parenting entrusted to all mature, adult female Friends. And whereas young men were deemed prone to committing a wide variety of sins, "sin" for young women was nearly synonymous with marital infractions, and more specifically with marrying out of the Society. Take for example, the following excerpt from the Epistle of the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in New York in 1824:

> A tender solicitude has been felt, that mothers ... be instructed to prepare the way of the Lord in the minds of their precious offspring, that when they attain to ripened years, a free and confidential intercourse may be maintained, that so ascendency may be preserved in their affections. - The distance and reserve sometimes practiced, between mothers and daughters, (especially at that period of life when it may be said that the latter walk in 'slippery places,') have subjected them to injurious restraint, and exposed them to the danger of seeking associates, amongst those whose converse and example are calculated to lead out of the simplicity of the truth... and eventually to the forming of connexions in marriage with those whose religious sentiments and views may differ from their own.

In the lines that followed, the women united in the view that godly parents would nurture godly offspring, the happy result of which was that children would be "preserved from mixing with unsuitable company... thereby avoid[ing] the many snares which attend their increasing years."[21]

This select examination of early nineteenth-century Yearly Meeting epistles provides one with a sense of Quaker attitudes toward questions of gender and family within its highest circles of consensus. In addition, it raises the question of how deeply North Atlantic Quakerism was influenced by, or indeed mirrored the rising cultural ideologies of the surrounding world, namely that of separate spheres. According to several historians, separate spheres ideology emerged in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries in the large centres of Great Britain and the United States. In Britain, it paralleled the rise of industrialization, whereas in the United States, separate spheres was intimately bound up with economic diversification, which involved the encroachment of wage earning on family farm production. As economic production and exchange shifted away from the household, the association of middle class women with the "domestic sphere" became more conspicuous. Despite the fact that such women carved out space for themselves within what was increasingly envisaged as a masculine public world – most notably, through charitable associations and movements for reform – the prescriptive literature pronounced an "emphatic sentence of domesticity" upon them. In an ideal world, women's opportunities would be limited to the roles of wife, mother, nurturer, and devout Christian. In the private realm, women would provide order and solace to men immersed in the amoral public world of politics, business and the market. From this emerged the sense that the differences between the sexes were naturally quite pronounced. To women were attributed the qualities of superior delicacy, sensibility, imagination and piety whereas men were accorded such traits as rational prowess, bodily strength, and daring. Men were less religious due to their harder hearts, and stronger passions.[22]

The prescriptive literature of early nineteenth-century Quakerism, prior to the Hicksite schism, does not truly reflect the ideology of separate spheres, despite some similarities. Although it was understood that Quaker men were more directly engaged in the larger world of politics and business – this was particularly so in Great Britain – while Quaker women were more intimately connected with children and family, the importance that the sect placed on proper child nurture

meant that the worth of both sexes was substantially defined by their parenting abilities. Furthermore, as illustrated by the above excerpt from the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends, the boundaries between male and female parenting styles were not, in reality, that explicit. Mothers may have been encouraged to foster close ties with their nubile daughters, but nevertheless, some preferred to adopt the "distance" and "reserve" that many would consider characteristic of a family patriarch. Proper parenting may have been the measure of Quaker citizenship, but well into the nineteenth-century, this concept proved resistant to the dictates of separate spheres ideology, and its more pronounced sentimentalization of the mother-child bond.

According to Phyllis Mack, the Quaker parenting ideal was rooted in the systematization of the faith which took place in the 1660s. With the creation of separate women's meetings, Quaker leader George Fox intended to create a mechanism to promote the sect's commitment to holy childrearing and the spiritualization of household relations. He understood that mothers were "oft-times more amongst [their children] than the men, and "may prevent many things that may fall out, and many times they make or mar their children in their education." By exalting women as "Mothers in Israel" rather than "administrators or deputy husbands," Friends "projected domestic values into the public sphere" while avoiding the pitfalls of defining women's roles in a way that would directly challenge men's domination of public space.[23]

In the context of a wider patriarchal culture, in which women's characters were moulded to please fathers, husbands and male ministers, and in which women were forced to rely on persuasion as the only means of asserting authority, the creation of the Quaker women's meeting was a radical step. This new standard insisted that Quaker women were to answer first to the community's coterie of female superiors, including elders, ministers and overseers, and only second to their husbands or the sect's male leaders. Moreover, the women's meeting was empowered to inquire into Quaker proposals for marriage: the couple would present a written marriage proposal, signed by both parties, to the Preparative Meeting of which the woman was a member. This would

be forwarded to the Monthly Meeting, and if the prospective husband and wife were both members of said meeting, those assembled would appoint a committee to examine their characters. This included ascertaining whether the couples' parents had consented to the match, and ensuring that the rights of any children from a previous marriage would be adequately protected. After a month of more of deliberations, the couple would return to both men's and women's meetings, to receive the committee's decision. If the members came from different Monthly Meetings, the onus was on the man to produce a certificate from his Monthly Meeting proving that he was clear to marry.[24] This process forced men into a subordinate posture vis a vis female Quaker elders, and it suggested that they would be forced to accept continued intrusions into their households after the wedding day.[25] Such developments challenged seventeenth-century notions of gender relations which emphasized women's radical subordination to men in all areas of life.[26]

Despite the creation of separate, gendered business meetings, it would be more accurate to say that in reference to the various relations of the sect, Quaker elites prescribed a system of overlapping as opposed to separate spheres, even by the early-nineteenth century. Although Quaker women were deemed to have greater power over children, while Quaker men had greater authority over financial matters and questions touching on the sect's public role, both sexes equated good parenting with upstanding citizenship. Moreover, both served as elders, clerks and overseers, and on committees struck to discuss their communities' most pressing concerns, including prospective marriages. In addition, the sect recognized ministers of both genders, and as such valued them equally as vessels of the Inward Light. And unlike those descriptions of separate spheres ideology which presupposed that the True Woman would be irrational, and highly emotional, Quaker women were expected to a have a well-developed sense of order and justice, alongside a tenderness of heart which their male counterparts to a significant extent were presumed to share. The most important point here is that both sexes would ideally participate in faith communities governed by the values of spiritualized domesticity.

Despite the hardships of pioneer life, Quaker migrants to Upper Canada in the late-eighteenth to early-nineteenth centuries successfully established communities guided by the peculiar testimonies of their faith. Moreover, in some ways, it is likely that the rural, subsistence orientation of such early settlements buttressed Quaker commitments to spiritualized domesticity, which formed the basis of women's authority within the sect. During the early to mid-nineteenth century, rural folk, Quaker and non-Quaker alike, geared production toward meeting the subsistence needs of their households. According to Marjorie Griffen Cohen, the role of female, household labour, and its contribution to capital accumulation has been neglected by scholars concerned more with the development of market versus subsistence production. During this period, labour was divided according to gender, but men and women were inter-dependent and worked in close cooperation with each other. Cohen argues that women's household production was critical to the survival of family farms, and eventually to the process of capital accumulation in an inauspicious context of labour scarcity, volatile export markets, and underdeveloped local markets. More directly, because families were fed and clothed by means of women's productive efforts, men were free to engage in market production, and market income was geared toward capital accumulation.[27]

A sense of what life was like for first and second generation Upper Canadian Quakers can be gleaned from the few personal recollections available to posterity. For example, Joseph Gould's father and mother migrated to Canada from Pennsylvania in 1805, and settled on 200 acres of wild land in Uxbridge, joining a handful of Quaker families – only a dozen in all. Gould was born as the township's second white male child, in a log shanty which his family occupied for more than twenty-five years. For several years, they were the only white settlers of Uxbridge, which was located thirty miles from the Yonge Street settlement. Settlers were scattered miles apart, and there were no roads linking them to each other and to larger centres, but for a rough track through dense forest. In his recollections, Gould emphasized the importance of reciprocal labour exchanges,

mutual assistance and neighbourliness in those early days, and he notes that members of both sexes and individuals of all ages joined in the work of harvesting wheat and haying. At other times of the year, work likely reverted to a more gendered pattern. Typically, men and older boys hunted, made simple tools, sowed crops, worked the fields and performed heavy, outdoor chores such as chopping wood for fuel, whereas women and older girls kept house, worked the garden, tended the children, and produced enough food and clothing for the entire family.[28]

Rachel Webb Haight's "Recollections of Daily Life" provide a more detailed description of what life was like for Quaker mothers and daughters in Yonge Street's second generation families. She noted that her parents had married in 1823, with "few of the world's goods...little more than the clothes on their back" which were the product of home labour. They began their lives together in a small log house, which was little more than "a shelter from the storm." Eventually they moved to a new house, erected "near grand-father's dwelling, which was quite a commodious frame building." After her grandmother died in 1837, she and her family moved in with their grandfather. Rachel stayed there until she married, in 1846, at age twenty-two.[29]

Haight provides a detailed description of the regular tasks of the typical rural Quaker wife, living on a mixed farm. In her work, she was assisted by her daughters – if she had them – who remained at home until they got married. Alternatively, she could hire another family's daughter as a domestic for about seventy-five cents a week. Haight recalls that domestics were in large supply, and that many farmers' daughters served in this capacity before marriage. On a typical day, they baked bread and cooked meals in an open fireplace. Cooking large dinners was a "face burning task" but meal preparation was only the final step in the extended process of food production. Haight recalls helping her mother dry fruits and make pies and sauces from produce grown in their garden. These tasks were laborious, as were churning butter, making cream, pressing cheese and pickling. In the winter, pigs were butchered and women assisted in salting, drying and smoking pork, and in preserving deer meat in a similar fashion. Haight also notes how the "thrifty

housewife" of the 1830s would cultivate numerous herbs such as camomile, peppermint and ivy. These were used as medicines at a time when doctors were scarce and rarely called upon.[30]

When not engaged in food production and preparation, farm women were kept busy making candles and straw hats for the men, in addition to making clothes for the family, and invariably, washing them. Haight notes that her "mother was well acquainted with the use of the spinning wheel...and...the management of the wool from the time it left the sheep's back until the yarn was ready for the weaver...." After being pressed at the fulling mill, the women made the cloth into dresses, sewing every stitch by hand. In addition, "full cloth" was woven for men's suits and coats, in addition to wool blankets. Yarn was also used for knitting mittens, socks and hosiery. Moreover, women dried and spun flax into cloth used for trousers, linens, and sacks. Haight recalls that select farm women were weavers of both linen and wool, and produced cloth for cash.[31]

Although such accounts are fragmentary, they provide one with a tangible sense of the integral role women played within the Upper Canadian Quaker household. They do not, however, mention that female labour in both reproductive and productive terms was critical to the success of farm households. Due to the labour-intensive nature of early farming, having several children was viewed as an asset, for a large family meant that more land could be cleared and put into production. Upper Canadian women married in their early twenties, and usually bore offspring into their forties, with the result that most of their adult lives were dedicated to caring for children, and producing food and clothing to fulfill subsistence needs. Only a small proportion of women who presided over very large families – particularly those with several daughters – were themselves able to produce goods for local markets.[32]

While historians are in general agreement regarding the interdependence of the sexes within the context of rural life, they come to different conclusions regarding opportunities for the expression of female authority within such communities. For example, in her study of nineteenth-century farm families of the Nanticoke Valley, New York, Nancy Grey Osterud asserts that rural

conditions created an experience of relative gender equality which mitigated against the adoption of separate spheres ideology and its inherent notions of female inferiority. Osterud emphasizes the fact that while labour was divided according to gender in farm households, tasks were distributed with much flexibility, and there was considerable cooperation between the sexes, particularly in dairy operations. Formal and informal social activities furthered this sense of mutuality, and when women were excluded from groups which wielded authority, they responded by forming auxiliary associations which drew men in, rather than creating exclusive female enclaves. Osterud accents the multiple ties which bound rural communities together across age, gender and social relation. In contrast to this view, Cohen asserts that the patriarchal productive relations which underscored rural Upper Canadian life guaranteed female subordination. Because male heads of families owned the means of agricultural production, by both custom and law, wives and children "were the proletariat of the family farm, the workers whose labour was rewarded according to the good fortune or goodwill of the owner."[33] Even though women's and children's labour was central to the family unit's survival, they had no legal right to articles produced by the sweat of their brow. As such, women's social inferiority was guaranteed.

Although there is much value in Cohen's assessment, its economic determinism is rather stark, with regard to groups such as the Upper Canadian Quakers, a sect whose relations were governed by a system of alternative values, in opposition to the state and the wider society. In this sense, approaches that are more wide-ranging, such as Osterud's provide more depth and subtlety, with the result that women's lives become much greater than the sum total of economic victimization. While it is difficult to assess the subtle, gender dynamics operative amongst Upper Canadian Friends, it is clear that while the sect supported spiritual roles for women that challenged current assumptions of male superiority, the basic social fabric which guaranteed female subordination remained intact.

British common law dictated male domination of property in nineteenth-century Ontario. Although single women over age twenty-one and widows were entitled to the same property rights as males, inheritance practices, legal restrictions and norms dictating proper behaviour meant that few such women controlled property. Additionally, the law upheld the view that the work women performed for their families did not require remuneration because such work was their God-given duty. Until 1859, married women in Upper Canada had no legal right to own property, for according to William Blackstone, marriage made husband and wife one "and that one is the husband." In return for the right to be supported by her husband, a wife forfeited her rights to the products of her labour, to her children, and to independent action. A woman's legal inferiority was only emphasized when her husband or father died. Daughters were rarely given an equal share in their father's estate, likely due to the assumption that another male – either a husband or brother – would support them.[34] Although widows were legally entitled to own property, it was rare for women to obtain complete control over their husbands' estates after they passed away, particularly when there were children involved.[35]

According to the provisions of Upper Canadian law, a woman's material fate was entirely dependent upon her husband's felt duty to provide for her after his death. While the Quakers did not radically contest the gendered basis of distribution of property, the sect's commitment to community cohesion, and its faith-centred approach to questions of day-to-day life offered an alternative to state-sponsored social regulation designed to fulfil the needs of individuals, defined as adult, male property-holders. This meant that when faced with poverty, a Quaker widow could call upon Friends for material assistance. Indeed, Quakers were encouraged to show liberality proportionate to their means in relieving the needs of the poor. Due to the dictates of the Discipline which required charity to be disbursed in complete confidentiality, one can only speculate how often Quaker widows relied upon their community for support. What is known, however, is that monthly meetings of both sexes were required, on a quarterly basis to make collections for relieving

the poor of their own sex. And although women were encouraged to apply to the men's meeting when unable to collect enough money or provisions from their own ranks, the fact that they were entrusted with financial responsibilities, however "traditional" in focus, suggests that female Friends had more official control of property than most women of the time.

And yet, the assessment of the extent of female authority within Upper Canadian Quakerism is ambivalent at best. Unlike other denominations, Quakerism backed up female power within families – particularly, the power of the spiritual mother – by giving women substantial control over marriages, and hence, over men. Moreover, it provided women with religious and administrative structures through which to voice their concerns, nurture female spirituality, and deal with the problems of discipline peculiar to their gender. Additionally, Quaker women were placed on a relatively equal spiritual footing with men, and could attain the position of overseer, elder, or minister within the Society. This differed markedly from the practices of other denominations. For example, Presbyterians, male and female alike were disciplined by male ministers and church elders, nominated by male members. The situation was not as extreme amongst the Baptists, who maintained that all believers were responsible for overseeing members' behaviour; nonetheless, male deacons and ministers wielded the sole power of disciplinary enforcement. Neither denomination allowed women to become preachers. Within the Methodist Episcopal Church until the early 1830s, and in two smaller Methodist connections into the second half of the nineteenth-century, some women did preach, although they were not treated the same as their male counterparts: they were paid much less for equal work, and by mid-century they were shut out of the position altogether.[36] In contrast, the Society of Friends' commitment to the female ministry and to harnessing women's maternal and moral energies for the faith, via the offices of the sect, and the administration of its discipline was long-standing and secure.

But while Quaker women had more access to positions of authority within their communities than their non-Quaker counterparts, it is important to note that within united

Quakerism, women's role was limited by the male leadership, whereas men's power was less circumscribed by the corresponding female authority. For example, prospective female elders were subjected to a more rigorous process of examination by the opposite sex than were prospective male elders. Moreover, female ministers who felt a call to travel on religious "business" were required to seek the approval of the men's meeting, after having secured the consent of the women's meeting, while male ministers were only compelled to obtain female approval for extensive visits, beyond the limits of the Quarterly Meeting.[37] As a result, women's movements were more constrained by male Quakers than vice versa. This was perhaps due to concerns regarding women's safety. More cynically, it may have reflected traditional fears of scandal, and the need to ensure that female ministers were accompanied by appropriate companions on their journey.

In addition, women's Preparative and Monthly Meetings were not allowed to receive or disown members without the concurrence of the men's Monthly Meeting. The women's meeting was to bring the particulars of such cases to the attention of the men's meeting, and if no consensus emerged, a joint committee of men and women would labour together in order to reach a harmonious settlement.[38] In several disciplinary cases, it would appear that the mens' meetings provided little more than their formal agreement regarding women's disciplinary decisions, but this may be more a reflection of the sect's consensual style than men's practice of giving women a free hand in such matters. It is hard to say. Men's authority over women is more pronounced in those many "difficult cases" requiring the appointment of a joint committee. For example, in the "Twelfth Month" of 1806, the Women Friends of the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting requested their male counterparts to assist them in a visit to Kezia James, "who hath been guilty of unbecoming behaviour in A meeting for worship – and Through A turbulent ... spirit hath been endeavouring to Defame the Characters of friends – Not only Amongst Members – but to those Not of our society – Whereby she hath wilfully Asserted things which Appears to be false." The underlying assumption was that women were not as capable of judging such cases as men, or

alternatively, that women's power of persuasion was not enough to convince certain errant females of the gravity of their sins, and of the need of repentance. The ministrations of sisters, and Mothers in Israel having failed, women may have called upon the more stern authority of fathers, as moral reinforcements, and spiritual enforcers. Perhaps this was the case with Kezia James, who later rejected the attempts of the joint committee to bring her to a sense of her transgressions: in February of 1807, it united in "the opinion that the Charge against her was Justly Supported" and thus disowned her.[39] It is also possible that the women's meetings' frequent recourse to the joint committee reflected a peculiarly female, Quaker style of investigation. During the American Hicksite schism of 1827-28, women on both sides of the controversy, prior to making decisions, sought greater deliberation, prolonged attempts at reconciliation, and recommended multiple inquiries more frequently than men who favoured swifter action. This is related to Osterud's argument regarding rural women's approach to community concerns: they sought to forge links across gender rather than reinforcing all-female associations. Moreover, it is likely that the tendency of women's meetings to seek male assistance was strengthened by connections linking Quaker office-holders of both sexes. As Albert Schrauwers has shown, in the early nineteenth century, a small coterie of "weighty" Quakers – the sect's social elites – monopolized most committee positions in both men's and women's meetings. Quite often, married couples dominated the sect's affairs. At Yonge St. for example, Amos and Martha Armitage, and Thomas and Martha Linville were the meeting's de facto leaders, for a quarter of a century.[40] As such, requests for assistance likely drew upon the social ties which bound elite men and women together, often but not exclusively in opposition to women of lesser status in the community.

To be sure, the nature of women's authority within united Quakerism was somewhat ambivalent. But this ambivalence reflected the sect's understanding of revelation, in addition to women's role within their families and within the larger "Family of Love." On the one hand, women could be preachers and prophets. But traditionally, their ability to command public space

was not justified by appeals to feminine piety or via the glorification of the weak. Rather, Quakers based this right upon their belief, derived from Galatians 3:28, that "male and female are one in Christ Jesus, and he gives his Spirit no less to one than to the other." Self-annihilation or "killing the creature," which represented all that was willful and base in one's character, preceded the gift of the Spirit. As such, early Quakers assumed authority as political prophets by disengaging from their social identity, and allowing God to speak through them. Because preaching was a public, male activity, female preaching depended more emphatically upon women's ability to transcend their womanhood. On a day-to-day basis, however, women were envisioned as "Mothers in Israel" who drew their authority from their role as parents to correct unruly children, and instruct younger women on how best to nurture their families, and keep their homes. By formally recognizing this type of female power, through the creation of women's meetings and religious offices, women's private role, in addition to the domestic values of mutual love and discipline, were propelled into the public sphere. Although radical in its challenge of patriarchal assumptions, Quaker women's public authority derived either directly from God, or from a godly extension of their "natural" role and not from a conception of equal rights.[41]

Quaker men and women, through their intimate roles as parents of children, and through their more public vocations as parents of the larger sect were expected to guide young people toward an acceptance of full adult responsibility within the community, and to ensure that others remained obedient to Friends' discipline, throughout their lives. As Quakers, individuals were required to subsume their passions, and to spiritualize all social relations for the greater good of the community of faith. Rather than adhering to a confession of faith as a guide to group identity, Quakers focused on questions of behaviour: good deeds and upright moral conduct were the proper fruits of inward illumination. On a spiritual level, the Quaker discipline was intended as a path to religious enlightenment through self-control, and through the correct ordering of social relations. On a tribal level, it was a means of avoiding spiritual contamination by the "other." American

Quakerism had emerged in the late eighteenth century as a purified and reformed sect, cautious of the sullying effect of worldly values and of unseemly relations with those who stood outside of Friends' definition of piety. Quaker discipline attempted to reinforce group harmony and the integrity of its spiritual family versus a godless world.[42]

The means by which Quakers attempted to reach this end were frequently oppressive of individual freedom. As mentioned, Quaker polity allowed for the appointment of male and female overseers whose duty it was to ferret out moral transgressions, which I have broadly categorized under the following rubrics: drink and diversion,[43] disorderly conduct,[44] going out of plainness,[45] gossip and dishonesty,[46] verbal and physical violence,[47] neglect of meetings,[48] in addition to sins pertaining to marriage and sex,[49] war and government,[50] and business and legal concerns.[51] Overseers usually began their investigations by visiting alleged offenders personally.[52] It is likely that many cases were dealt with informally. However, if a transgression were serious enough, of a persistent nature, or likely to cause a public scandal which would defile the good name of the Society, the case would be brought up in the Preparative and then the Monthly Meeting. By this point, enough investigative ground-work had been done to ascertain that the errant party was likely guilty of the charge. The Monthly Meeting would then appoint a committee of overseers to "treat with the offender" in an effort to "make him sensible" of his sin. If the sinner wholeheartedly acknowledged his wrong-doing verbally, and then in writing, he or she could be allowed to continue as a member of the Society. If an acknowledgement was not procured, or if the acknowledgment did not appear to be sincere enough, the person was disowned, and advised of his or her right to appeal the decision.[53]

Richard MacMaster has demonstrated that early Friends' communities in Upper Canada were made up of Quakers disowned in their meetings of origin, Quakers who never associated themselves with Friends meetings in the new settlements, in addition to those in good standing.[54] Within this context, it was hoped that disowned individuals would suffer a sense of shame and feel

the pain of being spiritually disenfranchised, even while they continued to take part in the cycle of farm and family life. This may have been the case with an anonymous Yonge St. Quaker, who was the object of Theodore Winn's death-bed utterances, as recorded by Winn's mother, Phebe in 1806:

> ...[M]any were the savory expressions and advices which he utterd [sic]...[T]o one who had turnd [sic] his back on our meetings and disregarded our testimony in respect to bearing Arms he said [']when thou wast in the heighth of thy obstanancy [sic] I have retird [sic] alone and on my bended knees solicited that Father of mercies on thy behalf[.] Earnestly entreating him to return and being again drawn Forth in Supplication he prayd [sic] earnestly after the return he expressed it For that poor Departure....[55]

This scene bears the marks of a "good" Quaker death, one in which the individual's mind was preoccupied with the salvation of friends and family members, but it also underscores the habit of vigilance that animated the lives of righteous Friends. This habit was fostered, formally and informally, not only within communities and meetings, but also between jurisdictions. The disciplinary authority of the Monthly Meeting would follow errant individuals if they moved to new settlements, leaving questions unsettled. For example, late in 1811, the Yonge St. Monthly Meeting received a complaint against John Masters from Muncey Monthly Meeting in Pennsylvania alleging that he drank to excess, quarrelled, swore and fathered an illegitimate child, for which reasons he left their neighbourhood. Upon investigation, Masters acknowledged all charges except "that of being the father of the Child" and informed the committee that he would return to Pennsylvania in the spring to face the meeting.[56]

In the following section, quantitative data collected from disciplinary cases treated in Quaker men's and women's monthly meetings, at Yonge St. for the periods 1807-10, 1825-8, and 1837-40 will be examined for insight on the gendered orientation of infractions, and on Quakers' ability, over time, to maintain the testimonies which formed the basis of their distinct communities. Before such things are discussed, however, it is necessary to note the challenges facing the historian in search of rich, documentary detail. Firstly, Monthly Meeting minutes pertaining to the adjudication of disciplinary cases are at once intriguing and remote. Quakers kept records on

individuals and their transgressions, in addition to the names of those appointed to the committees struck to treat with the offending parties. Month to month, meeting minutes noted whether progress was being made, and finally, they noted when decisions were made to testify against their errant brethren and sisters, and conversely, when it was deemed appropriate to receive sinners back into the meeting's good graces. But due to Quakerism's consensual style, the minutes of all business meetings reflect only the decisions agreed upon by those assembled. Disagreements, contentious issues, and points of debate were routinely left off the record, leaving many questions as to the exact motives which underlay both decisions to disown, and to pardon errant Quakers. In addition, meetings did not record the exchanges that occurred between transgressor and committee, and as such, the reasons for one individual's apparent obstinacy and another's willingness to be forgiven are unclear. This consensual style also obscured the work of many other Quaker committees, including those struck to discuss the validity of an individual's calling to the ministry. And because accounts contained in letters, journals, and reminiscences are precious and few, it is nearly impossible to round out disciplinary case information with other reports.

That being said, much can be learned from the available case information, which is presented as follows. For the 1807-10 period, thirty-nine individuals appeared before the Yonge St. Monthly Meeting to face a total of fifty charges. Twenty-five of these individuals were men, and fourteen were women, but only one woman was guilty of more than one charge: in 1809, Lydia Ray was disowned for the dual charge of neglected attendance at meetings, and for joining the Methodists.[57] In contrast, eight men were guilty of multiple infractions, usually involving drinking, or less frequently, selling alcohol. For example, in 1810, Seba Armitage was charged with drinking to excess and behaving in an unbecoming manner. Two years earlier, John Huff was disowned for retailing spirituous liquors to the Indians, attending a military training, and leaving the meeting's jurisdiction without applying for a certificate.[58] During this period, 54.3% of male infractions involved, in order of descending importance, drink, disorderly language or conduct,

diversion, and to a much lesser extent, verbal or physical violence, for a total of nineteen cases. Fourteen percent of cases involved either attending a militia training or accepting government office, while there were only two meeting infractions, and one business infraction which involved Ephraim Dunham cutting "cedar timber that was not his own" in 1807. A further 14% of infractions involved issues of marriage and sex: only three men married non-Quaker women during this period, and only one was charged with fornication. Of twenty-five individuals, 36% were disowned, while 56% acknowledged their errors and continued as Quakers in good standing.[59]

Of the fourteen women charged by the Monthly Meeting, fully ten answered to marital or sexual infractions: seven married non-Quakers, two attended marriages accomplished contrary to Friends' discipline, and one Sarah Hill committed fornication with a man she subsequently married. Two neglected attendance at meetings, one was disorderly therein, and the infractions of two others remain unclear. In contast to Yonge. St.'s men, 57% of its female sinners were disowned, while 35% proffered acknowlegements accepted by the Meeting.[60]

From January 1825 to September 1828, forty-seven men who committed fifty-eight infractions were investigated by the Yonge St. Monthly Meeting. By this point, fewer infractions – only 36% -- involved, in descending order, verbal or physical violence, drunkenness, diversion, and profanity. Nonetheless, incidents of assault versus the opposite sex increased from zero to four. About 33% of infractions involved issues of marriage and sex, with thirteen individuals marrying non-Quakers. Three men neglected meetings, three were charged with joining the militia, two were embroiled in business/legal concerns and the nature of seven cases remains unclear. Fifty-five percent of individuals were disowned by the meeting, while 34% proferred acknowledgements which were accepted. From September to December of 1828, nearly forty individuals were charged with meeting infractions, the largest proportion of whom were disowned for joining the Hicksite faction of Quakerism.[61] Women's key area of concern continued to involve marital/sexual transgressions. From January 1825 to September of 1828, twenty-three of thirty-

five infractions, or 66%, fell under this category: notably there were twelve cases of marrying out, and four pertaining to fornication. Moreover, two women were charged with attending a place of diversion, one with using unbecoming language and another with acting unbecomingly. Within the latter part of 1828, several women were disciplined for seceding to the Hicksites, but far fewer than those that came before the men's meeting. 62% of women were disowned during the entire period, while only 13.5% were accepted back into the fold.[62]

During the final period in question which stretches from January of 1837 to December of 1840, the men's meeting at Yonge St. recorded seventy-five infractions committed by forty-eight individuals. There were twenty-three individuals who committed multiple infractions, but this time, few involved alcohol. Charges involving, in descending order, disorderly conduct, drink and diversion, verbal and physical violence, and plainness declined to 21.3 %. Infractions pertaining to war and government rose to 13.3%, largely due to participation in the Rebellion of 1837, and business/legal infractions remained low at 2.7%. Marriage/sexual infractions accounted for 28% of the total, with nine individuals marrying non-Quakers, and seven marrying contrary to discipline; two individuals were charged with fornication. Twenty-one men, or 28% of the total were charged with meeting infractions, the majority of which pertained to neglected attendance. 73% of the men were disowned, while 10% were accepted back. The remaining cases were still under consideration as of December of 1840. The same meeting recorded thirty-eight infractions committed by twenty-eight Quaker women, nearly 48% of which involved marital/sexual infractions, with the majority marrying non-Quakers. Incidences of diversion, disorderly conduct and "going out of plainness" remained low. Meeting infractions accounted for 34% of all sins. 78% of female transgressors were disowned while 21% proffered acknowledgments which were accepted.[63]

These figures provide only a snapshot of the conditions prevailing within the Yonge St. Monthly Meeting from 1807 to 1840, but nonetheless, one can discern a few important facts and

trends. Beginning with a comparison of men's and women's monthly meeting information through all periods, one notes that infractions were in significant measure gender-specific. This reflected, in part, the legal boundaries separating men's concerns from women's: only men could join the militia, or accept a government office, and because they controlled most property, only men could be charged with dishonesty in business, incurring dishonest debts, initiating court proceedings versus a Friend, or selling spirituous liquors. While business/legal sins remained very low in all periods studied, Quaker men in the first two periods could not easily resist pressures to attend militia trainings. This was likely due to the meeting's proximity to Yonge St., which was used as a military road.[64] Other infractions, while not expressly "masculine" were almost exclusively committed by men. During the periods in question, only men were charged with gambling, drunkenness, participation at a chiveree, uttering profanities and verbal and physical violence. Plus, men were more likely to be charged with attending a place of diversion, such as a tavern, unbecoming conduct and language, and slander. In all periods, few individuals of either sex were charged with going out of plainness, though prior to 1810, men were somewhat more likely to do so. Conversely, women's infractions were generally limited to sins against the marriage testimony, and neglected attendance at meetings. Men also committed these sins, but within a wider disciplinary infraction range. In addition, individual men were more likely to be charged with multiple infractions than women.

What this suggests is that aside from the marriage testimony, women were much more likely to behave according to the Quaker ideal than were men, particularly during the first decade of the nineteenth century. This perhaps reflected gendered notions which made certain actions, such as drinking, fighting, and cursing completely unacceptable for Quaker women, though early to mid nineteenth-century Baptists and Presbyterians seemed to have shown no particular sense of outrage over women's drinking.[65] It is also likely that women had less opportunity to commit certain diversionary sins such as attending a tavern: compared to men, whose work likely involved

forays to local markets, and extended business trips, women's work was confined to home, and the daily needs of the household would not permit much time for leisure, particularly for married women who had children to care for. Young, single women were somewhat less constrained, which likely accounts for the diversionary sins of women as a whole.[66]

Taken together, male cases of drink and diversion, disorderly conduct, gossip and dishonesty, and verbal and physical violence decreased from 53.9%, to 38.6% to 20% of total infractions in each successive period beginning with 1807-10. As time progressed, proportionately fewer individuals were caught drinking, selling or distilling spirituous liquors, which largely accounts for the decreases. This probably reflected the sect's increasing commitment, not only to temperance, but also to putting an end to the practice of distilling and retailing liquor.[67] As such, from 1807 to 1840, there appears to have been a shift toward greater decorum, and a movement away from "rougher" definitions of masculinity which historians suggest characterized the pioneer period in Upper Canada. But it is important not to exaggerate this effect. For example, chiverees, that emblem of pre-industrial, vigilante justice continued to pose an occasional problem at Yonge St. into the 1830s. In one case, occurring in 1826, Stephen Rogers, and James and Isaac Eves were charged with assisting in "tarring and carrying a woman on a rail" for which the former was disowned, the other two being sufficiently penitent.[68]

From 1804-28, seventy-two marriages were conducted with the approval of the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting. Because most settlers came from Pennsylvania, it is not surprising that most marriages occurred between Pennsylvanians, though a fair proportion occurred between Pennsylvanians and Vermonters. Individuals sought mates in Preparative Meetings other than their own, with the largest number of marriages occurring between Yonge Street and Uxbridge, the most widely separated groups. Whitchurch and Uxbridge, which were also quite far apart, were next. Furthermore, by 1828, "all but five families (where there had been marriages) were related or had intermarried" with certain families inter-marrying frequently.[69] These patterns suggest that

Quakers, separated by distance within the settlement, maintained strong ties with others who hailed from the same place of origin in the "old country," and preferred to select marriage partners amongst the large network of extended kin which bound certain groups of Friends more tightly together than others. Done properly, marriages were a matter of both family and faith.

From 1804-28, however, fifty-seven Quakers married out of the community. And interestingly, the data for 1807-1810 suggests that there was some correlation between the number of marital infractions and disownment rates. During that period, few men were charged with such sins compared to women, and the women's meeting's disownment rate was much higher at 57% versus 36% for the men's meeting. From 1825-28, prior to the Hicksite schism, the percentage of men disowned by the meeting rose to 55%, which likely reflects, in part, the increase in exogamous activity.[70] Traditionally, Quakers who had "married out" were loathe to condemn their recent attachments as sinful, and when they did, it was difficult to muster the requisite amount of sorrow to convince disciplinary committee members of their sincerity. In contrast, acknowledging error after a bout of drunken diversion, or after striking a man in anger was much easier to do, in that it did not require one to cast aspersions upon one's chosen spouse and the future of one's family. The former were obviously sins of passion, which cast a pall on the Christian reputation of both individual and community. It was much more difficult to conceive of marriage in such terms, and assent to the official view that exogamy resulted from esteeming fleshly lusts above Divine truth, which only Quakers were deemed to possess. As such, it is not surprising that of fifty-seven Yonge St. Quakers who married non-Friends from 1804-28, thirty-four became permanently estranged from the faith community.[71]

That exogamy was a serious problem for Upper Canadian Quakers implies a few things. If faced with the prospect of finding no suitable Quaker to marry, individuals were willing to look beyond the sect, even if that meant inviting community censure, and suffering disownment. In this case, individual economic and perhaps emotional necessities were placed above the interests of

maintaining the purity of the Quaker community. Although Quakers traditionally demonstrated respect for women who remained unmarried,[72] the facts of rural life were such that they staked their economic livelihood on the prospect of marriage. As mentioned, fathers ensured that their sons would receive the lion's share of their estates for this very reason. As an alternative to years of service to elderly parents, and dependence upon married brothers, Quaker women who could not find a suitable mate within the sect, chose to marry either non-Quakers, or perhaps men whom the Society had disowned, or whose families had fallen away from the faith. It is also possible that economic considerations were augmented by romantic ones, particularly in the later periods for which data was collected, though this is difficult to establish due to the scarcity of descriptive documents.

For men it was nearly impossible to create new farm households independently because women's productive and reproductive work was integral to both their survival and success, as noted previously. Cases of exogamy leave many questions unanswered, however. The lower incidence of male exogamy as compared to female from 1807-10 might be explained with reference to the patriarchal land-loan system, which encouraged sons' dependence upon their fathers. But it is unclear how fathers would have reacted to those sons who chose to marry non-Quaker women. It is possible that some fathers may have tacitly complied – though the meeting registered no cases of parents conniving in this way during the periods in question – particularly if they themselves had selected non-Quaker spouses, or if they felt well-disposed towards those family members who had. Tacit consent may also have been given to both sons and daughters if a match promised to be advantageous economically, though the historical record is silent in this regard. Furthermore, there is some indication that individuals of both sexes who married out were less likely to be directly related to Quakers in positions of authority, which suggests that pressure to maintain the sect's marriage testimony was greater amongst the sect's elite families. It is also possible that some men sought mates outside of the faith, due to an impatience with the special powers accorded to women

in the Yonge St. settlement, the pressures of the larger society, most specifically the demands of the Canadian state for military requisitions and militia men, and later on the enticements of political reform further challenged Quakers' ability to maintain their distinct way of life during the Upper Canadian period.

Despite such challenges, Orthodox Quakerism in Upper Canada continued to grow at a moderate pace, until the Gurneyite-Wilburite Separation of 1881, which involved a quarrel over attempts to evangelicalize the sect, divided it into two branches – "Conservative" and "Progressive." After a movement for revival infused Orthodox meetings with new life in the 1870s, and early 1880s, Quakerism experienced significant decline. This was preceded by a considerable relaxation of disciplinary enforcement: old rules were annulled or ignored, as Quakers took an attitude of encouraging the lost lamb, as opposed to judging and disowning the offender. For example, by the late 1850s, individuals were no longer disowned for marrying out, or for being married by a magistrate or priest, though some form of acknowledgment expressing the desire to retain one's membership was still required. In the last twenty years of the nineteenth-century, several meetings were laid down, and numbers ebbed. The Separation of 1881 occurred in the midst of a revival within Orthodox Quakerism which initially swelled its ranks. Unfortunately, by the 1890s, few remained convinced members: most drifted away to other denominations with the waning of revival ardour.[75]

It is to this latter period that one must look for clear evidence of Quakerism's decline as a faith based on traditional structures which bound individuals tightly to the larger sectarian community as "family." Once the discipline was no longer enforced, church bodies lost the power they once had to compel individuals to conform to moral dictates designed to serve communities based on ties of kinship, faith and reciprocity, and to keep them pure from the effects of moral error. By the late 1850s, Quakers joined other Protestant denominations in treating sin as a matter of private struggle: although spiritually guided by the larger community, individuals approached

moral issues as opportunities for interior reflection, and the deployment of greater self-control. Furthermore, a relaxation of the marriage testimony suggests that marriage was envisioned less as a bulwark of exclusive Friends' communities, than an opportunity for individual fulfilment. In turn, families became more autonomous and less open to the intrusions of the church into the domestic sphere. It is likely that these changes were assisted by the rise of consensus Protestantism in the second half of the nineteenth-century. As the number of professing Christians rose, as the struggles which had separated Church from Dissent faded, and as the values of evangelical Protestantism became enculturated in English-speaking Canada, Quaker testimonies such as those pertaining to plainness of dress, and intemperance were no longer distinct. The boundaries between Quakerism and the outside world became more permeable during this period, as evangelical influences shifted Orthodox members increasingly toward the cultural mainstream. In addition, as the difficult conditions of pioneer farming gave way to more intensive rural development, a process which led to the formation of an agricultural middle-class by mid-century,[76] it is likely that many Quakers found themselves less in need of the economic assistance provided by the faith community. This fostered a greater sense of independence, and assisted in transforming the relationship between individuals and Friends' communities.

Although the decline of communitarianism amongst Upper Canadian Quakers appears much clearer after mid-century, historians have put forth evidence that this process was underway, in certain Friends communities, as early as the 1810s and 20s. A lack of descriptive evidence, however, makes it difficult to make direct links, during this period, between the rise of commercial capitalism on the one hand and insular nuclear families, individualism, and modern courtship on the other. This is certainly not the case with the Children Peace, who are treated in the following section. During the 1830s, rising market activity by young, Davidite farmers was parallelled by a marriage and courtship crisis which singled the failure of the sect's attempts to maintain community cohesion and to protect its traditional way of life.

*   *   *   *   *   *

In the first chapter, the schism of David Willson and 1/4 of the Yonge Street Quaker population was cast as a struggle between old Quakerism and new orthodoxy: as Friends in the North Atlantic world began to embrace elements of the evangelical creed, including biblicism and an express belief in the divinity of Christ, Willson rose up in protest, and asserted the superiority of progressive revelation via the Inward Light. His own mystical revelations led him to believe that Christ was superseded by the Spirit in power. Just as the Spirit had entered Christ, who acted as a perfect example of human triumph over sin, so could the Spirit enter all people who sought knowledge of the Lord by following Christ's lead. Once God was internalized, Scriptures and creeds were no longer necessary.

Soon after the schism, the sect organized itself along Quaker lines. But in 1816, corporate, disciplinary authority was rejected in favour of an emphasis on the centrality of the Inward Light. This theoretically strengthened individual spiritual power and autonomy, but in reality, it refocused the sect's direction on Willson's own messianic sense of mission. Although not enforced, several Quaker cultural practices were maintained as the sect moved to consolidate itself geographically by resettling on lot 10, concession 2, East Gwillimbury Township. This settlement would become the village of Hope, later re-named Sharon. From 1819 through the next decade, a "paternalist gerontocracy" emerged alongside Willson's prophetic leadership, further challenging the sect's profession of egalitarianism. This tendency was only reinforced in the early 1830s when elders gained even more control of the sect through the establishment of the Yearly Meeting of Committees. During these years, generational tensions emerged which threatened the unity of the Children of Peace, and which were never successfully resolved. In combination with external political, economic and cultural factors, this resulted in the precipitous decline of the group from the mid-1840s onward.[77]

The Children of Peace constituted an attempt to maintain the traditional Quaker "moral economy" against the hostile incursions of the outside world. As mentioned, rural Quaker communities in early Upper Canada were based on ties of faith, kinship and mutual assistance as opposed to commercial exchange. The economic bulwark of this system was subsistence farming: Yonge St. Quakers owned their own farms, and acted with little regard for market demands in producing crops to meet household consumption needs. Community needs and moral imperatives dictated economic choices. The Quaker moral economy was increasingly threatened by capitalist pressures which enticed Quakers into seeking the highest price for their produce or goods that the market would allow. This, combined with the military harassment Willson and his followers experienced during the War of 1812 led them to reject worldly pressures by taking refuge in a transformed version of traditional Quaker isolationism.[78]

The Children of Peace maintained Quakerism's traditional moral economy through a number of means, including charity, schooling and building projects. Most importantly, however, they struggled to maintain the Quaker subsistence farming tradition whereby fathers loaned land to sons until they obtained money for purchase. But as the cost of land rose after 1825, new farms could not be created without significant debt, which could only be liquidated by marketing crops. As younger sect members began to start new farms, they found themselves in the difficult position of depending upon the "subsistence insurance guaranteed by their moral economy" while finding it impossible to tear themselves away from market production in order to participate in unpaid, community-oriented work projects. Operating from a more secure economic position, the sect's elders sought to preserve the traditional moral economy, often at the youths' expense. This resulted in increasing inter-generational discord, particularly during the 1830s as young farmers "played their new-found (but precarious) independence" against community demands. In response, the parental group subsidized the creation of new farms by taking on the burden of capital costs

themselves. As recompense, they demanded that young heads of families participate fully in the communal life of the sect, most notably by donating their labour for the building of the temple.[79]

What Schrauwers and other historians of the sect neglect, however, is a discussion of the Davidite conceptualization of family, community and gender roles.[80] In attempting to preserve the sect's moral economy, Willson drew upon seventeenth and eighteenth-century Quaker and Puritan notions that based the social order on a tight fit between family, church and community, to the extent that the wishes of the individual were subordinated to the interests of the larger group. The Children of Peace were envisioned as a large family gathered together under the spiritual leadership of its "father," David Willson, and guided by the elders of the sect who sought to strengthen both Willson's and their own authority over younger members as a means of perpetuating a common culture based on subsistence farming. The patriarchal tendencies of the sect were mitigated, however, by its emphasis on the Quaker doctrine of the Inward Light, which provided a theoretical justification for the spiritual, social and political equality of all people. Willson sought to resolve the inherent tension between the individualism fostered by the doctrine of the Inward Light and the communitarian ethos of patriarchalism by means of his unique, prophetic role. Willson's advanced understanding of God's will made him the first among equals, and in this capacity, he constituted both the bulwark of patriarchal authority within the sect and its central proponent of egalitarianism. This seemingly contradictory blend of egalitarian and patriarchal notions of family and community was mirrored by Willson's proposals to reform the Upper Canadian alliance of church and state by turning it into a peculiar combination of monarchy and democracy, a system which would be tied together by a godly, Patriot King. This leader would be the guarantor of liberty, by humbling himself so that the people would be exalted.

The tensions between egalitarianism and patriarchalism were also manifested in the ways in which Willson and the sect conceptualized gender roles. Willson exalted and idealized women on visionary and rhetorical levels, to the point of suggesting that gender roles be inverted. He also

envisaged marriage in egalitarian terms, in addition to ensuring that all women – young, unmarried ones in particular – played a central role in the ritual life of the sect. At the same time, however, Davidite women's opportunities to exercise egalitarian political power were reduced in comparison to their Quaker counterparts, whose roles were institutionalized within the Discipline of the Society of Friends. In one sense, Willson's symbolic inversion of traditional gender roles served his larger political purpose by tapping into a theological view which attributed to the most marginal members of society the greatest spiritual, and hence political and social authority. Furthermore, on a visionary level, he associated both himself and the larger sect with the humble woman as icon. Over time, however, this was used to reinforce the power of the sect's elders by creating a core of young believers whose first loyalty lay with Willson and to the larger community whose will he embodied. Consequently, Davidite women – especially the young – traded in their authority in sect governance, for a special relationship with the sect's prophet and patriarch. This served the dual purpose of bolstering women's authority within marriage and fostering sect unity.

Because of its lack of formal discipline, sect cohesion depended greatly upon the subordination of individual, nuclear families to the larger sectarian one. Since Willson embodied patriarchal authority within the sect, the authority of individual heads of households had to be reduced. This did not pose a problem in the first fifteen years or so of the sect's life, when its adult membership was relatively small, because Willson and the elders represented the interests of the majority of the sect's nuclear families.[81] By the late 1820s to the 1830s, however, as increasing numbers of children of the founding generation came of age and married, and as most of them were forced by higher debt loads to engage in cash cropping, several of the sect's latent tensions with regard to marriage and family came to the fore. By the early 1830s, the sect experienced a crisis of apocalyptic proportions centring on the destabilizing effects of rising youth independence. As a result, Willson and the elders attempted to regain control over the younger generation by influencing its perception and experience of courtship, marriage and family formation. The battle

to maintain the authority and order of the larger sectarian family versus the competing claims of individual nuclear families was expressed in religious terms, as a contest between God and evil, in which the cosmic fate of both individuals and the larger community hung in the balance.

Willson and Davidite elders focussed most of their attention on the sect's girls, and young women of marriageable age. By exaggerating the dangers of courtship and marriage, and by praising young women on their strength and superior piety, Willson encouraged them to put parental wishes first, and to delay marriage as long as possible, channelling their ardour toward worship in King David's house. Although less than successful, gaining control of the sect's young women through marriage was the corollary of controlling young men's access to land. Both means of control were intended to preserve the traditional moral economy of the sect, by bolstering not only parental authority, but also Willson's prophetic leadership.

From 1812 to 1816, the Children of Peace were organized along Quaker lines into Meetings for Worship, the Business Meeting, the Select Meeting of Elders, and the Yearly Meeting which served to unite Davidites, scattered as they were among the Queen St., Uxbridge and Yonge Street settlements. The Select Meeting of Elders was composed of six men and six women who were to set and maintain sect discipline. In 1816, after a series of internal struggles, in addition to the community's failed attempt to rejoin the Society of Friends, the Children of Peace rejected Quakerism's corporate structure and jural authority, and rallied around David Willson's charismatic leadership based on the primacy of the doctrine of the Inward Light. Now, both men and women met together in a single Monthly Meeting. Although the settlement of the sect at Hope preserved the earlier patterns of subsistence farming and kinship ties upon which Quakerism's moral economy was based, the changes in Davidite polity made for a very fluid structure. Lacking a formalized system of social control, the sect turned to more subtle means of ensuring group cohesion. David Willson, in his role as the sect's spiritual leader, visionary, and patriarch was at the centre of these efforts, a fact which is attested to not only by his high public profile as itinerant

minister, but also by the volumes of published and unpublished writings that he produced. But unity was also fostered by the gradual emergence of a "paternalist gerontocracy" made up of the sect's "twelve eldest brethren in years." Made up of members of both sexes, this group came to dominate the administration of sect affairs through the Monthly Meeting, which meant that its consensual nature was undermined.[82]

Until 1812, in their lives as Quakers, seven of the ten founding female members of the Children of Peace participated in the Yonge Street Monthly Meeting as overseers, elders, or assistant clerks, and ten of ten participated in committee work.[83] While the Children of Peace maintained a high level of female participation in sect governance until 1816, its reorganization on the basis of the Inward Light, and around Willson's charismatic leadership resulted in the demise of women's traditional source of control. Once women's power was no longer entrenched in the regulations governing the sect, their ability to exert authority in business meetings was likely eroded. Indeed, the Quakers had provided women with separate meetings, as a means of guaranteeing their participation in governance; whereas Willson's mixed-gender meetings tended to silence the female voice.

Women's loss of a guaranteed place in the governance of the sect did not appear to be offset by an increased reverence for the spiritually egalitarian doctrine of the Inward Light. Although Willson's chosen confidante and advisor was Rachel Lundy, there is no direct evidence to suggest that she or any other female members of the sect became regular ministers.[84] Interestingly, women's decline in power was masked by Willson's theology, which relied on an insistently female-centred rhetoric, as this excerpt from one of his early hymns suggests:

> ...Will Christ the inner temple build/ By her that did his feet anoint/ The same my father did appoint/ her second cup shall be fulfilld [sic]...The womans [sic] soul did wash the ground/ Because the sacred place was found/ Where on the inner temple stands/ Hence forth let it be ever said/ That by a poor female or maid/ Anointed Jesus with her hands/ The woman did disern [sic] his End/ Her substance did she freely spend/ Pourd [sic] forth upon a Saviour's feet/ The same hence forth the temple build/ With more compassion was she filld [sic]/ Than men that sat with him at meat/ See where the woman has begun/ The

lowest state beneath the sun/ The same foundations doth lay/ The same the pillars of the work/ That the designs of men hath broke....[85]

Here, there reader encounters Mary of John 12: 1-7. Willson likely believed that this woman was Mary Magdelene, a former prostitute and one of Christ's closest disciples. Knowing that Jesus' days were numbered, she purchased an expensive perfume with which to anoint his feet and wiped it with her hair. Conversely, the men present at this dinner scene appeared to be lacking in faith and compassion. According to Willson, this humble woman was chosen to construct the inner temple of the spirit, which stood in stark contrast to the "designs of men" which lay in ruins. It was precisely her lowly state which would enable her to build the foundations of this temple. Men of power and supposed wisdom, who exalted themselves in Christ's presence would be incapable of constructing this vessel of the soul.

In cultural and political terms, this hymn is linked to Willson's constitutional ideal of monarchical republicanism which was based upon an inversion of social relations in which those of humble estate would be raised up, through the agency of a benevolent and egalitarian-minded king. This vision, which was developed more fully during the 1830s, framed the sect's participation in the larger culture of reform opposition versus the Upper Canadian Church-state. It will be discussed at greater length below. In the hymn, Christ the king exalts the lowly woman for her superior spiritual gifts, and in spite of her lack of temporal power. On one level, Willson associated himself with the messiah, while associating his sect with the woman as temple builder: indeed, his 1817 hymn harkens back to his visions of 1812 which had alerted Willson of his divinely-ordained role as prophet and protector of a new, purified church which was depicted in feminine terms, as a strong, sensual but virginal woman with "power...like fire." Alternatively, this gender association extended to all those who lacked power in Upper Canadian society: their superior piety would be recognized, not only by God, but also by an idealized, benevolent monarch.[86]

Davidite women played a key, symbolic role in the elaborate rituals Willson created as a means of commemorating his visions. As an observer noted in 1825, the Children of Peace "go in procession to their place of worship the females taking the lead, being preceded by banners and two of their number playing on the flute." They were followed by a separate line of men, and as they entered the meeting house, the sexes sat on separate sides of the room. The banners depicted Willson's early visions, and as John McIntyre has suggested, they reminded the marchers of his "divinely inspired mission." In addition, a special Choir of Virgins, dressed in white to symbolize their purity, played a significant role both in the ritual processions from meeting house to temple for the monthly almsgiving service, and in the itinerant services Willson held at Markham, York, and Sheppard's Inn in York Township. This choir was made up of several of the sect's young, unmarried women.[87] When in York, the procession travelled down King Street from Lawrence's Hotel where they stayed, to the Old Court House where services were usually held, which took about an hour. According to the Rev. Isaac Fidler, Willson "never performs such religious errantry without being accompanied by his virgins, six in number, selected from among the females of his household for their superior voices." These young women travelled in the same waggon as Willson, while in one of the other waggons followed as many youths .[88]

Kate Brennagh has argued that young women's participation in public processions was a testament to both their equality within the sect, and to their disregard of the restrictive elements of separate spheres ideology. By participating in marches, Davidite women ignored social prescriptions relegating them to the private sphere, and crossed over into "male territory" – the public domain. While the public role of Davidite women calls into question the validity of separate spheres ideology, particularly within Upper Canadian agricultural communities, assertions of female equality must be qualified.[89] Linda Colley has noted that female Britons often participated in public processions during this period; however, she likewise cautions against hastily concluding that such public participation was evocative of the social and political power of women.[90]

Similarly, Willson's efforts to educate the young girls and women of Hope must not be viewed as simply the product of an "enlightened" espousal of gender equality. To the contrary, such efforts were designed to secure the dependence and subordination of younger members to older ones in the absence of a coercive mechanism of group control. At Hope, boys and girls attended primary school at the first meeting house beginning in 1819. But in addition to this, in 1818, a girl's boarding school, known as the "female institution" was established in a log house on the settlement. It was subsequently moved to a frame house that Quaker traveller Jacob Albertson identified as Willson's own, and then to a larger edifice opposite the meeting-house. Under the special tutelage of David and Phebe Willson, girls twelve years of age and older were taught traditional feminine skills, such as cooking and spinning, in addition to lessons in reading. The girl's boarding school was thus central to the sect's ability to foster a set of shared values and to further group cohesion. This appears to be particularly so, when one notes that the need for a girl's boarding school at Hope would hardly have been necessary: most families were situated close to the village; moreover, the curriculum was heavily oriented towards the teaching of skills normally passed down from mother to daughter. There is some evidence to suggest that parents sent their daughters there because Willson could bring them up better than they could.[91] This attests to the faith sect members placed in their leader's abilities, and suggests the extent to which Willson was able to act not only as spiritual patriarch, but as an actual father to the sect's girls. This demonstrates two things: firstly, the prime importance Willson placed on cultivating the loyalty of the sect's young women; and secondly, that ties to the larger sectarian family were fostered at the expense of those that bound members of nuclear families together.

By 1830, the increasing participation of the sect's young families in the market economy had led to a sense of crisis, centring on the inability of the older generation to control their children's behaviour. As such, Willson and the elders attempted to maintain sect unity by preventing younger, wealthier members from purchasing extra tracts of land, and by dispensing

lands concentrated in their own hands to other members of the sect according to necessity. The crisis deepened as the younger, wealthier heads of households refused submission to elder control. With the sense that the "Judgments of Almighty God are now in the earth," the Yearly Meeting of Committees was formed in 1832. Eight committees were created to "repair the breaches in Israel" and to oversee the sect's various concerns. Composed of both elders and young heads of families, two of them were designed specifically to respond to the latter's particular needs.[92] But for the most part, the power of the elders was significantly increased, once again at the expense of group consensus. As such, while Willson's theology and the rituals of the Children of Peace remained theoretically rooted in a spirit of egalitarianism, in practical terms, the elders were accorded an increase in political authority that mirrored their economic power within the sect. Additionally, the committees struck to "correct our female Institution according to the will and mind of the Parent," to "order the neighbourhood and the inhabitants," and to advise those involved in idle diversions represented a departure from informal means of maintaining sect discipline and cohesion.[93]

Additionally, these records provide insight into female participation in sect governance: women's names were only listed for those committees charged with organizing funerals, caring for the sick, tending the Female Institution, and arranging feasts. Women did not serve exclusively on any one committee; moreover, they were exempted from all other committees, including those which wielded disciplinary authority. Whereas under Quaker rule, and under the early forms of Davidite governance, both men and women had relatively equal claims to the exercise of community control, by 1832, the Children of Peace had effectively reduced women's power in this regard. Nonetheless, the records demonstrate that women participated as elders, with both Rachel Lundy and Mary Willson co-signing reports on the group's behalf. What this suggests is that authority within the sect must be understood in both generational and gendered terms. Men had access to all forms of leadership, but with participation weighted in the elders' favour. In contrast, women were restricted on both gendered and generational bases. Female elders had more authority

than young Davidite women, but less authority than male elders, and perhaps less authority than younger male members who served on disciplinary committees. Young Davidite women were at the bottom of the sect's governing hierarchy.[94]

But by 1830, the crisis that pit communitarianism against individualism was expressed in another important and related way, namely, through the increasingly frantic attempts of Willson and the elders to control the courtship practices of the younger generation. It was in this context of crisis that Willson's special relationship with the young, unmarried women of the sect proved particularly useful. Evidence demonstrates that he attempted to mould young women's attitudes toward courtship, love, marriage and family, so as to ensure that they acted with the best interests of the larger community in mind. Willson judged that these interests would be best served if young women – but maidens in particular – placed their loyalty to their parents and to himself above both foolish desire and allegiance to perfidious suitors and irresponsible husbands. By playing on maidens' fears of marriage and childbirth, and by appealing to their sense of pride rooted in their superior piety, virtue, and freedom, Willson sought to delay their decisions to marry and to influence their choices of suitors as a means of controlling the actions of the sect's young men, who had grown increasingly restive under elder control. At times however, Willson's negative rhetoric regarding marriage pointed to a more extreme solution to this crisis—namely, that the younger generation avoid marriage altogether. All in all, this constituted an adamant rejection of the growing North American cultural tendency to embrace both romantic love and the right of individuals to select their own marriage partners, a trend that some historians suggest accompanied the transition from subsistence to market economies.[95]

According to the traditional Quaker theology of marriage, the love of husband and wife grew out of a greater love of God, and as such, the essential goal of courtship was to ensure that a couple's desire to marry was based on divine will, and not on worldly motives such as greed or lust. Exogamy was closely related to this theological view: not being the will of God, it bore the taint of

sinful motives. Placing human above divine will in the act of marriage would result in an unsanctified union, meaning that the couple would be plagued with poor health, discord, wayward children, and sad events reminding them of their fall from grace. Eighteenth-century Quaker custom dictated that before courting, a man had to notify all four parents of his intentions before emotional involvement occurred, thus ensuring that they knew and approved of the potential match. Once a couple decided to marry, the Monthly Meeting ascertained their readiness to do so.[96]

Evidence suggests that the Children of Peace maintained these elements of the Quaker theology of marriage intact, while modifying the means of controlling the courtship experience in such a way that Willson became the bulwark of both parental and community authority. Aside from several wedding songs and marriage certificates, Willson and the sect produced comparatively few documents pertaining to courtship, love and marriage prior to 1830. That the usually prolific Willson did not feel compelled to dwell on the subject until after 1830 suggests that for the most part, younger members of the sect in the 1810s and 1820s courted and married in a manner acceptable to the sect's prophet and elders. This means that they complied with Willson's wish that they not "marry with Strangers, lest we shall bring in a wicked generation of Canaanites that know not the will of the Lord and [that] will destroy our inheritance and make captives of our children." As for the exact nature of the procedure surrounding courtship and marriage amongst the Children of Peace, it is not altogether clear. However, one observer asserted that Willson acted as a courtship broker, informing maidens of proposals of marriage, and setting up two-hour appointments for prospective brides and grooms to meet, afterwhich a final decision, favourable or otherwise was made. As such, it is likely that acceptable courtship and marriage practice, although not enforced by a set discipline, would have involved obtaining Willson's consent to any prospective match, in addition to the consent of parents.[97] What is more certain is that Willson and the elders attempted to limit the unsupervised interactions of young men and women, in order to control the courtship experience.[98]

By the 1830s, Willson and the elders' feared that their authority was being undermined by the younger generation's independent tendencies. For example, in 1831, the sect passed a resolution on "the expediency of our young males and females meeting together on such subjects as is common on earth," stating that such encounters were to be avoided, as they were "injurious to the female character...unprofitable to the male" and generally detrimental to the entire society.[99] Moreover, in March of 1835, the sect approved a set of advices pertaining to courtship and marriage celebrations. This document states explicitly what a number of Willson's poems, hymns, wedding songs and in memoria had implied for several years, and as such, it would be profitable to examine its contents more closely. First of all, it attempts to arrive at a scriptural understanding of God's will regarding marriage, and comes to the conclusion that God "hath [not] appointed man to Marry." When a couple married, in "ages that were of old ... the parties took Each other in the presence of the people and then performed a married life." This reflected the Quaker practice of marriage, but not the Quaker understanding of it, for they believed that God had ordained the institution, and thus it was blessed. Adam and Eve had been united before the Fall, and as such matrimony was a sinless institution. Davidites believed that a couple's decision to marry had to be based on the conviction that it was God's will. Willson nevertheless suggested that marriage was not ordained by God. And even though He continued to will people to enter this "solemn Covenant," the idea that marriage was a human custom, instituted after the Fall of man into sin, suggests that it bore the taint of man's fallen nature. [100]

The question of who could best ascertain the will of God in such matters was crucial to the courtship crisis of the 1830s. In short, Willson, the elders and the parental generation of the sect believed that they embodied the will of God, and that young people's increasing tendency to "choose [their] own companion[s] through the Intoxication of what is called youthful love," demonstrated that they were motivated by sinful desire. This threatened the traditional moral order of the community for "the parent is cut off from a voice on this binding subject which once was all

and all." Whereas parents could once guide their inexperienced offspring in the ways of the Lord, "now every one hath taken whom he or she hath chosen to place their eyes upon and the sight of the eye hath become the direction of life...." The primary result was that children "have gone into ways that God never hath appointed in the choice of their companions and in the performance of their marriage...." Unions unsanctified by God – or by parents and the sect's leaders who interpreted His will – could only lead to destruction, not only for individual couples and their offspring, but also for the larger community. As such, God's "aged and afflicted people" set themselves the task of "awaken[ing] our young to the danger of marriage" in the following way:

> We hear the doleful news....the young mother is gone to the grave, but the little thirsting orphan is left to weep. He must be cast into the hands of a borrowed mother ... and soon he follows his mother down to the grave, or endures a thousand weary nights to live. When the Lord so frequently doeth this with his people: querie if the marriage day should be merry.... If the mother liveth a few years, she beareth a few feminent [sic] Children. Some she saves and others she washes with tears and sends them down to the Grave. The living Cry with hunger, the scanty breast is often produced to the babe, and the parent must haste for bread for his young; he can scarcely call at the house of the Lord, to worship there, because of his young, he has become too lean to pay his offrings [sic] or perform his vows.

The document closes with a plea that children consider these things before they marry. In order to avoid the Lord's chastising hand, they were to "enquire often at the gates of wisdom before you pass your word or perform your vows," and to "[k]eep from the dead watches of the night in all your Intercourse, one with no other for there is a deep snare in it...." Most importantly, they were to keep away from strangers, and "if marriage must make you happy" they were to gather together in the presence of their brethren and in the fear of God, declare their intention to take each other as husband and wife, signing their promise with a seal.[101]

These passages testify to the profound anxiety that sect leaders felt with regard to courtship and marriage. Central to this anxiety was their conviction that the unsanctified marriages of the younger generation constituted the principal challenge to sect cohesion. The lusts of youth had made them independent of both God's will and parental control, causing them to reap the rewards of death, orphaned or sickly children, and importantly, a lack of prosperity which

forced young men to neglect their religious duties as they sought to feed their young – a reference to their increased participation in the market economy. In addition to this, Willson and the elders were concerned that such deceptions were luring maidens into marriage before they were old enough, a fact which exacerbated the sorrows parents felt when many were led "to the grave in the morning of their day."[102] Even more negatively, aspersions were cast on marriage's ability to make individuals happy, while it was suggested that children or indeed the entire process of family formation were the reasons for young people's lack of participation in the sect's moral economy. Although unsanctified unions were largely to blame, ironically, it was implied that sect unity and survival would best be served if the younger generation refrained from marrying altogether.

One must be careful, however, to distinguish between Willson's and the elders' perception of events and reality. They had asserted that a plague of child and maternal mortality had descended upon the sect's young families in punishment for the sins of youth. However, an examination of the genealogical record demonstrates that this view was not based on reality. During the sect's existence, three of 132 female members were known to have died in childbirth. Of these three, only two had perished prior to March of 1835: Sarah Lundy Willson in 1826 and Hannah Dennis Willson in 1830. Tragically, both had been married to David Willson's son John. A random sample of twenty-five of the sect's families demonstrates that a majority of sixteen had not experienced the death of at least one child, under the age of ten, while nine of twenty-five families had. Interestingly, from 1830 to 1835, three children under the age of three died compared to only one between 1820-1829. With regard to women marrying too young, the average age of marriage for the sect's females was 19, while the male average was 25. While Davidite men married at about the same age as their counterparts in the province's other pioneer communities, Davidite women married a year or so earlier than theirs, thus suggesting that the sect's concerns about brides being too young had some comparative basis.[103]

In all, however, these figures imply that Willson and the elders exaggerated the frequency of maternal and child mortality, as a means of suggesting that God disapproved of youth's disruption of the sect's traditional, communitarian emphasis.[104] Within the history of the sect to 1835, only two women had died in childbirth. Moreover, the increased incidence of childhood death in the early 1830s was in accordance with the much higher number of marriages in that decade compared to the 1820s. It stood to reason, that as more individuals married, and as more children were being born, a greater number of children would also die.[105] Nonetheless, reason alone cannot account for the emotional impact that these deaths had on the community. Indeed, it appears that Hannah Willson's death in childbirth on November 22, 1830, two months shy of her twentieth birthday so shocked and saddened the community that it acted as a kind of psychological watershed point, afterwhich discussions of courtship, marriage and family took on an increasingly sombre tone. It also served to bring several of Willson's latent concerns regarding these issues to the fore. Furthermore, Willson's writings during this period demonstrate that he used Hannah's death, and the infant deaths that followed as a means of exerting moral and religious pressure on the younger generation – but particularly on its young, unmarried women – to curb its independent tendencies.

For example, David Willson wrote a memorial for Hannah Willson that was intended less as a remembrance of the deceased, than as a warning to young maidens to take the lessons of her death to heart. In it, Willson had Hannah proclaim: "But oh I saw a setting sun/ As many maidens more will see/ For when they do as I have done/ They will come trembling down to me." And suggesting that there was "in the land an angry God," he pleaded with young women to "[p]repare thy heart take Hannah in." Willson continues, speaking for young maidens in the first person, by remarking on the frightening sight of the deceased. He queries "[w]hy should I haste to see my fate/ While I'm so weak and young," juxtaposing this sentiment with a description of the joylessness of married women. Then, in chorus, the young maidens vow to "step aside" from the "beaten path" of marriage, to which "the lawless run" and to fear the wedding day, for while the

"earth may boast of ...[its]joys...[o]ur youthful morn it soon destroys/ When balanced in the scale."

They end with a set of promises: firstly, to seek for joy in God and His laws, rather than in "walks

by night or vile deceit" with young men; and secondly to avoid "afflict[ing] the aged breast," they

vow to remain "firm in worship" placing their trust in their parents' guidance.[106]

It appears that the lessons Willson sought to teach regarding Hannah's death were taken up

with zeal by the young women of the Female Institution, who felt so moved as to publish "our

mutual agreement in the House of the Lord" on December 5, 1830. Addressing their statement to

"parents and Elders," they remarked that the "visiting hand of God has caused us to look back on

our late practices of life and wonder... in the separation of our little band of Sisters who were

educated together in our little female institution, we seem to be led as lambs to the slaughter, not

knowing what is before our eyes." Lamenting the "alarming" death of their "dear... Sister Hannah

Dennis," they resolved to "turn a little aside from the common course of life...in which we see so

many go down to their death," and to place their parents' wishes before their own. They pledged to

be humble, and to give their attention to "moderate industry, useful history, and the necessity of

orphan females and aged mothers," while single. Furthermore, they vowed to "keep no male

company to offend the House of the Lord," and to forever abstain from "secret interviews by

night." If God provided them with a change agreeable to their parents' will and "the gray headed in

the House of the Lord," they promised to contribute to the support of the Whole institution"

according to their abilities.[107]

Although Hannah's memorial bears no suggestion that she was anything but a faithful

member of the community, Willson was able to convince the young unmarried women of Hope that

her death was a sign of God's displeasure with their behaviour, particularly when they so gave into

their own willfulness as to allow themselves to be courted in secret. Such actions defied God's will

which was synonymous with both the will of their parents and of the Elders of the community. In

order to appease an angry God, and to ensure that they did not cause their parents any grief, they

were to devote themselves to worship, creating a virtuous home, moderate work, and to caring for the neediest female members of the community. In short, they resolved to place the needs of the larger sectarian family above individual desire, while recognizing that this represented a divergence from common cultural practice.

Possibly, the impact of Hannah's death on young Davidite women was augmented by the prophetic nature of the wedding song that David Willson wrote for her and John Willson. Although Upper Canadian law did not recognize Davidite marriages,unless couples remarried by a justice of the peace or an approved minister, Willson composed hymns, signed by witnesses, which substituted as marriage certificates. The fact that Willson wrote all of these wedding songs testifies to his special authority within the sect, and to his attempts to articulate its understanding of marriage. The wedding songs written during the 1820s underscore the solemnity of the marriage vow, and the couple's commitment to sharing both life's burdens and joys in the traditional Quaker fashion -- as helpmeets, and "companions of the mind" or spirit. Although these early songs tended to dwell on such sober themes as the weariness of life and on the couple's submission to destiny, the wedding songs of the 1830s demonstrate a much more pungent negativity regarding the couple's future: images of gathering storms, death, confinement, and mourning parents are united with intimations of marital misery and the certain demise of youthful love.[108] No exception was Hannah and John Willson's wedding song, whose central theme was the plight of a little orphan, "born without a father's care" and deprived of his mother's love. It concludes: "Thus we see the child oppressd [sic]/ Parents for the orphan weep/ Eer [sic] you down in pleasures lie/ Through prayer reenter into sleep/ Parents and the child may die."[109] On a general level, the increasing negativity of wedding songs suggests that marriage had become a central source of tension in the life of the community. More specifically, however, the fact that Willson had presaged Hannah's death likely served to increase the weight of his opinion, particularly among young women who had been taught to be especially loyal to the sect's prophet and patriarch.

During the next few years, Willson's writings suggest that he sought to reinforce young maidens' resolve to remain unmarried, and obedient to their parents by contrasting the utopian qualities of maidenhood with married life, which was typically characterized as a female dystopia. A particularly salient example of this is the hymn "To be sung after meat by the female Children of the house of the Lord, Israel's God," written in the early 1830s. The title suggests that the hymn was intended to be sung regularly by the sect's girls, after supper, perhaps with the view that its lessons could best be internalized by frequent repetition. The song stressed the benefits of celibacy:

> ...We are a little orphan band/ Thats [sic] left our house and home/ To travel to a joyful land/ Where brightest virtues known/ We will put on our robes of white/ In peaceful union join/ Appear like clusters sweet and ripe/ Thats bearing on the vine.../ King Jesus placed us in the midst/ And there our place shall be/ With glory crown upon our heads.../For ancient David well [sic] sing.../We will not haste to wedding bands/ As thoughtless children do/ Nor crying Infants in our hands/ Soon bid our peace adieu/ We still will praise our maiden name/ Till storms of angers oer/ Why should we drink a mothers pain/ Before we are one score/ Well in the churches bosom rest...[and] marry as we need...[110]

This hymn speaks to the centrality of young virgins in the ritual life of the sect, who donned their "robes of white and took their place "in the midst" of celebrations, singing "for ancient David" in all glory. Images of beauty and lush nature surround the virtuous, young maidens, as they vow to rest secure in the "church's bosom" until they are at least twenty. The hymn implies that it would be absurd to forfeit their present esteem and peace for the trials of motherhood. Maidens' role "for ages yet to come" was to be sweet and virtuous, bringing comfort to aging parents, while rejoicing in their celibate state until the troubles that the sect was experiencing subsided.

Willson exalted maidens for their superior piety and virtue, as a means of rejecting the more mainstream ideal that women were happiest as wives and mothers. In this way, the concept of family and social organization promulgated by the Children of Peace undermined separate spheres ideology. At the same time, he proved to be quite adept at tapping into young women's natural fears of leaving childhood behind in favour of married life. It was common for young

women of the middling ranks in late eighteenth and early nineteenth century America to express profound anxiety about this rite of passage. They recognized that marriage could bring much evil and unhappiness, and many appeared reluctant to forfeit the benefits of girlhood – close connections to parents, safety, freedom and amusement – for marriage and its potential trials, including poor harvests, ill health, financial troubles, loss of sexual control, and death in childbirth.[111] Time and again, Willson made an art out of these fears, contrasting the virtuous play, freedom and homosocial solidarity of girlhood's "secret cause" with the anxiety-producing scenes of motherhood. Indeed, as young maidens "like plants of honor gr[e]w," mothers "toil[ed] and cr[ied with half a score of young ones by." Such sights were not only occasions for trembling fear, but also reminders to young women to avoid "evil company," and to set their gaze on the Lord.[112]

In attempting to dissuade Davidite women from acting independently when selecting a mate, Willson accented the dangers of unsanctioned and unsanctified courtship, in addition to attacking young men for being unreliable. These are the main themes of "Oh pride thou for to human right..." written in 1831. The hymn tells the story of an innocent maiden who went walking "one pleasant morn" whereupon she saw a youth who had been seeking her. He laid his "gentle arms" upon her and told her that for years his soul had sought her. The maiden folded her hands on her bosom but he "with love...forced them from [her] breast," with the result that she lost her "maiden rest" and bore a child. Dissatisfied, the youth abandoned her and her weeping child, making the young woman realize that his flattery had fooled her. Mournful, she longed for her lost freedom, and instructed maidens to shun the "sweet Imbraces [sic]" of "sons of adam" whose "hearts are full of treachery."[113]

These hymns suggest that the uncontrolled nature of sexual attraction and romantic love had begun to seriously undermine Willson's and the elders' grip on the younger generation. Willson's juxtaposition of innocent maidenhood with male carnality must be viewed in this light. Such appeals were based on the common view that by accepting or rejecting men's advances,

young women were in control of sexual expression. Moreover, they tapped into the rising cultural tendency to equate femininity with superior virtue in contrast to the "natural" masculine propensity for lust. Fearing that maidens' innocent and "tender-hearted" natures would make them vulnerable to male deception, such hymns underscored the dangers of taking suitors' loving words at face value. Pregnancy, abandonment, early marriage, death in childbirth or a woeful married life could be the only results of such inauspicious beginnings. Willson advanced that the best prophylactic against such fates was a longer stay in "Eden's garden"- a reference to the sexually pure world of girlhood, where females lived peacefully and in harmony with God, resisting suitors' advances until they too experienced this harmony, and "bowed down to kiss [their] hands. In short, before young men and women courted each other, they were to "court the messiah" and "triumph in his name." Importantly, once young men took "King David [as their] armour" - a double entendre designed to support David Willson's claims to patriarchal and prophetic authority- - they would "defend the rights" of young maidens, with all rejoicing in the blessings thus received.[114] Young people's happiness rested in the continued subordination of their own wills, to the "will of God" which Willson and the elders claimed to embody.

Interestingly, there is evidence to suggest that Willson employed similar arguments in order to convince young, married women to place loyalty to the sect – and by extension, loyalty to Willson and the elders – above loyalty to their own husbands. A poem entitled "Female history or the Mother's peace" written in the early to mid 1830s is a particularly strident example of this. It echoes the 1835 "marriage ceremony" in linking the perils of "youthful love" and unsanctified courtship with marital woe, men's participation in cash cropping, and male tendencies toward irreligion. The difference, however, is that it offers women a means of regaining God's favour, after having been punished for the sin of self-will: by serving the Lord as master, wives could reestablish order within their marriages and obtain the balance of power therein. In the process, gender roles would be inverted. The poem's narrative voice is female, and she begins her song at

eighteen, when she "thought [her]self a woman...fit for courting by young men." Cynically, she

remarks that she "sold [her]self to be a wife," as many women do, but despite the sweetness of the

wedding day, she soon "wearried [sic] in the marriage yoke/But found the chains could not be

broke." Burdened with tears, she prayed to God for death, while her husband "did oft lament/ And

of his courting did repent." With this, the bloom of youthful love passed away, "[a]nd fruit paid

for the marriage day." No sooner had her cheek dried than she was "confined to nurse a son," the

result being that her husband was "bound for bread/To sweat and toil till he is dead." To make

matters worse, her nursing duties prevented her from attending meetings for worship. When she

"told [her]boy to stay at home/ And one day nurse the babe alone... he began to frown and scold...

[saying] that he must till the field for gold... [and] had not time to tend the church." She continues:

> And I must of the house take care/ With every thing thats placed there/ I left the wheel for
> heavens sake/ And none knows how my heart did ache./ My husband he did fret and scold/
> And says hes [sic] lost both Joy and gold/ And my insides began to burn/ To see this world
> sad overturn/ But I did ...try the strength of my own arm/ In twain did part the marriage
> chore/ By the Jehovah calld the Lord/ And males again may try to bind/ With tears and
> groans may court my mind/ Ill first go hedge go ditch or plow/ To no such lords no more
> Ill bow/ ... Im bound henceforth to serve the Lord/ And lead the husband by the cord/ He
> many a day on earth did rule/ And made the male the greatest fool/ But now Ill sweat and
> pull the string/ My husband to the church Ill bring/ Ill also bow my heart and pray/ That
> he in fitts wont run away/ If so I hope hell not return/ To learn my free born soul to
> mourn."[115]

This document suggests that Willson and the elders viewed the nuclear family –

particularly if it were born in a spirit of independence – as a potential menace, not only to the

husband and particularly the wife, but also to the larger sectarian family. Interestingly, even

having children was viewed with some opprobrium: as mothers nursed their babies, and as fathers

were forced to work the fields to support their families, both parents were drawn away from the

religious duties that tied them to the larger community. But Willson placed most of the blame on

male individuality: men's greediness and hardness of heart compelled women to take on the lion's

share of responsibility in tending the church, which increased female authority within the family.

Recalling his earlier "vision" of pious woman as temple builder, Willson suggested that because of men's failures, within both nuclear and sectarian families, God had ordained that the unity of husband and wife would be disrupted as traditional gender roles were reversed.[116] Willson offered young wives greater rights within marriage, if they sided with him and the elders of the community against their errant husbands. In this way, the " Mother's Peace" was less a critique of marriage as a restrictive institution, than an attack on the individualism of young men – a vice which led them to shirk their religious obligations, and which made them exceedingly difficult to control. As a result, the unity of the sectarian family was deemed to be more important than the unity of the nuclear family, particularly when it proved increasingly difficult to dissuade young married men from the economic practices that severed them from community life. In this context of crisis, Willson's special relationship with Davidite women, together with his powerful rhetoric were instrumental in convincing them that their primary allegiance lay with the large, sectarian family which he himself had "fathered."

This special relationship had led to British traveller Thomas Rolph's recognition that Willson's reordering of traditional family and marital relations, through the creation of a "polygamous" harem, had a direct bearing on his attacks versus the newly evolving market economy. He likened Willson to Mohammed, "who, although possessing an extensive harem is not quite so jealous of its houris... 'holding all things in common' .... What with the influence of music, and the still softer attractions – the founder of this new sect has managed to induce farmers to dispose of their farms, to take an acre lot in this new village Priapus."[117] Hyperbole aside, Rolph understood that Willson's attempts to escape market economic encroachments depended upon the subversion of the yeoman farmer, and of domestic ideals based on the creation of the separate nuclear family. Willson's efforts to dissuade young men from cash-cropping, to create a highly visible, loyal core of female acolytes or "sect symbols," and to strengthen the ties of the larger, sectarian family to the detriment of the integrity of individual families, were explicitly patriarchal.

Indeed, from the sect's earliest years, Willson's prophetic leadership was conflated with the sense that he was its singular patriarch. Time and again, he asserted that he was the "servant the Lord has chosen" and urged his "children" to receive his words as they "are from the Lord."[118] He was even more direct in the introduction to A Lesson of Instruction, Written and Published for the Children of Peace, which was used as a catechism in the sect's schools, beginning in 1816. In it, he claimed to be "a father of a family of small children... committed to ... [his] care in this life." He believed that his sectarian children, should look up to their parent for support and for instruction in both temporal and spiritual matters. Although Willson did not sustain exclusive rights to spiritual leadership within the community, he was its "principal minister." Moreover, his special patriarchal and spiritual authority was supported by the sect's elders, who, even amidst divisions recognized him as "the first stone in our ... congregation" who had demonstrated great skill in building up their community. As such, they believed it best to esteem as "the father of us all," and to be willing to serve him, just as he had served them, "that he may advise us and our children with Godly care and the respect that a father should have for sons and daughters who is by them respected. In the main, the elders supported Willson as the sect's spiritual patriarch because they recognized him as a prophet who "hath written much... [and who] wrote truths which has proved to us that he was favoured with some foreknowledge of events, which has come to pass within our knowledge."[119] But Willson and the elders worked in tandem: their joint aim was the preservation of the sect's distinct moral economy in the absence of a set discipline. As was mentioned previously, after 1825, this became increasingly difficult as young heads of families began to depend on market production for survival. One way that the elders sought to meet this challenge was by controlling the sale of land. But equally important was the elders' recognition of Willson's special patriarchal and spiritual role which bolstered the moral authority of the founding, or parental generation in general, and the power of the elders in particular.

An example of this is found in <u>Moral and Religious Precepts, Church Ordinances, and the</u> <u>Principles of Civil Government</u> (1836) which was published in the context of the community's increasing inter-generational strife, in addition to its participation in the radical reform movement. In it, Willson attempted to provide a blueprint for both successful family life and constitutional reform that by implication, centred on an idealization of social relations in the sectarian village of Hope. As mentioned, Willson's hybrid of monarchical republicanism echoed the mid-eighteenth century Whig ideal of the Patriot King, a morally righteous and benevolent fatherly figure who would be the focus of political unity in the interest of the common good. Additionally, Willson's political ideal harkened back to Paineite arguments which stated that the Rights of Man were divinely sanctioned. According to Willson, the ideal king would make the poor and ignorant the peculiar objects of his favour, thus demonstrating that he ruled justly, according to egalitarian, Christian principles. Within this system, the essential outlines of establishmentarianism would be maintained, while the relationship between rich and poor would be radically reversed.[120]

The loving care the king extended to his subjects was mirrored by both Willson's sense of himself as sect patriarch, and by his vision of the ideal relationship between parents and children within the Children of Peace. Similar to his idealized King, Willson's leadership of the flock depended upon his superior piety, wisdom and justice – things that he readily accorded himself. Moreover, his conception of community was based on an interdependent family model. For example, Willson asserted that the duty of parent to child went from cradle to grave, during which time, the former was responsible for giving the latter the "whole necessities of a moral and religious life" as long as they lived. In turn, the child's duty was to respect his parent's wisdom at all times, because of his advanced age and experience. Although a son could provide for himself at age twenty-one, at no time was he to "declare himself independent of his father's love," for this was "but the full time of his childhood, and the beginning to be a man," when he needed parental guidance "more than when he lay in his cradle."[121]

Similar to peasant family structures in both Europe and America, the settlement at Hope depended upon a perpetuation of the subsistence-oriented, corporate family economy that was based on the patriarch's personal supervision and the settlement of his sons on contiguous land holdings. The cornerstone of this system was the continued interdependence of family members over "generational time." As such, it is not surprising that family and community was conceived in organic terms, with the "parents" of the sect constituting the "vine" and their children the "fruit."[122] But unlike other Dissenting communities organized along patriarchal lines, Davidites (and Quakers) sought to strengthen the relationship between parent and child by emphasizing the bonds of love that kept the latter in a state of benign dependence, as opposed to the more stern rhetoric of submission to patriarchal authority that characterized the "distant progeny" of other English Dissenting denominations.[123] For a time, Willson's model was more effective because it instilled patriarchal ideals through control of affections, in addition to control of economic relations. Willson's ability to influence the opinions of the community's young girls with whom he was especially close is a case in point.

But Willson and the elders were fighting a losing battle. In the absence of strong disciplinary authority, and faced with a marked rise by the early 1840s of large, commercially prosperous, and independent farms owned by individual Davidite families, the group's elders found that they could no longer control the behaviour of the younger generation. This had exacerbated the internal divisions caused by the participation of several young Davidites in the Rebellion of 1837. The experience dampened the radical ardour of Willson and other Davidites, as did the political and religious reforms of the 1840s and 50s which served to redress several of their original concerns. Furthermore, the involvement of local government in schooling and in poor relief eroded the group's traditional role as educator and welfare provider, which contributed to the severance of ties that bound family, faith and community closely together. At the same time, Willson increasingly monopolized the religious life of the community. This, along with a further

reduction in the importance of the Inward Light doctrine impeded the denomination's potential for spiritual regeneration via the emergence of new ministers. By the 1860s, the community was in rapid decline, as many of its younger members left the village, some in search of land, and others in search of opportunities in the rapidly urbanizing centres of Ontario. In 1876, ten years after David Willson's death, the denomination was incorporated into a charitable society, which ceased operation in 1889.[124]

Conclusion

In the first section, the key elements that contributed to the creation of traditional, rural, subsistence-oriented Quaker communities in Upper Canada was explored in some depth. Quakers in both Upper Canada and the larger North Atlantic world modified the typical, patriarchal orientation of the traditional, communitarian way of life. In contrast to those communities in Europe and North America which were organized along patriarchal lines, and which emphasized the coercive power of the father in controlling both his wife and offspring, Upper Canadian Friends directed their attentions toward proper child nurture, as the root of community harmony and cohesion. The Quaker understanding of childhood as a period of prolonged innocence, bounded at the far end by grave moral dangers, combined with its unique family-oriented polity to encourage both parents to approach child-rearing as a sacred, public trust. In earlier times, this accentuated parental role, particularly the role mothers played in their children's moral development, had led to the formal recognition of women's authority as elders, overseers and officers of the church. Although they worked within separate business meetings, and despite the disabilities which Quaker women faced both within the denomination and within the larger society, Friends in Upper Canada did not subscribe to the most extreme dictates of separate spheres ideology. Rather, Quaker women's guaranteed authority within the community, particularly their control over marriages, in addition to the interdependent nature of agricultural household relations, and the practice of joint

cooperation on Disciplinary cases mitigated against both physical separation and the polarization of gender attributes.

As for information on how successful Upper Canadian Quaker communities were at maintaining their peculiar way of life, this study has only "scratched the surface." In order to speak with certainty about the entire range of Friends communities in the colony, both Orthodox and Hicksite, a more exhaustive, statistical analysis must be pursued. Such a task is beyond the scope of this thesis, however, my research has indicated some of the main challenges to Quaker community cohesion at Yonge Street. In descending order of importance, these included the problem of marrying out, a factor directly related to the Quaker marriage testimony, and to the tendency for marital infractions to end in disownment; schism, which in some ways reflects the failure of Quaker consensus to successfully mediate between disputing parties; state pressures such as military requisitioning; the lure of reform activism; and the temptations of diversion, drink, crude words and rough behaviour. After mid-century, however, the challenges to Friends' traditional way of life became more pronounced, as economic "progress," consensus Protestantism and the assumptions of liberal individualism sealed its fate.

The rich documentary sources on the Children of Peace have permitted historians to speak with greater depth and certainty about this peculiarly Upper Canadian religious group. In this chapter, I have argued that the crisis of the 1830s over courtship and marriage pointed to the irreconcilable differences between the denomination's espousal of individualistic piety, with its rhetorical support of gender equality, and its adherence to a patriarchal system of family and community order. Willson had attempted to effect an ideological rapprochement between the two, which was expressed most directly in his vision of monarchical republicanism: harkening back to eighteenth-century notions of the social and political order, he modelled family life on the relationship between a benevolent, divinely-appointed king charged with protecting the welfare and liberties of his subjects. Willson envisaged his leadership of the Children of Peace in such terms: at

Hope, he acted as a divinely-inspired patriarch, commissioned to care for his family of God's chosen people. Unfortunately however, the challenges of reality meant that Willson's stress upon female participation and egalitarian community consensus were increasingly outpaced by the necessity to maintain community order and unity, a task which called for a strengthening of patriarchal controls. In the matrix of this struggle, Davidite women gradually lost political power while Willson used the rhetoric of gender equality to create a young, female coterie that was loyal to his prophetic and patriarchal authority. But the most dramatic battle between egalitarianism and patriarchalism, individualism and community, and subsistence versus market economic involvement, was expressed in the generationally-based courtship and marriage crisis of the 1830s. The community's second generation came of age at a time when rising land-debts necessitated greater dependence upon cash-cropping: successful participation in the market economy fostered an independence amongst young heads of households which threatened the traditional moral economy, most notably by challenging the authority of Willson and the elders. Aside from direct attempts to control the purchase and use of land, and in the absence of a system of discipline, they endeavoured to maintain the ties that bound family, faith and community so closely together through the more subtle instrument of indoctrination directed at the denomination's young women and girls. It was hoped that young women's personal loyalty to Willson as denominational patriarch would keep them from the temptation of romantic love which dangerously privileged individual desire, in addition to the couple's allegiance to each other and to the nuclear family unit, over the larger bonds of community.

On a more general level, this study suggests a number of things. First of all, it is clear that separate spheres ideology neither mirrored the reality of gender relations amongst the Children of Peace, nor was it an ideal toward which women were encouraged to strive. That being said, Willson drew upon its belief in female moral superiority to serve the purposes of both his egalitarian ideology, and the necessity of patriarchal control. It was perhaps this necessity that

caused the erosion of female political power within the group. Furthermore, this study illuminates the relationship between the conceptualization and practice of courtship, and notions of family, faith and community within a context that has been generally neglected: that of Upper Canadian agricultural and artisanal communities. In lieu of church courts, by which other, larger Canadian denominations of the era controlled the sexual behaviour of individuals in defence of the family,[125] Willson and Davidite elders took recourse to less formal means of social control. Moreover, it was the Dissenting family of God's chosen people assembled at Hope that they sought to defend, versus the challenges posed by nuclear families of increasingly independent means. That the defence rested largely on attempts to discredit the power of romantic love suggests that the denomination's tribulations during the 1830s constitute the beginning of a transition from a traditional, communitarian-oriented view of the family, to one based on more "modern" notions that privileged individual happiness, and the emotional bonds of couples over ties to the larger community. As such, the Davidite crisis over the meaning of the family, and over courtship, love and marriage provides the student of history with a sense of the cultural dimensions that accompanied the transition from subsistence-oriented to market-oriented production in Upper Canada.

Taken together, this study of the Quakers and the Children of Peace in Upper Canada accomplishes several things. Firstly, it points to the intimate links between Upper Canadian Dissent, on the one hand, and experiences of gender and family, on the other. It also pushes our historical understanding of such issues beyond the traditional Anglican and Methodist parameters. In the process, it challenges the notion of separate spheres ideology as a widely recognized, but ultimately unreachable set of values which colonial women valiantly sought to emulate. In agreement with other historians of gender, it asserts that separate spheres ideology and its dichotomization of masculine and feminine, public and private realms is too stark and simplistic. However, it goes a step further in suggesting that no one model of gender relations was authoritative or supreme prior to 1850. As such, it refocuses the historiographical debate away

from separate spheres as a joint elite/bourgeois phenomenon, and toward the persistence of early-

modern notions of family and faith, which moulded the experience of gender within Upper

Canadian agricultural communities into the middle decades of the nineteenth-century.

Endnotes

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[1] For example, Elizabeth Jane Errington does not discuss the role religion played in the lives of Upper Canadian women, in Wives and Mothers, Schoolmistresses and Scullery Maids. And although Cecilia Morgan's Public Men and Virtuous Women explores the intimate connections betweeen religion, politics and gender discourse, it does not venture beyond the Anglican/Methodist paradigm.

[2] I would like to thank Dr. William Westfall for suggesting that I explore the deeper currents beneath Willson's apparent espousal of female gender equality within the Children of Peace at the Conference on the Canadian Evangelical Experience held at Queen's University in 1996. My thanks are also extended to Dr. Nancy Christie who assisted me greatly in reconceptualizing my thoughts on the Davidite experience of gender and family.

[3] For example, Mary P Ryan has demonstrated how Protestant settlers to the frontier lands of Oneida County, New York, in the 1790s created a corporate family economy and a domestic system of production in which all family members were united in the common enterprise of subsistence. She argues that this mode of economic organization was intimately linked to Puritan commonwealth ideas regarding individuals, families and their social functions. Ryan, Cradle of the Middle Class, 18-22.

[4] Ibid.

[5] Edward Shorter, The Making of the Modern Family (New York: Basic Books, 1977), 3. Shorter argues that the bonds of the traditional, community-centred, patriarchal family were severed by a "surge of sentiment" that coincided with a transition from subsistence to market economic production, in Western European countries between the late eighteenth and the late nineteenth centuries. He notes that modern societies exalt individual, emotional considerations in courtship over material, instrumental or community considerations. Moreover, they are characterized by an increasingly intimate relationship between mother and child, and by a privileging of nuclear family bonds over ties to the larger community. For a contrasting point of view, see Lawrence Stone, The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1500-1800, (New York: Harper & Rowe, 1977). See also Norton, Founding Mothers and Fathers. Norton underscores the importance of the bonds of unity between family and community within patriarchal social structures, and contrary to Stone argues that Puritanism does not signal the beginning of modern individualism.

[6] Schrauwers, Awaiting the Millennium, 99-103.

[7] Frost, 14-22.

[8] Greven, The Protestant Temperament, 35-48. See also Fischer, 97-102, 507.

[9] Neil Semple, The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), 65. See also Alison Prentice, The School Promoters: Education and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Upper Canada (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1988), 31-40.

[10] Frost, 84-6.

[11] AO, Religious Society of Friends Papers [hereafter RSFP], MS 303, Reel 50, D-1-10, Pelham: Epistles, Yearly Meeting of Women Friends, a/ Manuscript, 1801-52; b/ Printed, 1813-41, Epistle of the Yearly Meeting of Women Friends, New York, 1816.

[12] Frost, 76-77; Discipline, 9; see also Joan M Jensen, Loosening the Bonds: Mid-Atlantic Farm Women, 1750-1850 (New Haven/London: Yale University Press, 1986), 12; Frost, 14-24, 75-78.

[13] RSFP, Reel 50, D-1-8, London (Eng.) Yearly Meetings. Epistles. "The Epistle from the Yearly Meeting, Held in London," 21-29th of the Fifth Month, 1798.

[14] RSFP, Reel 50, D-1-10, "From our Yearly Meeting of Women Friends held in New York by adjournments from the 29th of 5th month to the 2nd of 6th month 1820, to the Half Years Meeting of Women Friends in Canada." See also Frost, 78-80.

[15] The Yonge St. Monthly Meeting made provisions for schooling as early as 1806. School was conducted in local Friends' homes until 1816 when a school house was built on meeting land, near Newmarket. This school survived until the Hicksite schism of 1828-9. At Pelham, a school was organized in 1811 in Welland County, and at Westlake, one was organized in 1816 in Prince Edward County. In the late 1830s, Westlake Boarding school was established, also in Prince Edward County. Because Quaker schools were few and far between, children were usually educated in female-run family schools. For example, Joseph Gould, the son of Uxbridge pioneers, recalls that there was no school in the township until 1818. Nor was there any school closer than the Quaker schoolhouse on Yonge St., twenty miles to the west. He acquired the rudiments of reading and spelling from his mother, and after age ten, he attended a Quaker school that was open only during the winter months where he got a smattering of the "three R's." Samuel Haight, whose family moved to Yarmouth from Westchester Co., New York in 1817 recounts that he and his siblings were "deprived of school learning" but for the efforts of his older sister Rebecca who "wrought hard in her delicate state of health to teach us all she could. See Gould, The Life and Times of Joseph Gould, Ex-member of the Canadian Parliament. Struggles of the Early Canadian Settlers - Settlement of Uxbridge - Sketch of the History of the County of Ontario - The Rebellion of 1837 - Parliamentary Career, etc., etc. REMINISCENCES OF SIXTY YEARS OF ACTIVE POLITICAL AND MUNICIPAL LIFE, ed., WH Higgins, (1887; Toronto: Fitzhenry & Whiteside, 1972), 38-40; and DFHC, Young Friends' Review, First Month, 1889.

[16] RSFP, Reel 50, D-1-10, "Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Held at New York, the 5th of 6th Month, 1820."

[17] Fischer, 510.

[18] RSFP, Reel 27, B-2-84, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting, 1818-28; Gould, 88-9. This pattern was also reflected in the life of the son of Adolphustown farmer and lumberman, Thomas Bowerman, who went from sin to repentance in those years. See RSFP, Reel 54, Papers Relating to Individuals and Families, "Some Account of the Events of My Father," (Mimeographed pamphlet, date unknown. Subject of the sketch, Thomas Bowerman, was born in 1761).

[19]RSFP, Reel 50, D-1-8, "The Epistle from the Yearly Meeting, Held in London," 1807.

[20] RSFP, Reel 50, D-1-8, "The Epistle from the Yearly Meeting, Held in London," 1809.

[21] RSFP, Reel 50, D-1-10, "At a Yearly Meeting of Women Friends Held in New York."

[22]Cott, The Bonds of Womanhood, 128-9, 197-201.Errington, Wives and Mothers, 21; Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, "The Female World of Love and Ritual: Relations between Women in Nineteenth-Century America," in Disorderly Conduct: Visions of Gender in Victorian America, (New York: Mercer University Press, 1985); Ann Douglas, The Feminization of American Culture, (New York: Knopf, 1977); Epstein, The Politics of Domesticity. In recent years, historians have demonstrated that the reality of middle-class life did not live up to the prescriptions of this ideology, to the extent that the boundaries separating public and private worlds were blurred. In addition to Davidoff and Hall's Family Fortunes, see Cecilia Morgan's Public Men and Virtuous Women. Although Morgan criticizes the traditional binary opposition at the heart of separate spheres ideology as too simplistic, she nevertheless argues that bourgeois social relations in Upper Canada, by the 1840s, were largely guided by the ethic of domesticity.

[23]Levy, 78; Phyllis Mack, Visionary Women: Ecstatic Prophecy in Seventeenth-Century England (Berkeley/Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1992), 245-6.

[24]Dorland. 14; Discipline, 57.

[25]Levy, 79.

[26]Like Mack, Patricia Crawford notes that the creation of "respectable" Quakerism after 1670 augmented women's authority in some respects while restricting it in others. In reference to the restrictions, Crawford notes that the post-1670 emphasis on discipline versus mysticism led to the limitation of publications produced by female prophets, mainly through the censoring efforts of the Second Day Morning Meeting. Although women gained power over marriages and obtained a forum in which to discuss their concerns, Crawford asserts that men contested their authority and attempted to control their opportunities for speaking out. See Patricia Crawford, Women and Religion in England 1500-1720 (London/New York: Routledge, 1993). 193-7.

[27]Marjorie Griffin Cohen, Women's Work, Markets, and Economic Development in Nineteenth-Century Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 8, 66-71.

[28]Gould, 21-33; Errington, Wives and Mothers, 8.

[29]AO, Pamph. 1987 no. 7, Rachel Webb Haight,"Recollections of Daily Life," in Reflections on the Pioneer Settlement of Newmarket by Two Yonge Street Quakers, Newmarket Historical Society, Occasional Papers 1, no. 2, 15.

[30]Ibid., 19-21, 21-27.

[31]Ibid., 15-17.

[32]Cohen, 79, 85.

[33]Nancy Grey Osterud, Bonds of Community: The Lives of Farm Women in Nineteenth-Century New York (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 4-11; Cohen, 44.

[34]Ibid., 49-56.Bruce Elliott takes a much more an optimistic view of how women were treated in questions of inheritance. He argues that Tipperary Irish Protestant husbands of the Ottawa Valley allowed women as much control as was possible, while ensuring that the farm reverted to a male heir of the late husband after the wife's death. Indeed, the majority of men sampled gave their widows control over the homestead for the rest of their lives, or until they remarried. (See Bruce Elliott, Irish Migrants in the Canadas: A New Approach [Kingston & Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1988], 198-199). However, several other studies substantiate Cohen's claims. For example, David Gagan's study of wills led him to conclude that in widowhood, women "became the dependents of their sons, grandsons, sons-in-law or their husbands' executors, their standard of living and even their future conduct prescribed or proscribed literally from the grave." (See David Gagan, Hopeful Travellers: Families, Land, and Social Change in Mid-Victorian Peel County, Canada West [Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981], 89-90). Nanciellen Davis makes a similar argument in "'Patriarchy from the Grave': Family Relations in 19th Century New Brunswick Wills," Acadiensis XIII, 2 (Spring 1984), 91-100. In Founding Mothers and Fathers: Gendered Power and the Forming of American Society (New York: Knopf, 1996), Mary Beth Norton asserts that legal provisions in seventeenth-century New England ensuring that widows received 1/3 of their husbands' property were ignored in practice. In Property and Kinship: Inheritance in Early Connecticut, 1750-1820 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), Toby L. Ditz concludes that a number of factors "reinforced the subordination of women's direct claims to productive property." (See Ditz, 169). Women rarely came into ownership of land from their husbands. "So long as the life chances of children depended on productive property, wives and husbands did not normally become their spouses' main heirs. Holders were also likely to cut corners on their wives' maintenance needs. Both law and practice combined, on the whole, to curb sharply women's control of land." (See Ditz, 133). On balance, the larger historiographical record favors Cohen. However, Elliott's assessment suggests that the experiences of rural widows varied along regional and ethnic lines, and that the subject, at least in the Canadian context, requires further study. See Bettina Bradbury, "Widowhood and Canadian Family History," In Intimate Relations: Family and Community in Planter Nova Scotia, 1759-1800 (Fredericton: Acadiensis Press, 1995), 19-41.

[35]This was certainly the case with Quaker Mutuah Bowerman, who settled with her husband, Thomas Bowerman at Westlake at the turn of the century. Thomas Bowerman, who engaged in both farming and the lumber business died in 1810. Although Mutuah was a resourceful manager of the family farm during her men-folk's business absences, her husband did not see fit to entrust his entire estate to her: Instead, she was appointed co-executor, along with her son and her brother-in-law Stephen Bowerman. See: RSFP, Reel 54, Some Account of the Events of My Father. In the early nineteenth-century, the wife was often given usufructory rights over property until death, with certain limitations, and usually conditional upon her not remarrying. Husbands' provisions generally ensured that wives would be dependent upon their adult children, and often a single son was ordered to provide his mother with support. After the wife's death, estates were usually redistributed to the children, according to the husband's express intent. While women had little freedom over the bulk of the estate, they were often free to dispose of small amounts of property as they saw fit This was the case with Yonge St. pioneer and widow Phebe Winn who penned her last will and testament in 1823. See: NA, Archives of the Religious Society of Friends, Reel M 3850, "Phebe Winn's Diary," 1823 04 25. See also Jensen, 24-5.

[36]Lynne Marks, "Christian Harmony: Family, Neighbours, and Community in Upper Canadian Church Discipline Records," in On the Case: Explorations in Social History, eds., Franca Iacovetta and Wendy Mitchinson (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1998), 12; Elizabeth Gillan Muir, "Beyond the Bounds of Acceptable Behaviour: Methodist Women Preachers in the Early Nineteenth-Century," Changing Roles

of Women within the Christian Church in Canada, eds. Elizabeth Gillan Muir and Marilyn Fardig Whiteley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 164-178.

[37]Discipline, 21-24.

[38]Ibid., 16.

[39] RSFP, Reel 27, B-2-83, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting, 1806-1818, Minutes for 1806 12 18; Minutes for 1807 02 13. She vowed to appeal the decision, and in 1808 her case was revived. See same source, Minutes for 1808 01 14.

[40]Nancy A Hewitt, "The Fragmentation of Friends: The Consequences for Quaker Women in Antebellum America,"Witnesses for Change: Quaker Women over Three Centuries (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 104; Schrauwers, "Consensus Seeking, Factionalization and Schism," 84-5.

[41]Dean Freiday, ed.Barclay's Apology In Modern English (New Jersey: n.p., 1967), 218.; Mack 287-8. A disproportionate number of the feminist abolitionist leaders who gathered together at Seneca Falls, New York in 1848 to discuss the issue of women's rights were Hicksite Quakers. As Nancy Hewitt has argued, these women did not represent the interests of urban, middle-class moral reformers. Rather, their experience working alongside their husbands in New York state's agricultural communities, combined with Hicksite Quakerism's commitment to social justice led them to reject the Cult of True Womanhood, with its separation of spheres and claims of female superiority, and to embrace arguments for women's natural right to equality. Unlike the ranks of Orthodoxy, which contained a larger proportion of urban, wealthy Quakers, the Hicksite branch was predominantly rural. Margaret Hope Bacon suggest that the rural experience was crucial in sheltering these women from the effects of Victorian gender ideology. See Nancy A Hewitt, "Feminist Friends: Agrarian Quakers and the Emergence of Woman's Rights in America," Feminist Studies 12, no. 1, (Spring 1986), 27-49; Margaret Hope Bacon, Mothers of Feminism: The Story of Quaker Women in America (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1986). Canadian history lacks its own Seneca Falls, though notably, Emily Stowe, Canada's first female doctor, woman's suffrage pioneer and egalitarian feminist was born into a Hicksite family in Norwich, in 1832. See Carol Lee Bacchi, Liberation Deferred? The Ideas of the English Canadian Suffragists, 1877-1918 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983).

[42]Marietta,xi, passim.

[43]I have classified five charges under this rubric including intemperance or drinking spirituous liquors, selling or distilling liquor, attending a place of diversion, participating in a chiveree, and gambling.

[44]Three charges are classified under "disorderly conduct" including uttering profanity, using "unbecoming language," or behaving unbecomingly.

[45]This charge pertains to "going out of plainness," ceasing to dress plainly, and ceasing to speak plainly.

[46]This charge refers to "tale-bearing and detraction," slander, and lying.

[47]The types of violence encompassed by this heading include verbal abuse, verbal abuse to spouse, same-sex assault, opposite sex assault, and spousal assault.

[48]This heading takes in non-attendance or neglected attendance at meetings, disorderly conduct at meetings, the act of joining another society which could include schism, and leaving the area without obtaining meeting permission.

[49]Under this heading are listed the following sins: marrying a non-Quaker, marrying contrary to discipline, accomplishing one's marriage with the assistance of priest or magistrate, attending a marriage performed contrary to discipline, conniving at a child's keeping company or marrying a non-Quaker, cohabitation, fornication, adultery and consanguine marriage.

[50]War and government transgressions included attending a militia training, working for the militia, complying with military requisitions, bearing arms, taking an active part in the Rebellion of 1837, accepting military office, accepting a government office, taking an oath. The last three are quite similar, since to assume a government or military office in Upper Canada, one was required to take an oath.

[51]Business/legal concerns pertained to the following: initiating court proceedings versus a Friend, incurring debt due to dishonest or negligent business practices, reneging on a business promise, dishonesty in business, and theft.

[52]Discipline, 31-2.

[53]Ibid., 38-40.

[54]MacMaster, 2-3.

[55] "Phebe Winn's Diary."

[56]RSFP, Reel 27, B-2-83, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting, 1806-1818, Minutes for 1811 09 12, and 1811 10 17,

[57]Ibid., Minutes for 1809 01 12.

[58]Ibid., Minutes for 1810 05 17; Minutes for 1808 12 15.

[59]RSFP, Reel 27, B-2-83, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting, 1806-1818, Minutes for January 1808 to December 1810.

[60] Ibid., and Minutes for 1807 11 12; Reel 49, C-3-10, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting - Women's, 1806-1817, Minutes for January 1807 to December 1810.

[61]RSFP, Reel 27, B -2-84, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting, 1818-28, Minutes for January 1825 to December 1828.

[62]RSFP, Reel 49,Yonge Street Monthly Meeting - Women's, Minutes for January 1825 to December 1828.

[63]RSFP, Reel 28, B-2-85, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting, 1836-50, Minutes for First Month 1837 to Twelfth Month 1840.

[64]Schrauwers, 44.

[65]Lynne Marks, "No Double Standard?: Leisure, Sex and Sin in Upper Canadian Church Discipline Records, 1800-1860," in Gendered Pasts: Historical Essays in Femininity And Masculinity in Canada, eds. Kathryn McPherson, Cecilia Morgan, Nancy M Forestell (Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 1999), 54.

[66] For example, in 1810, Hulday Warren, nee Sprague of Pelham was charged with neglected attendance, going out of plainness, attending a place of diversion and keeping company with and subsequently marrying a non-Quaker. RSFP, Reel 41, Pelham Monthly Meeting 1806-34, Joint to 1810, Meeting Minutes for 1810 06 06.

[67]See for example, RSFP, Reel 27, B-2-83, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting, 1806-1818, Minutes for 1807 12 07.

[68]RSFP, Reel 27, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting, 1818-28, Minutes for 1826 01 12.

[69]Elizabeth J Hovinen, The Quakers of Yonge Street, Discussion Paper No. 17 (Toronto: Department of Geography, York University, 1978), 17-20.

[70]RSFP, Reel 27, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting, Minutes for First Month 1807 to Twelfth Month 1810; Minutes for First Month 1825 to Twelfth Month 1828; MS 303, Reel 49, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting – Women's, Minutes for First Month 1825 to Twelfth Month 1828.

[71]Frost, 158-9; Hovinen, 23.

[72]See for example, Karin A. Wulf, "'My Dear Liberty': Quaker Spinsterhood and Female Autonomy in Eighteenth-Century Pennsylvania." In Women and Freedom in Early America, ed. Larry D Eldridge. New York/London: New York University Press, 1997.

[73]RSFP, Reel 28, Yonge Street Monthly Meeting, Minutes for First Month 1837 to Twelfth Month 1840.

[74]Ibid., and RSFP, Reel 27, Minutes for First Month 1807 to Twelfth Month 1810.

[75]Dorland, 16, 258, 273.

[76]Gordon Darroch, "Scanty Fortunes and Rural Middle-Class Formation in Nineteenth-Century Central Ontario," Canadian Historical Review, 79, no. 4, (December 1998), 653-6.

[77]Schrauwers, Awaiting the Millennium, 59-128.

[78]Ibid., 20-22, 44-47.

[79]Ibid., 87-113. In 1825, the community began construction of a temple which would be an architectural symbol of Willson's prophetic vision. Linked to the building of Solomon's temple as well as to the dawn of a millennial kingdom based on equality and charity, it stood at the crossroads of history, between dispensations old and new. The temple was completed in 1831, while the ark or altar was completed in 1832. A marvel of wood and glass, the temple was used for monthly almsgiving services, for a yearly candle-lit illumination service, and for two special feasts commemorating the Jewish passover, and the first harvest.

[80]See McIntyre for example. An exception to this statement is Kate Brennagh's "The Role of Women in the Children of Peace," Ontario History LXXXX, no.1, (Spring 1998): 1-17.

[81]According to John McIntyre's analysis of 1851 census data, nuclear family households, consisting of only parents and children, were the norm for the sect, but with considerable variation. The average number of people per household was 5.7: non-farming households (headed by artisans, in the main) contained 5.2 occupants on average, while farming households contained 6.6 occupants. The latter figure was higher than the figure for King Township, a predominantly rural area, which registered an average of 6.1 people per household. McIntyre argues that the comparatively large households of Davidite farm families was linked to the community's distinct traditions: sons remained as tenants on their fathers' land longer than their non-Davidite counterparts , thus delaying the establishment of independent households. See McIntyre, 132-134.

[82]Schrauwers, Awaiting the Millennium, 60-63, 74.

[83]See: "Appendix 1," in Ibid., 211-213.

[84]Ibid., 54-57

[85]STP, 985.5.23, "Again great workmen will anoint..." 28 February 1817.

[86]David Willson, The Practical Life of the Author from the Year 1801 to 1860, (Newmarket: Erastus Jackson, 1860), 17-22.

[87]Upper Canada Gazette, 17 November 1825; McIntyre, 95; Schrauwers, Awaiting the Millennium, 83-4.

[88] Isaac Fidler, Observations on Professions, Literature, Manners and Emigration in the United States and Canada made during a residence there in 1832 (New York: Arno Press, 1974), 325-6; See also David Wilkie, Sketches of a Summer Trip to New York and the Canadas (London, 1837), 202-6.

[89] Brennagh, 5-6.

[90]Colley, 235, 244, 280.

[91] STP, x975.439.1, "History of the Children of Peace, by Emily McArthur" - excerpted from the Newmarket Era and Express, 12 December 1898; Colonial Advocate, 18 September 1828; Schrauwers, Awaiting the Millennium, 74-77; McIntyre, 122.

[92]These include a committee to ensure that business was conducted with "truth and justice to the world," and one to ensure that hired servants obtained their pay, and to "still murmuring against the house of the Lord for injustice amongst men." See Davidite Records, Series A., Vol II, 1832-1844, hereafter referred to as "Davidite Records."

[93]Schrauwers, Awaiting the Millennium, 118-129. All concerns were to be placed before the elders who would then predefine the consensus of the meeting, thus ensuring the unity of the larger assembly. Furthermore, the twelve eldest brethren gained the right to disown sect members by unanimous vote. A majority in the congregation could also vote to disown sect members.

[94]Davidite Records, File #2.

[95]See Daniel Scott Smith, "Parental Power and Marriage Patterns: An Analysis of Historical Trends in Hingham, Massachusetts," Journal of Marriage and the Family (August 1973): 419-428; and Shorter, 3-17.

[96] Frost, 50-58.

[97]George Hume, Canada As It Is (New York: William Stodart, 1832), 122-23.

[98] This did not mean that young men and women were deprived of each other's company. To the contrary. Participation in the religious life of this small, kin-based, farming community, through attendance at meetings for worship, business meetings, almsgiving services, itinerant services, choir and band practices and feasts ensured that this was not the case. Within the context of community life, and under the watchful eye of their elders, young men and women would have had ample opportunity to become acquainted with each other.

[99] STP, 986.3.2, "The expediency of our young males and females meeting together...," 3 December 1831.

[100]STP, 986.3.2, "Where as the Lord hath brought us together like Joseph's Coat of many colours...," 10 March 1835; See also: x975.434.1, "Ecclesiastes 4th chapter - 9th verse," 19 February 1830.

[101]"Where as the Lord hath brought us together like Joseph's Coat of many colours....".

[102]STP, 986.3.2, "An address to the young families and unmarried people of the Village of Hope," 1 February 1836.

[103]Appendix 3, " in Schrauwers, Awaiting the Millennium, 216-251.However, there is some suggestion that Jane Willson died due to complications resulting from childbirth, in October of 1835. See STP, 973.33.1, "To the memory of Jane Willson deceased October 4, 1834..." 4 October 1835; Peter Ward, Courtship, Love and Marriage in Nineteenth Century English Canada (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 51-53.

[104]Moran and Vinovskis suggest that Puritans in early America also exaggerated the incidence of death for religious purposes. Similar to Willson and Davidite elders, Puritan ministers used death "to remind the living of the proper way of serving God." See Moran and Vinovskis, 219-24.

[105] This was likely exacerbated by the cholera epidemic of the summer of 1832.

[106]STP, 973.33.1, "Memorial of Hannah wife of John D Willson..." 22 November 1830. See also STP, 985.5.1 9.

[107]STP, 985.5.1 9, "The above signers do hereby publish..." n.d. but likely written in December 1830.

[108]See for example STP, 973.33.1, "Wedding song for John and Eliza Morris," 4 November 1832; "Wedding song for William and Mary Reid," May 1831, and others in same source.

[109]STP, Reel 2, 973.33.1, "Wedding song of John Willson and Hannah Dennis, 1830."

[110] STP, 959.84.4, "To be sung after meat by the Female Children of the house of the Lord, Israel's God," n.d. but likely written ca. 1832.

[111]Ellen K Rothman, Hands and Hearts: A History of Courtship in America (New York: Basic Books, 1984), 64-68. Such concerns were also shared by middling English women of the eighteenth century. See Margaret Hunt, The Middling Sort: Commerce, Gender, and the Family in England, 1680-1780 (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996), 164.

[112]STP, 959.84.4, "When e'er we take our walks abroad..." n.d. but likely written in the early to mid 1830s.

[113] STP, 973.33.1, "Oh pride thou for to human right..." 4 October 1831.

[114]Ibid., and 986.3.2, "An address to the young families and unmarried people of the Village of Hope...."

[115]STP, 973.33.1, "Female history or the Mothers [sic] peace," n.d. but likely written in the mid-1830s.

[116] In traditional agricultural families, men were responsible for the heavy, outdoor work of ditching, hedging or fencing in land, and ploughing. See Shorter, 66.

[117]STP, 917.1, Thomas Rolph, Descriptive and Statistical Account of Canada and Shewing its Great Adaptation for British Emigration. Preceded by an Account of a Tour Through Portions of the West Indies and the United States (London, 1841), 183.

[118]STP, 973.33.1 "Lord show thy name by peace and praise..." 17 September 1830.

[119]McIntyre, 90; STP, 986.3.2 "A memorial...." 22 December 1831. See also: David Willson, Impressions of the Mind, 269-70.

[120]. Willson, Moral and Religious Precepts, 5-16; Willson, Impressions of the Mind, 278-79; JCD Clark, English Society, 179-82.

[121]Willson, Moral and Religious Precepts, 5.

[122] STP, 986.3.2, "An address to the young families and unmarried people of the Village of Hope..."

[123]Ryan, Cradle of the Middle Class, 18-32; Shorter, 3-18, 33; Moran and Vinovskis, 24-25; See also Philip J Greven, Four Generations: Population, Land, and Family in Colonial Andover, Massachusetts (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1970), chapter 4.

[124]Schrauwers, Awaiting the Millennium, 20-2.

[125]Ward, 25-31.

Chapter IV: "Perilous Times and Latter Day Glory:"
The Millerite "Heresy" and the Making of Canadian Liberalism

In the early 1840s, Millerism, a populist, millennarian variety of religious Dissent

imported from the United States, began to make inroads into Canada East and West, striking most

successfully at adherents of Methodism in the united province. Although it is impossible to

measure the quantitative extent of Millerism's impact in Canada, there is strong evidence to suggest

that its influence was widespread in Toronto and several smaller centres in Canada West, and in

the Eastern Townships region of Canada East, particularly in Stanstead County which shared a

border with the state of Vermont, a strong locus of Millerite activity. Millerism marks a shift in

the united colony away from eighteenth-century constitutional definitions in which Dissent was a

highly politicized phenomenon in reaction to the unity of church and state. The emphasis of this

new form of Dissent was more social than political in that it protested Methodism's attempts to

fashion itself into a "respectable" institution – bulwark of a new "establishment" that articulated the

values of an emergent middle-class. But despite the fact that most Millerites avoided direct,

political involvement, they did challenge the compromises Methodist elites were making with the

tories in the 1830s and 40s. In a sense, Millerites' rejection of political engagement as corrupt and

irreligious was an expression of their commitment to hard-line voluntarism and their disgust at the

toryism of Methodist leaders such as Egerton Ryerson. Thus, in addition to exploring the changing

nature of new forms of Dissent, this chapter speaks to the ways in which one sector of "Old"

Dissent – namely, the Canadian Wesleyan Methodists – evolved during the 1820s to 40s from a

denomination characterized by grass-roots opposition to establishmentarianism, to one that sought

to achieve the leadership status of an unofficial "established" church.[1]

Millerism owed its name to William Miller who was born on February 15, 1782 at

Pittsfield, Massachusetts. In young adulthood, Miller, a farmer by trade, embraced deistical views

in his quest to discern meaning in human history. After serving in the War of 1812, an experience which shook Miller's confidence in Deism, he began attending a Baptist church in Low Hampton, New York. There, he experienced a conversion that convinced him, by means of faith, that God existed and that Christ's atoning sacrifice had saved him. Preoccupied with squaring his newfound faith with reason, he turned to the task of authenticating Biblical revelation through diligent study. Miller promised skeptics that he would harmonize all apparent Scriptural contradictions, or return to Deism. After several years of study, he concluded that prophecies were always literally fulfilled, and that God had given humans rules to guide their interpretation of Biblical symbols. Armed with willingness and perseverance, anyone could decipher Biblical prophecy. Miller's reading of the books of Daniel and Revelation led him to believe that Christ would return to judge the earth in 1843 or 1844. Although Miller felt compelled to preach this doctrine as a warning to the world, he "shr[a]nk...from the responsibility... for a number of years," due to fears that his views were unique, and that he lacked sufficient educational and ministerial qualifications. He finally overcame his reservations in 1832, when at the age of 50, he began to "publish" his views.[2]

Despite this, it was Joshua Himes, Christian Connection preacher, reformer and abolitionist who gave the movement a public identity and momentum. From 1839 onward, he took over the administration of the movement, initiating Millerism's forays into publishing, and travelling across New England, New York, Ohio, Canada East, Canada West, and England to promote the cause. From January 1841 to June 1842, Millerism was transformed into a mass movement. A flood of books, pamphlets and tracts were published, including a prophetic chart; the first Millerite hymnody was compiled, and sixteen general conferences were held for the organization of evangelistic activity. Moreover, by May of 1842, Miller had come under strong pressure to be more specific regarding the date of Christ's actual return, so that by year's end, he settled on March 21, 1843, to March 21, 1844 as the annus mirabilis. Under Himes' guidance, the movement ralled tens of thousands of Christians from various denominations to the Advent

standard. At the same time, criticism of the cause increased exponentially, as Millerism was blamed for every social ill from madness to family breakdown. By 1843, hundreds of Millerites had separated from their congregations: some withdrew of their own accord while others were expelled. They began to band together on a voluntary basis into Millerite churches. Despite Miller's own reservations about separation, other Advent leaders justified the move: in 1843, Charles Fitch published a pamphlet calling on Adventists to come out of the churches lest they be sullied by wickedness at the very hour of Christ's return.[3] When Christ did not return as planned, the blame was placed on a slight error of calculation, and Millerites joined together in the fervent expectation that October 22, 1844 would be the date of Christ's return. Then, when October 22, 1844 came and went there followed a "Great Disappointment;" the movement collapsed and splintered into several groups including the Advent Christians, the Seventh Day Adventists and the "spiritualizers."[4]

American historians of Millerism generally agree that the movement was part of the larger culture of Jacksonian anti-elitism, anti-authoritarianism, egalitarianism and popular democracy. Moreover, they argue that Millerism shared several impulses in common with groups such as the Disciples Christ, including a strong antipathy to the formalism and institutionalism of the churches. Although Millerism was steeped in the values of post-Revolutionary populist Protestantism, it began to gather steam just when the evangelical consensus was turning away from both religious experimentalism and eschatologies that challenged progressive and optimistic visions of the future of the Republic.[5] Historians of Millerism in Canada have focused more intensively on the movement's challenge to the "new Methodism" of the 1840s, which began to turn its back on its populist, democratic roots in favour of an increasingly elitist, urban and respectable religious image. Millerism struck a resonant chord with many Methodists who objected to the changes in the "ordinary" and "extraordinary" means of grace, and to the widening gap between the clergy and laity. Echoing their American counterparts, the most recent Canadian historians of Millerism

have concentrated on how the movement assisted the evangelical "mainstream" in the task of

formulating a new theological orthodoxy that linked Bible history and prophecy with the

ideological needs of an increasingly sophisticated and prosperous society. This was not an easy

task, because Millerism tapped into several common cultural strands of the time, including a

revival of prophetic interest, anti-Catholicism, revivalism, empiricism, a strict adherence to sola

scriptura, and the right of each individual to follow her conscience in matters of faith. As such,

Methodist elites often found themselves in the difficult position of having to convince their

members that old orthodoxies were new heresies.[6]

What these fine Canadian studies have tended to overlook is the significance of Millerism

as a new, less expressly political variant of Dissent in the context of the history of the united

province in the early 1840s. On one level, Millerism's message was appealing because of its

rejection of the world as corrupt and in decline. Any radical transformation of society would have

to wait until the coming of the Lord, after which a new, perfect earth would be created as a

dwelling place for the saints. The Rebellions of 1837-38 and the political and social turmoil that

followed, in addition to significant agricultural and commercial dislocation, particularly in the

Eastern Townships assisted in creating a fertile ground for Millerism to take root on Canadian soil.

Whereas Dissenting communities that arose in Canada prior to the 1840s tended to direct their

energies toward criticizing the culture of establishmentarianism with the expectation of

ameliorating present conditions, Millerism's pessimistic eschatology caused adherents to forsake

such hope. Moreover, Millerism's effects were most palpable in those areas of concentrated

American settlement. Although the movement made significant inroads in Canada West, its biggest

gains were in the predominantly American border settlements of the Eastern Townships. There,

American Methodists accustomed to a grass-roots, populist, and egalitarian style of belief clashed

with conservative British Wesleyan missionaries who constituted the official voice of Methodism in

the area. Although local political instability and proximity to the American border contributed to

the development of a particularly volatile strain of Millerism in the area, the British Wesleyans' disdain of American Methodist religious culture meant that they could reject Millerism out of hand, as a product of American ignorance and the deplorable result of democratization. Conversely, Canadian Wesleyan links to American Methodism meant that denominational leaders had to be more careful in rejecting Millerism, so as not to discard elements of their own tradition they wished to maintain. As such, Millerism caused Methodist leaders in Canada West to suffer from a more profound malaise.

More vitally, Millerites' belief in the imminent, pre-millennial return of Christ represented a world-view in opposition to the gradually emerging consensus of "mainstream" Protestant elites, which can be subsumed under the rubric of Victorian liberalism. Although Millerism and mainstream Protestantism shared a belief in the Bible as a book of facts, and a guide to both past and future, they disagreed as to the timing and nature of the Millennium and the final judgment. In their response to political upheaval, economic disruption and social change, Methodist proponents of post-millennialism supported a nascent, middle-class, socio-economic consensus that embraced commercial capitalism, and sanctified work as a means of building individual character, and of contributing to the general progress of the world. Such earthly progress was sure to usher in Christ's thousand-year spiritual reign. They also supported a new intellectual and religious consensus which de-emphasized traditional Christian verities such as hell, damnation and supernaturalism. A loving and just God supported the individual in his drive for salvation and honest worldly success. Individual empowerment and faith in human progress constituted the cornerstone of post-millennialism. Consequently, Methodist and other elites used Millerism as a negative referent: viewed through often distorted spectacles, it provided a case study of religion gone wrong. Millerites lacked all of the things that a "good" Christian citizen of mid-century should have: a solid work ethic, an optimistic temperament, respect for formal learning, emotional and sexual restraint, the ability to reason, sanity, and a commitment to social reform.

Conversely, from the Millerite point of view, the Second Advent faith was compelling for a number of reasons. On a personal level, it provided individuals with certainty that earthly troubles would soon cease, as they would be rewarded for their piety and suffering by Christ himself. Promises of being reunited very soon with the dearly departed, of sick bodies being made whole, and of enemies getting their due must have been quite alluring, particularly in a context of economic depression and political disruption. On a religious level, it resisted the "gentrification" of Methodism, particularly in Canada West. Millerism sought to preserve the traditional content and structure of revival intact at a time when Methodist elites had begun to favour a less enthusiastic and more respectable forum for conversion, and for the spiritual refreshment of members. On a social level, it constituted a logical critique of the most inflated and fatuous claims of evangelical Protestantism – namely, that soon, the world would be converted to Christianity, and remarkably, that good would triumph over evil, via human effort. In the process, it registered its disapproval of the equation of spiritualized material progress with the Kingdom of Christ. Moreover, Miller's premillennial eschatology constituted a tacit indictment of the Methodist elite's involvement in the political affairs of an apostate world, particularly when expediency and conservatism led representative individuals, such as Egerton Ryerson, to compromise on voluntarism.

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Before discussing the elements of Millerism's appeal in Canada, it is necessary to review the main aspects of its theology, paying particular attention to its pre-millennial eschatological scheme. In order to do this, a brief synopsis of the prophecies contained in the Old Testament Book of Daniel, and in the New Testament Book of Revelation must be provided. Sporadically, since the early days of Christianity to the Reformation and beyond, these texts were studied by

Christian millenarians with the fervent belief that they would yield definite clues as to the nature and timing of the end of the world, and the second coming of Christ.

The Book of Daniel is set during the Jewish captivity in Babylon. It opens with King Nebuchadnezzar's dream of the end of days, which Daniel – an Israelite exile – was able to decipher. The king had dreamed of a crowned man whose head was of gold, whose breast and arms were of silver, whose belly and thighs were of brass, whose legs were of iron, and whose feet were made of iron and clay. As the king gazed at the image, a stone broke loose from a cliff and struck the feet of the statue, shattering them. The entire figure crumbled and blew away. Then, the stone grew into a mountain that covered the entire earth. (Dan. 2. 31-35)

According to Daniel, the head of gold represented the empire of Nebuchadnezzar. It would be succeeded by two lesser ones, followed by a fourth that would crush all earlier empires. But, this empire would be divided, and thus weak. The leaders of these empires would try to strengthen and unite their families by intermarriage, but they would fail, at which time God would establish His kingdom on Earth which would last unto eternity. (Dan. 2. 36-45)

Daniel then began to have several visions of his own. He dreamt of four beasts rising up from the ocean, (Dan. 7.1-7) of a "little horn" that makes war on God's people, (Dan.7.8-21) and of an evil king who will reign for three and a half years and who will change the religious laws. (Dan.7.24) In his second vision, he saw a second "little horn" that rose against the Prince of the heavenly army and cast down the sanctuary. (Dan.8.5-12) An angel revealed that 2300 days were to pass before the sanctuary would be restored. (Dan. 8.14) Later, Daniel is visited by an angel who explains the visions. He tells Daniel that his people will have 70 weeks to stop sinning, and that there will be seven weeks, and three score and two weeks from the time the command is given to rebuild Jerusalem, afterwhich Israel will receive its Messiah, to the time when the Messiah is killed. Jerusalem will be destroyed by the invading army of a powerful ruler. (Dan. 9. 22-26)

In the last chapter, an angel tells Daniel that the end will be a time of troubles. It will also be a time when Israel's elect would be saved. The dead will live again, some receiving eternal life, and others eternal disgrace. (Dan.12.1-2) The angel tells Daniel that it will be a "time, times, and a half" to the end, and that 1290 days will pass from the end of the daily sacrifices to the "abomination that maketh desolate." He leaves Daniel with a final promise: "blessed is he that waiteth and cometh to the 1335 days."(Dan.12.9-12)

The themes of the Book of Daniel are revisited in the Book of Revelation. It too contains several visions which follow a general pattern and which end in the establishment of God's eternal Kingdom. John's first vision is of Christ, who instructs him to write letters to the seven churches of Asia, (Rev 1.1-Rev.3.13) which represent the stages of time before the end of days. The last stage is represented by the Laodicean church which is castigated for being greedy and of "lukewarm" faith. (Rev.3.14-17) Chapters five to eight tell of a scroll and seven seals which are broken open, one by one, by the Lamb. With the breaking of the first four seals come the four horsemen of the apocalypse, bringing suffering and death to mankind in various forms. (Rev.6.1-8) When the sixth seal is broken, there is a violent earthquake, the sun blackens, the moon turns to blood, stars fall to earth, the sky disappears and mountains are displaced. This signals the beginning of the wrath of the Lamb. (Rev.6.12-17) These auguries of disaster are paralleled in John's visions of the seven trumpets, the seven bowls of anger, and the seven plagues.

John's prophecies get somewhat more specific in his vision of the two witnesses sent to proclaim God's message for 1260 days, during which time the Holy City will be trampled by the heathen. These witnesses will be overcome by the beast from the abyss, and their bodies will lie dead for three and a half days in the symbolic city in which Christ was crucified whose name is "Sodom," or "Egypt." At the end of this period, the final scenes of horror will take place. (Rev.11.1-14) Similarly, in chapter 12, John tells of a woman who flees to the desert in order to take refuge from a predatory beast. She stays there for 1260 days. (Rev.12.6)

The rest of Revelation foretells the fall of the "whore of Bablyon,"(Rev.8 and 18) the salvation of 144,000 souls,(Rev. 14.1) and the appearance of a horseman who would defeat the nations. This rider was "The Word of God" come to rule the earth.. The beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies would make war against the rider who would crush the assembled forces, and cast the beast into the lake of fire.(Rev. 19.11-21) In chapter twenty, Satan is bound and thrown into the abyss for a thousand years, during which time the risen faithful would rule with Christ, while the ungodly dead would "sleep" for a thousand years. (Rev.20. 1-6) After this time, Satan would be set loose to deceive the nations. God would destroy them and throw Satan into the lake of fire for eternity. This would be followed by the judgement of the dead. (Rev.20.7-15) Then, God would create a new heaven and a new earth, and would live forever with mankind in the new Jerusalem.(Rev.21.1-4)

Miller's approach to Biblical study was orthodox in the context of 1830s and 40s America when millennial speculation and expectation ran high. His emphasis on applying the rules of common sense to Biblical study, on achieving the proper balance between faith and reason, and on proving that prophecies had been fulfilled with empirically verifiable fact, backed up by a rigorous system of textual cross-referencing, placed him solidly in the camp of Jacksonian-era evangelicalism. Miller believed that the truths of Scripture could be accessed through intense study by anyone who approached the task with unwavering faith. He contended that Biblical visions, figures and parables had a repetitive quality and in order to understand their meaning, they must be "combine[d] ... all in one." Miller also believed that if a word made good sense, and did "no violence to the simple laws of nature then it must be understood literally, if not, figuratively." In assessing whether or not prophecy has already been fulfilled, he counselled that "every word of the prophecy (after the figures are understood)" had to be literally fulfilled for the event to be a true match. If even one word lacked fulfillment, the student was to "look for another event, or wait its future development."[7] Miller's method was appealing not only due to its common-sense clarity.

His entire approach suggested that theology was "of the people" and that it could be democratized without losing its credibility. Like the Campbells, Miller called on self-made students of Scripture to discount doctrinal speculation, and to use the inductive method to discover Bible facts that would form the basis of their Christian testimony.[8]

Before the meaning and context of Millerism are discussed at length, however, it is important to provide an outline of its prophetic calendar, which linked Scripture and human history in a grand mathematical scheme leading to the end times and Christ's Second Coming. Millerites often began with King Nebuchadnezzar's vision which assumed pride of place as the general guide to human destiny. It was remarked that this vision "carries us down from the days of Nebuchadnezzar into the eternal state," and provides the "great outline of the world's history" in relation to eternity. Millerites argued that the sections of the crowned image from head to toe corresponded with various historical empires had become "connected with the people of God," or the Jews. In order, these were the Babylonian, the Persian, the Greek, and the Roman empires. The weak clay and iron toes of the image were interpreted as the ten barbarian kingdoms that rose up in the west before 483 AD, and the division of Rome in 576 AD. In general terms, Millerites contended that they were living in the "last days" because Rome had fallen, but its successor, the divided "empire," had not yet been smitten, despite the coming of Christ more than eighteen hundred years ago.[9]

In more specific terms, Miller himself began his investigation of prophetic numbers with the 2,300 days of Daniel 8:14. Because many Protestant commentators believed that Biblical "days" often stood for "years," and that where prophecy was concerned, words were frequently symbolic, Miller interpreted Daniel's "days" as "years." Miller argued that it was decreed that the walls of Jerusalem be built in 457 BC. This set the prophetic clock in motion, ending in this case with the "restoration of the sanctuary" which Miller interpreted as the Second Coming of Christ. As such, when he added 2300 years to 457 BC, Miller came to his famous date of 1843 for

Christ's return. Had his exercise in prophetic arithmetic ended there, Millerism would not have

been so compelling. But because Miller's method of interpretation demanded that Biblical

prophecies be reconciled with one another, he set out to test his findings by investigating other

figures that pointed to the date of the end times. In the process, Miller discovered that the

prophetic numbers were extraordinarily consistent. For example, arguing that papal supremacy

was established in about 508 AD, Miller asserted that the addition of the 1,335 days of Daniel

12:12 also yielded 1843 as a date for the end.[10]

Later, when Miller revised his date for the rise of Papal Rome to 538 AD, he turned to the

texts of Revelation to square his dates. Referring to Revelation 11.1-3, he argued that Roman

Catholicism had trampled the Holy City for "forty and two months" or 1260 days during which

time the "two witnesses" which symbolized the Old and New Testaments, proclaimed God's

message, dressed in the garb of mourning. These "days" beginning in 538 AD, ended in 1798 when

the papacy fell by the power of Napoleon. The "last days" were the 45 years from 1798 to 1843.[11]

Or, Miller referred to the 1260 days that the woman spent in the wilderness, reaching the same

conclusion. (Rev.12.6,14) Alternatively, he would subtract the 70 weeks, or 490 years of Daniel

9:24 from the 2,300 days or years, arriving at 1810. Then he would add the 33 years of Christ's

life and arrive at the same conclusion that the end would come in 1843.[12]

From a modern vantage point, this exercise in Millerite math appears to be at best quaint,

or at worst deranged. However, present-day historians of Millerism agree that the reason why the

movement was so appealing was because it was orthodox in several respects. They also admit that

although Millerism made significant inroads into several of the more traditional Protestant

denominations, it is often more instructive to study the movement through the eyes of its critics

who were more numerous, and whose vision eventually triumphed. Both the appeal and the

rejection of Millerism will be discussed in a subsequent section. For now, however, it would be

useful to provide the reader with a general impression of the content of Millerism in the context of 1830s an 40s North Atlantic culture.

David L Rowe has argued that apocalypticism has been a "universal cultural theme," always subliminally present, but erupting periodically in millenarian and literary movements, in visions of revolutionary utopias, and in the individual or collective experience of religious and spiritual renewal. In the West, apocalypticism has manifested itself most frequently in Christian terms, and has had a tremendous impact on both American and European cultural life. From the Middle Ages onward, Dissenting Christians in particular took heart in the prophetic texts of the Bible, finding congenial meanings for themselves in the narratives of things to come. The Protestant Reformation accelerated latent millennial and millenarian tendencies as people were encouraged to read the Bible and to understand its prophecies. Protestants who viewed Roman Catholicism as corrupt and irredeemable were buoyed by John of Patmos' promise that Rome, which he identified as the whore of Babylon, would fall in the last days. Many believed that having escaped from the clutches of the whore, they would soon participate in the final transformation of the heavens and the earth into a dwelling place for God's elect. Apocalypticism was the major force that compelled British Puritans to overthrow Charles I in the 1640s. It also informed American Puritans' view that they were God's chosen people, destined to play a great role in world history.[13] Moreover, historians have argued that the French Revolution was directly responsible for the resurgence of prophetic interest in Britian. Its cataclysmic disruption of the fabric of European political, social and cultural life led many to speculate that the end was near.

Indeed, Miller was not the first to associate the events of the 1790s with those foretold in the Bible; Britons who lived through those turbulent times were the first to do so. In the early nineteenth-century, there arose a plethora of tracts and treatises debating the precise nature and timing of the apocalypse, but in general, this millenarian revival was characterized by growing support for the doctrine of the premillennial advent, and for a literal fulfillment of prophecy.

Premillennialists believed that Christ would return before the dawn of the millennium, and until that time, the world would wax worse and worse. In this view of things, the millennium would be established directly and cataclysmically by the divine hand. Premillennialism contrasted with the standard Anglican interpretation of eschatology which was postmillennial, meaning that the Second Advent would occur after the millennium or the thousand years of peace.[14] Displaying a tendency to understand prophecy metaphorically, postmillennialists were inclined to believe that the Kingdom of God would come gradually, as the result of human effort. Moreover, they looked forward to an unspecified time in the future when this optimistic vision would become a reality. Premillennialism, most notably in the form of Irvingism and Pymouth Brethrenism, grew in favour as Britain navigated the treacherous waters toward Catholic Emancipation, Reform, and increased democratization and industrialization in the 1820s and 30s.[15] Irvingites were "historicists" who looked for the fulfillment of prophecy in the record of human history, past and present. Some Irvingites went so far as to speculate that Christ would return in 1843 or 1847. The Plymouth Brethren were "futurists" who looked forward to the end of the present "dispensation" for the fulfillment of prophecy. But the differences between the two factions were somewhat superficial. Historicists and futurists were united on several points including a belief in the literal fulfillment of prophecy, encompassing Christ's bodily return to earth and the restoration of the Jews to Palestine before the millennium, and the belief that the world would become increasingly evil and degenerate until the final judgment.

In the American context, the First Great Awakening of the 1740s succeded in shifting academic and popular support away from the premillennialism of the Puritan divines toward postmillennialism. Jonathan Edwards was largely responsible for this alteration; through his Biblical commentaries and preaching he urged Christians to prepare the world for the Millennium by evangelizing the heathen, converting the Jews to Christianity, and stamping out sin. Soon, missionary organizations and Bible and tract societies were created as a means of bringing forth

the Kingdom. Evangelical optimism was bolstered by the widespread revivals of the 1740s, 1780s and late 1790s; these evidences of mass conversions seemed to be proof that God was smiling down upon Christians, and sending forth his Spirit to strengthen them as they worked. By the the 1820s and 30s, however, it became obvious to many people that despite growing missionary efforts, and increased tract distribution, the Millennium had not yet begun, and the world remained sadly unregenerate. Many began to think that human efforts to create the Millennium were absurd, and that nothing less than a cataclysmic disruption, and the final condemnation of the intransigent sinner at the hand of God would prepare its way. Moreover, this view found support in the essential doctrines of all the evangelical churches including the belief in the future destruction of the world and the Last Judgment. Additionally, Presbyterians, Orthodox Baptists and Methodists continued to employ images of the apocalypse as a means of deterring people from sin. On a more popular level, the experience of the raw forces of nature contributed to a kind of vernacular apocalypticism that gave credence to the more learned doctrinal articulations.[16]

In addition, in 1830s and 40s America, there arose several expressions of millenarianism on the more experimental edge of religious life. The Shakers, a mystical sect, were formed in the 1770s, but they rose to the height of their support in the 1830s and 40s, during which time they experienced an efflorescence of enthusiasm which included direct revelations and glossolalia. Shakers believed that their founder, Mother Ann Lee was Christ returned to earth in female form. As such, they contended that they were actually living in the Millennium – and a uniquely premillennial one at that. Moreover, in 1831 the Mormon church was founded in the burned-over district of upstate New York. Its founder, Joseph Smith preached a premillennial eschatology and contended that his "rediscovery" of the Book of Mormon had initiated the "Latter Days" in preparation for the Millennium. Additionally, in the 1830s, the Oneida Community, under the leadership of John Humphrey Noyes believed in the doctrine of the Second Advent near. By the 1840s, however, their position had shifted; they then contended that Christ had already returned to

earth and that the world was undergoing a period of probation during which time perfect

sanctification was within individual reach. This preoccupation with the apocalypse and the

millennium was also shared by those of a more legalistic and rationalistic cast of mind, including

Alexander Campbell: he was intrigued by premillennial explanations of prophecy, and he even paid

tribute to William Miller despite his disagreement with him over the timing of the Second Advent[17]

Millerism drew significant numbers of adherents from each of these groups.

Essentially, Millerism can be described as a Yankee, republican manifestation of

democratized Christianity that grew out of the New England Calvinist tradition as it was

transformed in the decades after the American Revolution. Millerism was in many ways a product

of the attempt of ordinary Americans to grapple with the disintegration of elite culture in the face

of political and social democratization in the period from 1780-1830. Millerites joined their

Jacksonian-era counterparts in challenging authoritarian social structures through a faith that was

rooted in a new kind of evangelicalism that took the Reformation principles of sola scriptura, and

"everyman his own priest" to their logical, levelling extremes. Intent on putting an end to the

tyranny of university-educated clergymen, they embraced an empirical, common sense approach to

the Bible that placed the opinion of humble folk on par with those of their alleged social betters. In

their early desire to avoid sectarian exclusiveness, and in the "come-outerism" of 1843 onward,

Millerites demonstrated an ardent anti-formalism that was based on the idea that "Christian

tradition since the time of the apostles was a tale of sordid corruption in which kingcraft and

priestcraft wielded orthodoxy to enslave the minds of the people." This was manifested in a

strident anti-Catholicism, and a tendency to associate all churches that applied man-made doctrines

and tests of faith, and that demanded higher standards of clerical training with the "whore of

Babylon." In addition to this, Millerism embraced revivalism. According to David Rowe, it

constituted the ideal means of securing individual commitment to the Adventist message.

Millerism's palpable, literal and imminent vision of the wrath that awaited the sinner, juxtaposed

with the great blessings that would soon be poured out on the faithful only served to bolster the imperative of conversion and its concomitant enthusiasm. [18]

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It is difficult to precisely ascertain the facts of Millerism's rise in Canada East and West for a number of reasons. First of all, the movement's Canadian adherents generated few documents. This may be partly due to the fact that Miller's message was not effectively evangelized in the province until 1842. Since it was not officially organized as a separate religious body, its adherents could continue taking part in the life of their regular churches, until they were threatened by explusion or departed of their own accord. And when Millerites began to gather together on their own, the anticipation of Christ's return was likely a disincentive to congregational record keeping. Although there is evidence that a Millerite paper entitled the Expectant was being published in Toronto by November of 1842, it does not seem to have survived the passage of time.[19] Moreover, only a few copies of the Voice of Elijah published in 1843-44 in Montreal by former British Wesleyan minister RT Hutchinson survive. However, several American Millerite periodicals published just before and after 1843-44 provide the student of history with numerous accounts pertaining to the progress of the Canadian arm of the movement. Aside from these sources, and tracts published after the Great Disappointment of 1844, one must consult documents written by non-Millerites who felt obliged to publicly comment on the movement. These sources are comparatively voluminous and they attest to the fact that Millerism posed a significant threat to the equilibrium of several Protestant groups, the Methodists in particular.

The area of most intense Millerite activity in Canada East was Stanstead County, which formed part of the Eastern Townships region, bordering on the state of Vermont. This area was distinguished by its predominantly American character; in contrast to the northern part of the

region which contained mainly British and French settlers, Stanstead was settled earlier, obtaining

the bulk of its immigrants in the 1820s and 30s. The mainly American provenance of Stanstead

settlers was reflected in its denominational diversity. The area was dominated by Methodists, Free

Will Baptists and Universalists, but it also contained a number of Episcopalians.[20]

Although William Miller himself introduced his brand of Adventism to the county in 1835,

it was only in 1842, when American preachers Josiah Litch and Columbus Green began to hold a

series of meetings in Stanstead, Derby Line and Hatley that things began to take fire.[21] The first

Millerite camp meeting in all of North America was held in Hatley on June 21, 1842, and the

second one was held in nearby Bolton shortly after. A "Great Tent" capable of accommodating

almost 4,000 people was specially constructed for these and the several camp meetings that

followed.[22] In his report to the Secretaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Society written in

November of 1842, an exasperated Reverend R Cooney expressed his consternation at the first

Millerite intrusions on the Stanstead Circuit. He complained that during his attendance at the

"district meeting," Advent preachers from the United States had held services in the local "Union

Church," a building "capable of holding 1,000 persons." They had also organized several camp

meetings. Alarmingly, more than half of the Wesleyan membership had adopted Adventist views,

and several had had dreams and visions.[23]

At Stanstead, late in 1842, people began to gather together for daily services at the Union

Church "as long as the world lasts." [24] For the next year or so, the reports of several British

Wesleyan Missionaries stationed in the Eastern Townships reflected the turmoil occasioned by

Millerism's rise. Missionaries complained of the American publications that began to flood in,

which were followed by lecturers whose purpose it was to "powerfully impress the public mind

with [Millerite] doctrines." As a result, "multitudes ...[were] carried away from their respective

Churches." Most worryingly, however, were the considerable numbers of Methodists, "comprising

Local Preachers, leaders, Stewards and private members" who rallied round the Adventist

standard.[25] The missionaries complained of the disorderliness of Millerite meetings, and of the hysteria which they produced. The "extravagances of the people" were only augmented as April 14, 1843, the first date set for the Lord's return, drew nigh.[26] British Wesleyan leaders also complained of the serious shortfall in financial contributions caused by Adventist fever. These problems were most acute in the region's smaller centres, in particular those near the US border. Missionaries were at a loss about how to deal with the massive disorder and financial decline caused by the Millerite "menace." The Reverend R Cooney, who was stationed at Stanstead, where Millerism reached epidemic proportions, pleaded that he be removed from the circuit saying:"I am not the man for the Eastern Townships."[27]

Due to a comparative lack of documents, it is somewhat more difficult to reconstruct the precise pattern of Millerite support in Canada West. However, strong evidence suggests that Adventism spread to evangelical congregations in several centres across the province. Once again, Methodist congregations were amongst the hardest hit. In many respects, the dissemination of Millerism in Canada West was similar to its extension in Canada East. It was brought to the area by American Millerite itinerants such as Joshua Himes, Charles Fitch and several other lesser-known preachers. Favourable audiences were found in Toronto by the fall of 1842, and local leaders began to spread the word. Around the same time, a home-grown Millerite publication was founded entitled the Expectant, and a Second Advent Library was purchased by a Millerite reading club in the city.[28] Under the direction of Brother Caldwell of Buffalo, New York, regular meetings were commenced in a small schoolhouse which soon "was filled within, and surrounded without." Eventually, Toronto Millerites opened a large hall in the central part of the city, called Bethdridge's Hall. This meeting place was soon so crowded that it gave way, "in the height of the excitement, and while hundreds were inquiring, 'are these things so:' and sinners were beginning to cry, 'what shall we do to be saved.'" Then, in early 1844, a "plain, simple, but convenient" meeting house was constructed as a "temporary affair" measuring thirty by ninety feet.[29]

Other areas in Canada West manifested a groundswell of popular support for Adventism in 1843-44 including Port Hope, Cobourg, Port Credit and Hamilton. Southwold, about thirty miles west of London was a strong centre of Millerite activity, several conferences on the Second Advent being held in that vicinity. In addition, Canadians from the Niagara area were drawn to border cities in the United States such as Buffalo, New York to hear Millerite lectures. The far eastern portion of the province was less receptive to Millerism; Kingston was signalled out as being a particularly barren mission field.[30]

Millerite converts in both provinces were disillusioned by the failure of Christ to return in 1844. By 1846, Millerism had declined precipitously in areas which had previously boasted of massive support for the movement. As in the United States, Millerism was so resolutely discredited because its larger validity was bound up with the setting of a precise date for Christ's return. When he did not come to earth in bodily form in 1843-44, the movement's critics were provided with the ideal weapon with which to inflict the death blow. Opponents of Millerism had fought an intense battle from 1842 to 1844 to discredit the movement on theological, philosophical and social grounds. But until its chronology was manifestly proven to have failed on an indisputable point of fact, Millerism continued to flourish. Indeed, setting a precise and imminent date for Christ's return had incited a popular frenzy that had worked in Millerism's favour; there was little time to lose in choosing between eternal damnation or salvation.

In both provinces, Millerism provoked intense criticism and violent reaction, particularly after the final Disappointment. For example, in the November 28, 1844 edition of the Millerite newspaper, The Midnight Cry, there appeared a "Letter from Canada" written by Second Advent preacher LD Mansfield. It described the chaos that ensued in Toronto after Christ did not return in glory on October 22, 1844 - the final Millerite set-date for this event. Mansfield recounted that "the meetings of the saints of God were almost universally broken up, and violence inflicted or threatened," but he rejoiced in such persecution, as it was "evidence... that the Lord is *very near.*"

"Compelled to abandon [their] public meetings" Millerites gathered at his house for prayer one

evening, when "it was surrounded by a large mob... who were only restrained from breaking into

the house by the interference of police" and Mansfield's landlord. He writes:

> They were greatly exasperated against me, and having made all the preparations, with tar,
> feathers and eggs, seemed with demoniac fury fixed upon inflicting punishment upon
> me...and fifty persons pledged themselves to have me the next night, if they had to tear
> down the house... having applied tar and feathers, they were going to throw me into the
> bay. This came to the ears of my landlord; he, fearing for the safety of his house, procured
> a warrant for my apprehension under the charge of assembling a mob. Having come before
> the magistrate, I told him I supposed the charge must be sustained by the
> complainant...[T]he magistrate replied, by no means...I must give bail to keep the peace.

Mansfield questioned the "glory" of so-called "Christian governments" when they sided with

"ruthless mobs" who infringed on the life, liberty and property of innocent individuals. But faced

with the choice of going to prison, Mansfield gave L 100 bail, and turned his sights toward the

coming end when peace would reign.[31]

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In order to understand the nature of Millerism's appeal, in addition to why mainstream

evangelicals ultimately branded it as one of the most rank heresies of the age, one must understand

that it drew upon religious orthodoxy as a means of criticizing the response of cultural elites to

social, political and religious change. As such, it was both critical of the values of mainstream

denominations, while sharing certain traditions with them. In this section, the following issues will

be explored: Millerism's central beliefs regarding the individual, the collectivity and human

behaviour; the economic, social and political factors which made Millerism's pessimistic

eschatology so attractive; and the movement's appeal to religious orthodoxy.

Although Millerites anticipated the coming of the Lord in 1843 or 1844 with great joy and

a sense of personal optimism, the movement's premillennial eschatology was premised on a

profound sense of pessimism regarding the fate of humanity. At the theological core of Millerite premillennialism lay the assumption that the human propensity to sin was so great that the vast majority of individuals were irredeemable. Human efforts and institutions were powerless in the face of it and they could not bridge the gap between temporal corruption, and promises of a universal and perfect Millennium. Christ's radical intervention alone could halt the earth's slide into moral decrepitude: humanity's infinite evil could only be squelched by the supernatural power of infinite good, through the agency of a Christ who was more God than man. As an example, Millerites argued that the millennial Kingdom would be "both universal and perpetual," that it would be made up of saints who could never backslide, and that there would be no war, death, pain or sorrow, but only peace and bliss. In contrast, one Millerite writer noted that at present, children are born with an unholy nature. Holy parents could "no more transmit [their] acquired moral feelings than [they] can [their] education." As long as man was "at war with God by nature," Christ's Kingdom could never be universal, and nor could it be accomplished gradually, by human agency. It was necessary that a radical "new estate ... pass upon man before God's will can be done by him universally, as it is done in heaven...such a one as stamps his being with immortality." As such, only a "scattered few" would be marked as the Lord's when the angel was sent "to sound the funeral dirge of time!"[32]

It stands to reason that Millerism, a faith that encouraged individuals to "read the signs" of sin and corruption as proof of the coming end, was appealing to a great many Protestants because pessimism made sense. It has already been demonstrated how convincing Millerite date-setting could be, particularly when the "signs of the times" were marked upon the vast canvas of Protestant history. In general, it provided individuals with a means of understanding frightening world events in eschatological terms: the French Revolution, the rise of infidelity, the Napoleonic Wars, and Catholicism's persistent "tyranny" were all addressed by Millerism. But events closer to home also contributed to Millerism's appeal. By the early 1840s, Canadian Protestants faced the

task of interpreting a myriad of social, political and religious changes that called into question the very structure and meaning of time.[33] In order to understand the particular appeal of Millerism in Canada, it is necessary to examine its attitudes within the colonial context of the 1830s and 40s.

Millerites referred to Scripture as a guide to the state of society as the end drew near. For example, it dictated that the world would be "greatly given to sensuality" as people would eat, drink, marry and give in marriage, oblivious to the coming wrath. People would be "lovers of their own selves, covetous, proud, blasphemers," and as immoral as the citizens of Sodom. Interestingly, they would be "pushing their great public enterprises, as well as their private businesses – 'planting and building, buying and selling'" and knowledge would be on the increase. But as the world sank into the pit of moral corruption, the "appearance of virtue and order" would remain. They noted Isaiah's prophecy that in such times, the "profession of religion [would] abound, [and] men [would] have 'the form of godliness.'" Moreover, they warned that existing governments were "parts of the image which is to be dashed in pieces," and as such, principle dictated that political involvement generally be avoided, while Christ's imminent return made this the more pragmatic choice as well.[34]

Adventists of the day arrayed themselves against the seductive and united forces of greed, fashion, ambition, intellectual sophistry and the idolatry of work. God had warned his "soldiers" to steer clear of Mammon's magnetism, declaring that "those who would be rich" would "f[a]ll into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, err[ing] from the faith."[35] Moreover, Millerites lamented the fact that Christianity, which was supposed to be a most "heavenly and spiritual" religion was being corrupted by worldly and materialist followers. Christianity's "legitimate effect" was to ensure equality among its members, and to "discountenance on religious occasions, distinctions wholly dependent upon money." The popularity of religious tea parties was a case in point. It was unseemly that people had to be tempted by delicious food and drink in order to give to church charities. What is more, such parties wasted time and money,

countenanced fashionable display, and led to the abandonment of "domestic comfort for public dissipation."[36]

Equally odious to Millerites was the educational snobbery and false intellectual superiority of professors, rulers, and paid ministers who sought to delegitimize the right of godly individuals of average learning to decipher Biblical prophecies. For example, Eastern Townships Millerite, John Potter claimed that his experience of British Wesleyanism meant that for years he had "paid men" and allowed them to think for him. Conversely, when he heard Brother Litch preach of the coming Kingdom, he began to "think for himself." Millerites objected to the tendency of postmillennialists to rely on the services of a professorial elite, whose smug superiority could not obscure their "deceitful" practice of wilfully suppressing Biblical proof. Generally, they believed that the approaches of so-called "learned men" to prophecy smacked of sophistry and dishonesty. Indeed, one author consoled his brethren, who felt that the opposition of the learned was a significant "stumbling block in the way of persuading sinners to escape the coming wrath." He directed them to the testimony of Scripture and history, noting that "this class of men were not always first in reformations and in returns from captivity. Furthermore, in the days of Christ they were his most bitter opponents, and those of their number who believed, came to him by night."[37]

At one extreme, love of wealth led to sensualism. At the other extreme, it led to destructive ambitiousness and the idolatry of work. In turn, worldly ambition led to wars and the great "distress of nations." But both ambition and the worship of work, in addition to intellectual sophistry were distressing in that they indicated the extent to which "Christians" had strayed from the true path of faith. Adventists of the time were fond of describing the final seconds before Christ's coming. Invariably, the unregenerate were found immersed in their various occupations, or alternatively, in the process of committing some evil deed. One writer imagined the minister in his study "preparing for the pulpit; the lawyer ... in his office preparing for the lawsuit; the farmer in his fields; the mechanic in his workshop; the merchant in his counting-room... [and] the lovers of

Pleasure were seen in the halls of Mirth." With their minds focused on the return of Christ in 1843 or 1844, Millerites did not expend the bulk of their efforts analyzing evil's finer points, since writers believed these things to be generally understood. Rather, they concentrated their attention on Scriptural proof of Millerite pre-millennialism, and on reports from the mission field. But it is clear that Millerites indicted all those they perceived as placing their own wills before God's. The acts of murderers, slanderers, and pleasure-seekers were the most obvious examples of sin, but similarly culpable were great generals, politicians and learned divines. And most interestingly, this guilt was shared not only by professional gentlemen and merchants, but also by farmers and artisans who placed their personal ambition, their desire for riches, and their hopes for greater material comforts before service to God.[38]

These observations raise questions about Millerism's appeal, which must be understood within the confines of its time and place. If, broadly speaking, Millerism took fire because it offered an attractive option for dealing with "change," one must investigate the nature of such "change." The accounts of British Wesleyan missionaries to the Eastern Townships noted the "unprecedented" depression of agriculture and commerce that struck the area in the winter of 1842-3, a situation that was exacerbated by geographic isolation, and the "*unusual* changes" in winter weather which made it impossible for farmers to bring their produce to market.[39] Such observations were placed alongside accounts of the popularity of Adventist preachers, particularly in Stanstead, and other border communities. Other historians have noted, that although the region's soil was suitable for cereal production, for the first half of the nineteenth-century, poor roads and the absence of a good, natural transportation route made it difficult to deliver wheat to market. And although British and American farmers in the Townships have been left out of studies on the "agricultural crisis" in Lower Canada, which plagued the province from at least 1830 to 1850, Jack Little has asserted that poverty was endemic in the region during this pre-industrial age.[40] As such, one might conclude, as have some of the earlier historians of Millerism, that the movement held a

special appeal to the poor and dispossessed.[41] A first-hand experience of economic depression may have made them more susceptible to Millerism's pessimistic eschatology, and to its urgent demands that people put God above all other things.

Interestingly, this conclusion is challenged by evidence on the economic conditions of Canada West for the 1830s and 40s. In contrast to Canada East, Canada West emerged from the agricultural slump of the mid-to-late 1830s, and witnessed solid growth in the next decade during which the economy reaped the benefits of good weather, large-scale immigration, rapid settlement, improvements to transportation, and changes to the British Corn Laws.[42] From 1821 to 1851, most farm households produced more than they consumed, but surpluses were generally modest. Although focused on wheat production, most farm households produced livestock, in addition to other types of crops for the local market – oats and potatoes in particular –and many relied on forest products to generate essential income. In short, Upper Canadian farmers pursued an "integrated strategy in which each activity played a part in building the farm as a long-term enterprise." Others supplemented artisanal manufacture with farming. Steady agricultural growth, with wheat leading the way, and growth of basic industries, commerce and financial institutions, fired the engine of the provincial economy, particularly in the farm hinterlands served by Toronto, Cobourg and London – areas of strong Millerite support. This in turn spurred the rise of Toronto as the premiere wholesale centre of Canada West, which laid the foundations for modest urban/industrial development in the next decade.[43] This contrasts significantly with the situation of the Eastern Townships in the early 1840s, thus implying that Millerism's appeal transcended economic factors: both prosperous and poor were drawn to the movement. Indeed, information on New York Millerites suggests that their average material worth was $200 greater than their non-Adventist counterparts, a finding which discredits the traditional view that millenarianism appealed mainly to the economically down-trodden.[44]

As such, the student of Canadian Millerism is faced with two possible economic sources of "change" that contributed to the movement's appeal: the depression in Canada East, and the challenge of prosperity in Canada West. The disparity of these two factors underscores the malleability of Millerism's appeal in Canada. In both cases, followers of the movement participated in a critique of mainstream culture that denied both the efficacy and the sanctity of progress via human effort. This belief which was most dramatically acted out when in anticipation of Christ's return, followers left "worldly business except as that work necessary for immediate support."[45] In Canada East, poor economic conditions likely cast doubt on the benefits of extra striving, while Millerism functioned as spiritual compensation for hardship in the here-and-now: the dispossessed would gain their reward when Christ returned. In Canada West, more prosperous individuals were drawn to Millerism as a means of coping with the accelerated pace of change, and the sense that shifting expectations regarding work, and materialism were threatening the very fabric of evangelical faith. These points will be discussed in greater detail as the chapter progresses.

In addition to economic dislocation, the ethnically-determined political, religious and cultural divisions separating the clerical elite from the Methodist rank and file created a fertile ground for the proliferation of Millerism in the Eastern Townships. In 1820, through an agreement between the British Wesleyan church and the American Methodist Episcopal church, Lower Canada was alotted to the former group, with the exception of the east side of the Ottawa River. The latter obtained control of Upper Canada with the exception of Kingston. This agreement lasted until 1854 when the British Wesleyans of Canada East formally united with the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada, already in existence in Canada West.[46] In the aftermath of the political unrest caused by the French Revolution, and of the social turbulence caused by working class strife in the early nineteenth-century, British Methodism took a conservative turn, as its preachers began to realize that their preaching privileges were contingent upon loyalty to the state.

By the early Victorian period, British Methodism had succeeded in purifying the denomination of

its populist tendencies, opting instead for a more institutionalized structure and a more genteel

style. As a result, in Stanstead County, the British character of official Methodism contrasted

starkly with that of the American Methodist rank and file who were steeped in the values of

popular sovereignty and anti-authoritarianism. They tended to ignore traditional distinctions

between clergy and laity, and balked at any attempts to impose doctrinal or behavioural uniformity

upon them. In 1841, on the eve of Millerite incursions into Canada East, Henry Lanton, the British

Wesleyan Missionary stationed in Stanstead expressed his exasperation with this state of affairs:

> As the people are principally from the United States and have brought with them their
> republican peculiarities they are not, and I fear never will be British Wesleyan
> Methodists....[O]ur excellent discipline is almost universally disregarded by...members of
> our Society. We have only one Lay preacher, and over him we have no control: he
> preaches where he pleases for other denominations as well as for ourselves, even for those
> who oppose us....[H]e is called by some 'a minister,' and by others 'the Rev____' although
> he can hardly read a chapter...of the Scriptures. And if we move at all to correct... these
> errors, we are said to be proud, tyrannical, etc.etc.[47]

Lanton went on to describe several other obstacles in the way of inculcating, amongst the

American Methodists, a preference for British Wesleyan ways. For one, owing to the scattered

nature of settlement, class meetings were often poorly attended, and class papers were seldom used

despite the fact that Lanton supplied the class leaders with them. This meant that missionaries on

their quarterly rounds could not compile records on class meeting attendance. Furthermore, Lanton

lamented the fact that they were forced to include non-subscribing Methodists at love feasts, partly

due to geographical conditions, and partly due to the settlers' sense of fairness and their hostility at

attempts to enforce denominational exclusivity. As such, Wesleyan ministers were seldom able to

address members of their own congregation in private, and thus disabuse them of their errors.[48]

According to Lanton, one of the most worrisome aspects of religious life in Stanstead

County was the instability caused by the influx of American Methodist itinerants. They served to

strengthen the settlers' resolve to adhere to their democratic religious traditions, which increased

disaffection toward British Wesleyan ways. The result was that "many who regularly subscribed to our funds will not now give 'a cent.'"" Other Stanstead missionaries echoed Lanton's concerns, singling out the moral turpitude of the population for particular scorn. Aside from a tendency to disregard the order of British Wesleyanism, they alleged that the people desecrated the Sabbath, cursed, swore and drank. [49]

The connections between American settlers in Canada East and their neighbours in Vermont were not limited to the activities of popular preachers. During the Rebellion of 1838, there were reports that Americans on both sides of the border planned an attack on Stanstead in support of the rebel cause. On February 26, 1838, about 250 men met at Derby Line, which separated Canada from the United States, for the purpose of making an attack upon loyalists in the "dead of night." Because firearms which had been promised from the United States did not arrive until the next day, the plan fell through. A subsequent proposition to set fire to certain buildings on the Stanstead Plain and to seize the arms that were deposited in "the academy" was rejected on the ground that it would "involve the women and children in the common ruin." Some of the men who had assembled were reported to be radicals from the different parts of the county, including Stanstead, Barnston and Hatley, though rumour had it that they had been kept in ignorance of the plan of attack. Several months later, the entire county was put under martial law, which was deemed to have a baneful effect on the Methodist membership. Missionary Thomas Turner reported that the Methodist chapel had been occupied for a fortnight by soldiers, and feared that the sight of "implements of war... in the house of God" would have a "very unfavourable influence upon the interests of religion and also upon the income of the Circuit. [50]

Local missionaries lamented the effects of martial law, but they threw their support wholeheartedly behind the suppression of the Rebellion, to the point of using the pulpit to proclaim the gospel of loyalty. [51] The experience of the Rebellion had placed in sharp relief the lack of "unanimity of feelings and desire" within communities "made up of persons from different

countries and political sentiments."[52] The wounds it caused were not soon forgotten: into the early 1840s, British Wesleyans continued to describe the American members of their flock with a mixture of disdain and fear.[53]

More generally, historians have remarked upon the political violence that accompanied the struggle for responsible government in the Canadas, from the late 1820s to the late 1840s.[54] Although conditions in the Eastern Townships after the Rebellions were particularly chaotic, individuals in both Canada East and West experienced a great deal of political strife in working out the pressing constitutional questions of the day. Millerism's premillennial eschatology left little room for the success of reform efforts, particularly those on a grand scale because it urged believers to turn their backs on a corrupt world in anticipation of Christ's imminent return. While it drew from the larger culture of democratized Christianity, and while, when pressed, it came out in favour of political reform along Christian lines, Millerism constituted a rejection of politics as it was practiced in North America. By the early 1840s, this option was appealing for several reasons. Reflecting on the political and religious struggles of the 1830s to the early 1840s, it is not difficult to understand how Dissenting reformers could lose heart: violence at the polls, use of the gerrymander, and frequent electoral corruption, combined with state-sanctioned religious discrimination in the form of the Clergy Reserves, the eruption of the Rebellions, the subsequent declaration of martial law, unfair accusations of disloyalty, and public executions of rebel conspirators created a profound sense of unease amongst the Canadian public. Moreover, the Rebellion had led to the demise of the radical democratic option, and to the development of a conservative and statist reform consensus. With Christians so divided, and with the chance of real reform increasingly remote, it is little wonder that a significant minority of Canadians – many of them American settlers and their descendants – were attracted to the Millerite message in the early 1840s, particularly when politics, Protestantism and prophecy were so closely associated in the public mind.

In repudiating the legitimacy of political involvement, in denying the efficacy of human

agency to effect change via institutions, and in charging the mainstream churches with corruption,

Millerism responded unfavourably not only to political and economic change, but more specifically

to the undesirable changes occurring within Canadian evangelicalism. It also attacked the latter's

response to change in the larger world. In so doing, Millerites spoke a common, evangelical

language, but with an anti-formalist accent that attested to their democratic Christian principles.

They charged that the evangelical churches were as tainted by worldliness, corruption, and deceit

as the larger society, and eventually, that the elect had no choice but to "come out of Babylon" in

order to disassociate themselves from moral ruin.[55] It is clear that there were significant

theological, political and stylistic gaps that divided British Wesleyan ministers in the Eastern

Townships from their American Methodist flock, leaving little doubt as to why Millerism was so

popular in the area. But a lack of such explicit documentary evidence for Canada West, means

that the more "negative" religious reasons for Millerism's appeal within Canadian Wesleyanism are

somewhat obscure. As such, it is necessary to refer to general developments within the Upper

Canadian church, so as to ascertain the validity of Millerism's anti-formalist criticisms.

In the early 1840s, the main body of Methodism in Canada West, that of Ryerson's

Episcopal Methodists had come through a long and difficult period, traceable to the events of

1820s and 30s. It can be recalled that Ryerson's response in 1826 to Strachan's "Ecclesiastical

Chart" and to allegations of Methodist disloyalty, transformed the denomination into a powerful

force of political opposition to establishmentarianism. But as the Reform movement became

increasingly radical, under the unofficial leadership of William Lyon Mackenzie, and as the

Methodist Episcopal Church contemplated a union with the British Wesleyans, Ryerson sought to

re-establish his church's political principles on more conservative terms. Historians have suggested

that Ryerson favoured the 1833 union for tactical purposes. The British Wesleyans did not

consider themselves as entirely separate from the Anglican Church, and as such, union meant that

the Methodist Episcopal Church might be able to rid itself of the charges of republicanism and disloyalty, which severance of the church's American ties in 1828 had not accomplished. At the same time, it longed to end "potentially devastating" missionary competition, and to gain access to more ministers and government funding. These resources were vital to the construction of a new Methodist school, then under consideration, and to the development of the institutional infrastructure of the church in general. Although Ryerson feared British Wesleyan domination, he believed that union was by far the most attractive option.[56]

But Ryerson's fears of British Wesleyan control were not unfounded. Under the terms of union, the new church assumed Wesleyan polity, doctrine and discipline, and was placed under the official jurisdiction of the British Conference. It was agreed that existing preachers and itinerants would maintain their functions, while new candidates would abide by Wesleyan regulations. As such, secularly employed preachers would be stripped of their sacramental power. This represented an erosion of popular rights. Although British Wesleyan ministers complained bitterly about Methodist Episcopal disloyalty and indecorum within the new church, malaise was greater amongst Methodist Episcopals, several of whom broke away from the union in 1834. Staunch in their support of reform politics and voluntarism, they abhorred efforts to reduce the authority of local preachers, and to augment that of ordained itinerants, fearing that centralization would lead to a more conservative and less revivalistic church. Ultimately, the divergent visions of these two branches of Methodism were incompatible. Although purged of its more radical elements, the Methodist Episcopal group continued to press for local administrative control, and its leaders persisted in attacking the Church of England, and the colonial administration, both in person and through the Christian Guardian. The British Wesleyans generally deplored such actions: existent internal divisions were exacerbated, and the union was dissolved in 1840.[57]

The 1830s struggles of local Methodist elites against the British Wesleyan missionary authorities assisted in the process of Methodist Episcopal self-definition. Religiously, elites

envisioned the church as a stable middle ground between the established church, and radical

Dissent. In the context of 1830s establishmentarianism, such a view had political ramifications as

well: local Methodist elites, such as Egerton Ryerson favoured the Whig ideal of a balanced

constitution based on a limited monarchy, the preservation of aristocratic honour and property, and

a respect for the rights of the people. Corruption occurred when one estate abused its powers.

Ryerson's vision combined a solid respect for authority and tradition, with the liberal view that

individuals had the right to equal privileges in society.[58] In the year or so before the Rebellions

erupted, Ryerson's fears of radical agitation led the Methodist Conference to support the Governor

and the Constitution. This occurred despite Francis Bond Head's 1836 refusal to solicit the advice

of Reform members of the Executive, who represented the will of the elected Assembly. Ryerson

and the Conference tacitly endorsed the Government party in the elections that summer, an action

which contemporaries believed contributed to Reform's defeat. Fears of radicalism led the

Conference to downplay its backing of a voluntarist settlement of the Clergy Reserves issue in June

of 1837. But by 1838, Methodist support of the government was faltering, as it sought harsh

punishments against the rebel insurgents. That year, following Ryerson's lead, the Conference

restated its view that the best solution was to appropriate funds accruing from the sale of the

Reserves to general education. The funds would be divided amongst the denominations, in

proportion to the amounts raised by voluntary effort. In January of 1840, the Clergy Reserves Bill

was passed with Ryerson's support, but it involved a compromise of his voluntarist principles.

Reserve proceeds would be divided amongst the legally recognized Christian churches, and each

would decide whether to direct their share toward funding religious instruction, paying clerical

salaries, or other purposes. Ryerson accepted this compromise due to pragmatic motivations. The

bill put an end to Anglican superiority, while it secured much-needed funds for Victoria College,

overwhich Ryerson would preside as principal, beginning in June of 1840.[59] Ryerson's moderate

and pragmatic approach to reform is also witnessed in his support of the Governor's cause in the

Metcalfe Crisis of 1844: in challenging the "extreme" measures of the LaFontaine-Baldwin Reform ministry, he secured preferment for public office as Assistant Superintendent of Schools for Canada West.[60]

This brief survey of Methodist history during the 1830s to early 1840s demonstrates local church elites' commitment to political activism, as the voice of conservative Dissent: principled yet pragmatic, Ryersonian Methodism's adherence to cautious reform, advanced the denomination's reputation as a respectable cultural leader. The lessons of the 1830s and 40s had taught Methodist elites the value of progress, and strengthened their faith in institutional efforts to reform society. In 1842-44, Millerism challenged this newly-minted sense of power by means of anti-formalist appeals. Methodist elites' political entanglements, their willingness to compromise on the Reserves issue, their efforts on behalf of Victoria College, and their evident pecuniary motivations, in addition to the experience of union with the British Wesleyans contributed to the view that the church had been corrupted by worldliness. Millerism appealed to those who lamented Methodism's increasing formalism, and who, in the larger context of social and political change, believed that Christ's imminent return was the only way around what appeared to be a colossal impasse.

Although it is impossible to be certain about the Millerites' personal motivations, this discussion would be incomplete without a consideration of the movement's psychological appeal. Contemporary critics of Millerism often suggested that its adherents were mentally deranged. Building upon this, some historians of millenarianism have argued that social and political changes, such as the ones mentioned above, are often responsible for rising rates of insanity. According to this view, individuals unable to cope with change, channelled their psychoses into leadership of millenarian movements, while adherents were taken from the ranks of the neurotic. Such assessments are problematic for they do not take into account the shifting definitions of "madness" over time, nor the fact that accusations of madness were invariably false. In the case of Millerism, such accusations were used to discredit the movement, and as such, taking them at face value

obscures the real reasons why it was ultimately rejected.[61] That being said, knowledge of Christ's

coming in 1843 or 1844 was a joyous prospect for many Millerites, because it promised the end to

pain and sorrow.[62] The saved would be eternally blissful, and they would be reunited with their

loved ones, living and deceased. One correspondent to the Voice of Elijah proclaimed: "...The

bright features of that 'world to come,' whereof we speak ... cheer us, delight us, win us to duty,

and fix our affections upon it, instead of this world. And who, I ask, would not desire to see it, and

see it now?"[63] Another looked to "that glorious day when the dead in Christ shall arise, and we that

are Christ's (who are alive) shall be caught up to meet him in the air" with the faith that he would

soon be reunited with his recently deceased daughter. More negatively, in promising a swift

redress for injustice, Millerism acted as a safe outlet for desires for revenge through the belief that

"the Lord will make it all right when he comes."[64] Despite such indications, the personal reasons

why some people were attracted to Millerite premillennialism remain shadowy at best. Surely

premillennialist and postmillennialist alike suffered physical and emotional pain, harboured desires

for revenge, and grieved when friends and family members died. The student of Millerism must

look beyond both economic and narrowly psychological factors for more tangible clues.

Some of these may be found within evangelical culture itself. As noted, Miller's

premillennial vision hinged on the belief that the world would become increasingly corrupt in the

last days, afterwhich Christ would return to meet his saints, and begin his personal, millennial rule

on an earth purified by fire. Other historians have argued that Millerism was not so easily

dismissed by its opponents for the simple fact that it was orthodox in several respects.

Furthermore, this appeal to orthodoxy cemented the movement's success: it was attractive because

it offered ways of understanding the world, of interpreting change, and of expressing religious

feelings that were so familiar as to be almost indistinguishable from more traditional paths.

Michael Gauvreau has asserted that evangelicalism's authority depended upon "the ability

of professors and preachers to predict the future course of events, to link the occurrences of the

past to a meaningful sequence of trends and portents," via the prophetic texts of Scripture.[65] From

1800 to the eruption of Millerism, the North Atlantic world was awash in a sea of millennial

expectation, during which period, only the nature and timing of the millennium were points of

dispute: the notion that Biblical prophecies had been and would continue to be fulfilled was not

called into question by representatives of the mainline faiths. Their response to Millerism is a case

in point. Critics of the movement battled with "heresy" on its own terms, and attempted to refute

its claims by pointing out "errors" in the calculations upon which Miller's pessimistic eschatology

was based. But because the Bible contained numerous complex and contradictory passages,

prophetic interpretation was highly subjective. Even Methodist elites did not agree on all elements

of interpretation. Some asserted that Daniel's 2300 days could not be proven to stand for

"prophetic years." Others, such as Methodist luminary Anson Green, accepted such assumptions,

while disagreeing about the precise events that had set the prophetic clock in motion.[66] Afterall,

had not pious and learned men such as Wesley, Benson and Clarke fixed the date for the end of

time at 1836, 1866, and 2015 respectively?[67] What united both Millerites and their critics was

their equally fervent conviction that prophecy formed the core of evangelical faith.

Toronto Congregationalist minister John Roaf eloquently expressed this point of

interdenominational elite consensus in an 1844 tract written in response to Millerism. Although he

supported the "more common" postmillennial position, he noted that the question of the last days

provoked a great diversity of opinion. He urged individuals to proceed with caution, while

asserting that the study of prophecy enabled individuals to be "better students of history, even of

politics, as well as better church members and Christians. Although Christians might quibble

about the exact rules governing prophetic investigation, the pursuit itself was necessary, based as it

was on the assumption that the Bible contained a factual account of the establishment of the

Christian Kingdom at Pentecost to the end time.[68] As such, it is little wonder that prophetic

interpretation was not limited to the worlds of college and pulpit. On the contrary, in the first half

of the nineteenth-century, it was still common for ordinary folk to use prophecy to explain

everyday events.[69] This practice wedded belief in the factuality of the entire sacred record, with

other Protestant orthodoxies including sola scriptura and the democratic ideal of liberty of

conscience: prophecy was useful, accessible and personal.

In addition, the doctrine of the Second Coming was emphatically orthodox: Protestants

were united in millennial expectation, and as historians have argued, the fact that Millerites tried to

predict the exact date of Christ's return did not justify the opposition they faced. Indeed, the

movement appealed to a great many Methodist preachers and class leaders who saw nothing

heretical in Miller's message of Christ's imminent return, and several Methodist ministers allowed

Millerite preachers the use of their pulpits.[70] In reflecting on the circumstances surrounding his

separation from the British Wesleyan Church, former minister-turned-Millerite-preacher, RT

Hutchinson noted that he first "preached the Advent Doctrine" at the December Quarterly Meeting

in 1842, and that Chairman William Harvard "was perfectly acquainted with my entire course, so

that if he had deemed anything wrong in my teaching, he might have called me to account."

Moreover, Hutchinson noted that after his separation from the Church, and in the midst of public

attempts to discredit his character, Chairman Harvard continued to offer him private support, and

ensured Hutchinson that he had been a faithful Methodist, and an exception to the idea that all

Millerites were fools. Hutchinson also noted that several of his colleagues held Millerite views

while serving as ministers, some keeping these views private, while others "took a decided and

public stand."[71] The support – tacit or otherwise – that Millerism received, particularly from

members of the Methodist clergy, suggests that in early 1840s Canada, the line separating

evangelical orthodoxy from Millerite heresy was still indistinct.

Another reason for the confusion was the centrality of revivalism to both Millerism, and

other "mainstream" evangelical faiths, such as Methodism. Revival lay at the core of Methodist

identity, and every effort was directed toward its efflorescence.[72] For Millerites, surety of Christ's

speedy return made their experience of revival and of conversion to Adventist views all the more

pungent. Moreover, the "Great Tent," whose construction was authorized by the American

Millerite leadership, symbolized the camp meeting's importance to the movement: able to seat 4000

people, and reportedly, the largest structure of its kind, it was first used at Hatley and Bolton, in

the Eastern Townships, in the summer of 1842. Millerite preachers to the area focused their

revivalistic efforts on the border townships, but they also spread the word in the St. Francis River

area. In Stanstead alone, 3000 to 5000 people reportedly attended each camp meeting.[73] Camp

meetings were also held in the upper province, but in larger centres such as Toronto, Hamilton, and

Port Credit, indoor meetings and conferences were also popular. Although outside reports of such

meetings must be taken with a grain of salt, it was common for several persons to pray, speak and

shout out loudly at the same time, and for individuals under the Spirit's influence to writhe or

"struggle" in a full-body prayer for the unconverted.[74]

The emotionalism of Millerite revivals parallelled the emotionalism of evangelical religious

worship in general, and of Methodist camp meetings in particular, where a combination of factors

coaxed the prospective penitent toward salvation. Isolated from everyday concerns, and in the

company of friends, the individual joined in song and prayer. Furthermore, he or she listened to

fervent preaching and exhortation which often relied on the Final Judgment, and on the radical

dichotomization of good and evil to convey the message that the sinner must "repent and be saved,

for the Kingdom of God is at hand." The process of conversion could take several days or weeks,

and for many Methodists, it issued in an intense emotional release characterized by shouting,

crying, violent shaking and prostration. Protracted meetings which took place indoors and in urban

settings generally gathered in the evenings so as not to disrupt day-to-day business. Because

rowdyism and excessive enthusiasm was more easily controlled at protracted meetings, they were

viewed as more "respectable" than camp meetings. This was certainly the case with British

Wesleyans who associated the latter with American-inspired disorder. British Wesleyan

jurisdiction over Methodist affairs in Lower Canada meant that official support for camp meetings was lacking, although during the revival of 1835, a more controlled form of the camp meeting made its way into the Eastern Townships. In contrast, the Canadian Wesleyans of Upper Canada historically viewed camp and protracted meetings as having equal value.[75]

Under the leadership of Joshua Himes from 1840, Millerism was transformed into a mass movement whose success depended upon the efficacy of conferences and camp meetings to promote Adventism, and to recruit talented individuals to assist in organization and evangelization. Himes' genius at promotion made Millerism an international phenomenon. He systematized the movement, and without him, it is likely that Miller would have remained an obscure figure in the history of millenarianism. Both Millerism's emphasis on revival, and Himes' efforts to systematize the camp meeting, most notably through the construction of the "Great Tent" – a brilliant promotional device because it lured curious onlookers who would stay and listen to the Advent message – had parallels in the larger religious culture of Protestant North America.[76] The late 1830s witnessed the increasing systematization and professionalization of evangelism, under the leadership of Charles Grandison Finney. Although differing in tone, both Finneyite and Millerite revivalism relied on extensive organization and skilled promotion. Moreover, the latter began to flourish in the Canadas during a period of increased Methodist revival activity. For example, in the early 1840s, James Caughey became the "first great revivalist to crusade extensively in British North America." Interestingly, his first major efforts were made among the British Wesleyans of Lower Canada, where he accepted William Harvard's invitation to assist in protracted meetings in Quebec City. Additionally, in the spring of 1841 in Canada West, several leading preachers went on tour, and set in motion a renewal of revival fervour.[77]

Finally, Millerism's anti-Catholicism was also orthodox: as noted, the Roman Catholic Church was fingered as the historical villain in prophecies both fulfilled and unfulfilled, and the Pope of latter days was marked as the Anti-Christ, or whore of Babylon who would lead the forces

of evil in battle against the saints. This assertion resonated with mainstream Canadian evangelicals who were influenced by renewed hostility between Protestants and Catholics in Britain from 1820 to 1860, and by home-grown fears of Catholic power in the colonies. It was imperative for Protestants of the age to discredit Catholic claims to greater antiquity via the Apostolic Succession, and to depict the Church as utterly corrupt, so as to legitimize their own claims to superiority. As such, even Methodists who wished to discredit Millerism found occasion to praise its staunch opposition to popery.[78]

These meditations on Millerism's orthodoxy raise several questions. First of all, if Millerism was so orthodox, why did Methodist and other Protestant elites reject it as heresy? Furthermore, how was Millerism discredited and what does this process reveal about the Methodism of mid-century, and the larger cultural context? As mentioned earlier, this occurred during a crucial crossroads in the history of both Canada West, and of Canadian Wesleyanism: during the late 1830s to early 1840s, Methodism had come of age, and elites were poised to take their rightful place as leaders of cultural, social and political change in the age of voluntarism. Their success depended upon an optimistic belief in progress and human agency, and on their ability to control Dissent's centrifugal pull. Millerism's pessimistic eschatology challenged the very basis of elite Methodist assumptions in the new age. This, combined with the movement's sheer popularity, meant that Millerism constituted a serious threat indeed. The process of grappling with Millerite arguments forced Methodist elites to reevaluate the faith. This consolidated the view that work was a sacred trust, and that a formal, Christian education was necessary for individual development, and by extension, for the creation of a progressive Christian society which would fulfill Scripture's decidedly postmillennial promise. These elements constituted the basis of a budding, middle-class ideology in the colony.

Methodist criticisms of Millerism can be divided into two camps: those directly concerned with questions of human agency, progress and optimism; and those that attempted to discredit the

movement by means of ad hominem attacks, exaggeration, "half-truths" and outright lies.

Although Methodists engaged in both types of criticisms, their use of exaggeration was mild

compared to Anglican, Presbyterian and "secular" tory reactions. These more conservative sources

of colonial opinion shared Methodism's belief in human agency, progress and optimism, but used

the opportunity provided by the "Millerite mania" to attack Methodist respectability: its alleged

"enthusiasm" had led to all manner of disorder and moral infection. In contrast, Methodist critics

trod more carefully. They took Millerism's prophetic arguments seriously, and they restrained their

invective in order to avoid publicly undermining their own beliefs. A comparison of both streams

of colonial opinion sheds light on the rancorous atmosphere of the 1840s, and on the process by

which the key elements of the mid-Victorian liberal cultural consensus was fashioned.

Methodist critics of Millerism did not shrink from the movement's prophetic challenge. On

the contrary, in many cases, they attempted to refute its premillennialist doctrine point by point.

Although the critics did not agree on every particular, they were united by a common belief in

postmillennialism, as the "doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church" set forth by Wesley and

other leaders of the faith: the millennium would take place long before the end of the world, and it

would entail a spiritualization of earthly relations. In this millennial state, "the kingdoms of this

world [would] become the kingdoms of our Lord and of the Christ." In contrast to Millerites,

Methodist elites believed that the state of the world was constantly improving. Despite historical

set-backs and the persistence of sin, Satan was fighting a losing battle; the critics looked forward to

the general conversion of the world before the end of Time.[79] Although they were confident in the

progress of missions, Methodist critics understood that Christianization of the entire globe would

take more than a few years to complete. Afterall, the world's salvation depended, for many, upon

the conversion of the Jews, in addition to Protestantism's ability to grow in knowledge, and to crush

Popery, and all manner of infidelity. Because of the gradual nature of prophetic fulfilment, they

joined in condemning date-setting as a heresy, with many referring to Acts I, 7 and to Christ's

statement that it was best for his followers not to know the time of his return.[80] An optimistic

reading of history suggested that the world was indeed in its "last days," in the sense Christ's

kingdom, characterized by Christian unity, the spiritualization of society, in addition to world

peace and material prosperity was close at hand. There would be nothing to fear.

In rejecting the movement, Methodist critics argued for the superiority of liberal

explanations of prophecy over Millerism's radical supernaturalism. In their view, not only had

Miller made several errors of calculation, his doctrines were the product of a crude combination of

empiricism and Biblicism, which resulted in the propensity to take the Scriptures too literally. One

Methodist critic thought it absurd that the "New Jerusalem" promised in chapter 21 of Revelations

as a city 1200 furlongs, or 1500 miles in breadth, width and height would be constructed according

to these actual dimensions. He exclaimed: "If *Millerism* be true, we have a literal city 1500 miles

high!! What is the inference?" For this and other critics, it was that Millerism was absurd, and

indeed primitive in orientation because it promised a material fulfilment of prophecies which were

meant to be understood in spiritual terms. Biblical prophecies were to be interpreted with this

modified definition of literalism in mind. Additionally, in rejecting Millerism, Methodist elites

repudiated its view of God as a distant, yet omnipotent entity who simultaneously played a precise

role in world affairs, but to the extent that human ingenuity was minimized. Instead, they believed

that God's direct intervention was limited to the individual's conversion experience. In the main,

God's effect was immanent, not supernatural: he worked through natural and historical processes.

Although capable of using miracles to spread the gospel – for example at Pentecost – Methodist

leaders believed that God did not generally employ such "extraordinary means."[81]

Methodist elites' developing liberal, progressive vision was based on a belief that all

individuals were potential instruments of the Divine will. As such, Millerism was most repulsive

and "absurd" because it denied salvation to the vast numbers of the world's unconverted.

Methodists charged Millerites with selfishness, for in their zeal to meet the Lord, they had forgotten

compassion for their fellow man. In a letter to the <u>Christian Guardian</u>, H Wilkins queried if there were any "drawback to this joy in the imminent destruction which...[will] overwhelm many?"[82] He answered affirmatively, asserting that it was not a matter of joy to believe that "a mere fragment of the adult human family are in a saved condition." Although Wilkins believed in Christ's Second Coming, for him, the precise nature of the event remained obscure. Because God's will was not altogether clear, he argued that it was better to believe that through evangelization, more would be saved than lost. And referring to elements within the movement that favoured annihilationism, or the ultimate destruction of unsaved souls, he reminded his readers that Millerism meant salvation for the few and eternal death to "untold members of our race, whose spirits, like our own, are of infinite value."[83]

Belief in each individual's "infinite value" was simultaneously an act of faith in his/her fundamental goodness, in the redemptive power of the Gospel, in the efficacy of missions, in Divine mercy, and in the Methodist tradition. According to Methodist postmillennialists, human sin was not so great as to require the physical and imminent intervention of God to expunge. The "New Methodism" of the early 1840s strengthened the traditional affirmation of the individual's power in achieving salvation, by reducing the scale of his/her personal struggle with sin. This marked the erosion of an earlier emphasis on the natural and total depravity of humanity. Humans were essentially good, and as such, individuals had the power to choose redemption for themselves, and to successfully evangelize the unsaved.

In the early-to-mid 1840s, writers in the <u>Christian Guardian</u> made frequent reference to man's wondrous capacities, quite apart from attempts to discredit Millerism as a faith for misanthropists. The world they described was one of near endless possibility, a world which John Wesley had envisioned as an outgrowth of individuals' movement toward "Christian perfection" or freedom from sin. Although man was "fallen," he was "still the object of Divine regard... and the only being that transports with joy the enraptured myriads of the heavenly world." As proof,

writers referred to man's impressive intellectual powers and attainments, to which were linked his

ability to achieve moral perfection, with the help of the Holy Spirit's "gracious influence." When

Christ took on human nature, he caused it to be "glorified in heaven," compelling one writer to

exclaim: "Man is represented in the courts of glory. Humanity is inseparably connected with the

Deity. What order of intelligence is raised so high! Can seraphic legions boast of such a

distinction? How exalted, how dignified is man!"[84] In the 1840s, many Canadian Methodists

ardently embraced Wesley's doctrine to which was added the Finneyite exhortation to go on to

"perfect love" and to become entirely sanctified. In subsequent years, through the agency of

Phoebe and Walter Palmer, in addition to other "holiness" crusaders, this "second blessing" would

become a central component of evangelicalism's post-millennial hopes in the North Atlantic world.

They reflected not only new expectations regarding the effect of the Holy Spirit on converted

individuals, but also an affirmation of the power of individuals as agents of amelioration within

their own lives, and within the larger society.[85]

The corollary of faith in individual goodness and human agency was the belief that through

hard work progress was inevitable. Millerism's criticisms of the "idolatry of work," which led

many to neglect worldly business in preparation to meet their maker, rankled its Methodist critics.

Millerism was described as a "mushroom ... on the dunghill of error," and a "wheel in Satan's

machinery" because it attacked the progressive heart of the developing elite consensus.[86] This was

suggested by the editor of the Christian Guardian who remarked:

> Many members of our own Church... are carried away by these delusions: hundreds are
> relinquishing their business. The fatal consequences of the prevalence of these opinions are
> Incalculable upon the future interests of the Church. If the end is so near, we need make
> no further exertions for the conversion of the heathen world.... Why need we foster longer
> the various benevolent institutions of the Church for the instruction and the amelioration of
> the condition of mankind? .... Upon the failure of the fulfilment of these prophecies at the
> stated time, infidelity will prevail... [and there will be] a vast amount of suffering arising
> from inattention to property and business. Many have relinquished the intention of
> attending to their agricultural pursuits; and if they 'sow not, neither shall they reap.'"[87]

For both the Canadian and British Wesleyan leadership of the early 1840s, the individual's

commitment to work, and to the success of missions and other benevolent institutions were integral

to their definition of personal piety, and in turn to the "future interests of the Church." From its

earliest days in Canada, Methodism had been a missionary church par excellence: its travelling

preachers had brought the Word of God to remote areas of the colony, serving the spiritual needs

of thousands of American and British immigrants, and directing lost souls toward salvation. In

addition, after the War of 1812, Methodist efforts were directed toward evangelizing and

assimilating the native population: by the late 1820s, the success of such endeavours had captured

the attention of Lieutenant-Governor Sir John Colborne, who channelled provincial funds toward

the support of Methodist native settlements in the areas of Georgian Bay, Lake Simcoe and the St.

Clair River. By the 1830s, Methodist elites were certain that progress, and the Christianization

and civilization of the natives went hand in hand. By the end of the decade, this rising sense of

missionary self-confidence contributed to the establishment of native residential schools, and to

greater efforts to evangelize the Northwest. Moreover, readers of the Christian Guardian were kept

abreast of efforts to convert the heathens of India and other far-flung places. Thus, it is no

surprise that by the early 1840s, the Missionary effort signified Protestantism's "brightest

ornament," and embodied both British and Canadian Wesleyan commitments to social progress via

moral reform.[88]

On a pragmatic level, Methodist leaders recognized the direct effect that Millerism had on

church revenues. At best, sources of revenue were divided, and at worst, they were completely

lost. For example, late in 1842, British Wesleyan missionary to Stanstead, R Cooney noted with

dismay the effect of Millerism's attempts to organized a "distinct sect." He lamented that in the

process, Millerites denounced Wesleyan missionaries as "unscriptural," stigmatizing their

"attempts to raise funds... as a pious fraud." Moreover, many members had already "'stopped the

supplies.'" And disconcertingly, they often gave "to the advent Preachers more... than they were

accustomed to give us in 4 or 5 years."[89] Indeed, by the spring of 1843, both Cooney and RL

Lusher of Three Rivers were complaining of a "great diminution of receipts" caused by Miller's

"delusion." The latter lamented that the past year had been "one of great affliction." Millerism had

"affected the income of several of the Circuits, occasioning the total amount of the Deficiencies to

exceed the grant...." Economic troubles were partly to blame, but Millerism made an already

difficult situation worse.[90]

Millerite criticisms of the "idolatry of work" and their tendency to neglect worldly

business, as the projected set-times approached, was also a problem for Methodist elites on

ideological grounds. In response to such criticisms, Methodist leaders argued that dutiful

fulfilment of worldly responsibilities was the corollary of Scriptural preparation for Christ's

return.[91] Conversely, those who neglected worldly tasks in God's name courted heresy. This view

was essentially shared by Anglican and secular tory critics of the movement as well. The

controversy over Millerism erupted at a time when work began its transformation from a

burdensome necessity into a virtuous act. Work was both a validation of the existing order, and a

means of shaping society's future course.[92] If the world was to reap the material and spiritual

benefits of progress, individuals had to be active and ambitious, treating worldly duties as a sacred

trust. This philosophy blended well with elite experiences and aspirations: hard work was paying

off in sustained agricultural and commercial growth, despite pockets of stagnation; moreover,

Methodist elites' success at brokering the disestablishment of the Upper Canadian Church-state,

and as a leader of reform opinion was an object lesson in the efficacy of human effort. From their

viewpoint, there was every reason to be optimistic that they could re-fashion society in their own

liberal image, by means of ceaseless toil. Such optimism was reflected in the Christian Guardian

editorial for January 3, 1844, which made reference to Millerism's failed prophecy that "terrestrial

transactions would terminate in '43." In offering readers his warmest wishes for the coming year,

the editor remarked on the numerous auguries of agricultural and commercial prosperity, and

institutional progress in "our land of liberty and religion." [93] With the curses of Millerism dispelled, Methodists could rejoice in the optimistic prospects of their church, and their society.

As the foregoing argument suggests, Methodist and other anti-Millerites drew upon common notions of "character" in attacking the movement. In the process, they contributed to the creation and consolidation of more precise cultural orthodoxies befitting the age of progress and liberal voluntarism. Ryerson, and other colonial religious elites believed in the traditional tri-partite division of human nature into physical, intellectual, and moral faculties. They believed that man's physical aspect which included his bodily appetites, passions and primitive emotions, was perpetually at war with his higher intellectual, emotional and moral attributes. The Christian's task was to master his natural passions by cultivating his higher faculties.[94] Principled and disciplined individuals were deemed respectable while others who manifested a lack of self-control were viewed as disreputable. With proper self-mastery, individuals, and indeed society could reach the heights of spiritual and temporal sublimity. Accordingly, progress-minded Methodists believed that the key to self-mastery and to respectability of character was a solid work ethic. Indeed, they maintained that the creeping advances of "laborious mediocrity" were sure to outpace the efforts of "wayward genius."[95]

That Millerism was popular, what with its belief in radical supernaturalism, and its attacks versus human agency, work and progress was incomprehensible to Methodist and other colonial elites who had difficulty distinguishing the movement from the "humbuggery" of the age. American scholars of Millerism have noted that the rapid pace of change of the 1830s and 40s had made it increasingly difficult to accurately judge individuals' sincerity based on surface appearances. Just as forgeries and imitations were passed on as genuine – for example, PT Barnum's museum of oddities – so too did confidence men ply their various trades under the guise of trustworthiness.[96] At the same time, radical social and religious experiments had reached their peak, as elites sought to moderate democracy's extremes into a more "limited orthodoxy."[97]

Canadians were not sheltered from change and instability: the Rebellion debacle, which was closely associated with Dissent had demonstrated to Methodist leaders the perils of excess, the fragility of the social order, and the need for moderate reform solutions to the political and religious questions of the day. Furthermore, Canadians were not removed from the context of the larger, North American culture. Access to a free press, the proximity of Canadian centres to the American border and the American connections of many settlers meant that the colony had been exposed to the novelties of the age of Jackson and his successors. Moreover, colonists had both knowledge and direct experience of other so-called novelties such as Irvingism and Socialism. From the vantage point of the early 1840s, Methodist leaders had seen their share of upstart gospel preachers, and had become increasingly sensitive to their detrimental influence as they struggled to define the boundaries between acceptable and unacceptable expressions of the religious impulse.[98]

One must keep such things in mind when examining Methodist indictments of Millerism as a "wilful imposture," or more interestingly, as a heresy even worse than the much-maligned Mormonism, a faith which involved an entirely new revelation: in the 1820s, Joseph Smith was led by a heavenly messenger to a book written on gold plates, buried on a hillside in western New York, and was instructed to translate the document using ancient seeing stones.[99] Millerism was much more orthodox than Mormonism, and yet, it was more thoroughly despised. It was perhaps its orthodoxy which made it a more serious force to be reckoned with in Canada, for it was much more difficult to refute solely on the merits of its own claims. In any case, when the final Millerite set-date failed, the humbug argument gained more steam: to be sure they were liars. But in addition to the undisputable proof of failed prophecy, critics alleged that even Millerite methods of evangelization smacked of chicanery. One charged that if they could not "get up a congregation" they would "send for a long-sober-faced man" or perhaps "a female, who can cry pretty easy, read the Bible some, and [who] has a very red face, showing a high temperament" as a means of seducing people "out of the churches."[100]

In depicting Millerite leaders as liars and rogues in Christian disguise, Methodist and other critics cast aspersions on their character, and by extension, on the character of the entire movement. But the leaders were only part of the equation. Methodist elites needed to understand why the movement was so popular amongst ordinary members of their own church. Moreover, they needed to warn the faithful away from Millerism's potential dangers. Accordingly, they criticized those who attended "Millerite exhibitions" for being lovers of "novelty or of error;" they were warned, in the name of all that was sacred to turn aside from all "fraternization with imposture." Others sorrow[ed] for the weaknesses and waywardness" of Millerites who "profess[ed] to be able to reason and judge": they were obviously simple or "imbecile-minded." Still others took a harsher view and interpreted men's neglect of work, and their anxious anticipation of the "midnight cry" dressed in the legendary "ascension robes" as a "species of religious hydrophobia," all the more disturbing because these events had taken place in Toronto and area.[101] British Wesleyan critics also made frequent reference to the delusive effects of Miller's radical gospel.

Anglican and Tory papers echoed these arguments, but with more force, making clearer links between ignorance, enthusiasm, sin and madness. They marvelled that any "man of common sense and ordinary shrewdness could be imposed upon for a moment by such a palpable imposture" as the Millerite "humbug." That thousands of Dissenters were made one question their status as a "free and enlightened people." Moreover, they suggested that Millerite leaders were illiterate men who would be "better employed at some useful branch of mechanical or agricultural industry than in dabbling with the Prophetic writings of the sacred scriptures."[102] They also alleged that Millerism had led to sexual immorality. Some "carried their dangerous absurdities so far as to pretend to have had revelations that other men's wives were to be given into their power."[103] In addition, these more conservative critics were fond of depicting Millerites as insane, wandering

about with pale countenances and swollen eyes. According to several of their reports, Millerism

had literally frightened individuals out of the their minds.[104]

The refutation of Millerism was a means by which Methodist, Anglican and other colonial

elites defined themselves. In one sense, Anglican and secular tory critics used Millerism to attack

Methodism, and to thereby shore up their own claims to cultural leadership. This occurred at the

beginning of the long process by which the Church of England was transformed from an

established church into a voluntary institution. During the 1840s, the Church of England defended

its conservative vision of the social and political order, and its traditional cultural superiority as the

via media between the dangerous extremes of Romanism and Dissent. By the late 1850s, the

Church of England had adapted itself to the new conditions, but from the vantage point of the early

1840s, the victory of the voluntarist option was by no means a fait accompli.[105] It is in this context

that one must understand Anglican and Tory assertions that religious enthusiasm in general – but

American-style Methodism in particular – was to blame for the disorder Millerites engaged in.

Echoing stock objections, The Church argued that itinerant missionaries of all "sects" were

generally fanatical, and charged that their modes of preaching were "calculated to disorder the

minds of persons...."[106] And as the previous examples suggest, Anglican sources equated such

preaching, albeit in more extreme, Millerite form, with the desecration of the marital bond, and to

the disordering of the divinely-ordained social hierarchy.[107]

Despite the fact that Anglican and Tory critics used the movement to undermine their

Methodist rivals, this must not obscure the points of agreement that united all three groups in

facing the Millerite threat. Most vital was their agreement on what constituted the rudiments of

respectable character, which was the key element in the developing Victorian liberal vision. As

noted earlier, Methodist and other colonial elites agreed that an individual of good character would

demonstrate self-discipline by means of constant toil. Just as important, however was reason,

which was the engine of self-control. According to Millerism's critics, lack of reason was defined

by degrees on a continuum of unacceptability. First of all, a basic ignorance or lack of education

led to credulity, which made people vulnerable to all sorts of impostures, and to moral corruption.

Secondly, ignorance led to enthusiasm or the state in which an individual lost control over his

physical and emotional passions, and fell into sin. The most extreme consequence of ignorance

was madness, or a total loss of one's rational capacity; in this state, the baser passions remained

unchecked.

Although Methodist elite criticisms of the movement were comparatively restrained, their

suggestion that Millerites were ignorant meant that they were in danger of letting their baser

passions run amok. Such notions underlay accusations of Millerite-inspired disorder and led to the

articulation of a more moderate approach to effecting conversion. The nearness of the set-dates

was the primary culprit: Methodist observers noted that they produced a "horrible state of dread

and alarm" as each one approached, and concluded that conversions were made under duress, and

amidst great confusion.[108] Conversions motivated by terror were false, as was the Millerite

equation of eagerness to die and see the Lord with proper, Scriptural preparation of one's soul.[109]

Although Canadian Wesleyans were careful in their criticisms of Millerite revival methods, lest

they inadvertently cast aspersions on the traditions of their own church, their charges that the

movement created confusion and disorder tapped into elite desires to moderate the revival

experience. Canadian Wesleyan leaders were very sensitive to allegations of Methodist fanaticism,

for they undermined the respectability of the church and hence, struck at its ability to command

authority in colonial society. Such concerns were evident by the 1830s, as is clear from Egerton

Ryerson's description of a protracted meeting in St. Catherines:

> Disorder has been uniformly discountenanced and the extravagances of ignorant and
> ungoverned passion have been immediately corrected. Not a particle of enthusiasm appears
> to have entered into this work, nor to have received the least encouragement.... The
> consequence is that there has not been so much unintelligible noise... but more deep
> feeling...more ardent (not fiery) persevering zeal...more rational and sound conversions
> ...and more consistency and permanent building up of believers in the most holy faith.[110]

To Ryerson and other Methodist elites, the future of the church hinged upon its ability to control emotional extremism, and to transform the cruder, popular passions into a heart-felt, pure and more restrained zeal. If Canadian Wesleyanism was to assume the mantle of social leadership, it had to maintain its core beliefs and traditions while commanding the respect of the colony's most influential citizens, many of whom disdained revivalism as an enthusiastic aberration of true religion.

In another sense, this was accomplished by countering Anglican claims that experiential religion and enthusiasm were one and the same. Using Locke as a guide, one Methodist deplored enthusiasm as a state in which men of lively imaginations but inferior judgment "take their own...fancies for the illumination of the Spirit of God." This was to be deplored. Conversely, "when a man acts consistently with right reason, and when his actions are ...absolutely benevolent in their design and tendency, however zealous or enthusiastic he may be, we cannot be justified in using means to prevent his usefulness." Although somewhat tentatively expressed, Methodism continued to support men who combined "warm temperament" with sound judgment, even as the emphasis was increasingly placed on the latter. For example, missionary reports in the midst of the revival of the early 1840s made frequent mention of the decorum of Methodist meetings, which combined "fervency of spirit"—expressed as "forcible ... prayer and thanksgiving" – with the "soundest reason and wisdom." Furthermore, the Christian Guardian consistently printed articles underscoring the value of the rational faculty in enabling individuals to grasp Divine truth.[111]

Maintaining core Methodist practices, while ridding the denomination of ignorance-induced "excess" partly depended upon grasping the nettle of Finneyite conversion. This new style was much more immediate than the traditional form which could take months, drawing on the tireless labours of family and congregation in bringing the individual to an understanding of God's ways. Finneyite conversion suited the new Victorian consensus regarding progress and work, for it meant that the prospective penitent spent much less time agonizing over the state of his less-than-

totally-depraved soul, thus liberating him for work in the Lord's vineyard. It also complemented elite desires for greater decorum in revival meetings, and cemented leaders' preference for the protracted meeting, a form of service which accommodated both daily work schedules and individuals' need for spiritual refreshment.[112] Despite Millerite leaders' partial participation in the drive toward systematization, Methodist elites focused on examples of Millerite "excess" which in reality accented revivalism's traditional content in lieu of Finney's more "respectable" methods.

Such examples highlight the Methodist elite view that heretical extremes such as Millerism could cause credulous individuals to go mad, though the central cause was not experiential religion, but an exaggeration of the legitimate methods of revival resulting from doctrinal error and date-setting. As such, Canadian Wesleyan elites trod a middle ground between Millerite extremism, and the more conservative Anglican view that religious enthusiasm frequently produced "soul madness," particularly in the ignorant, and in those "already suffering the ills of life, the depressing passions, bereavements of affection or of fortune, exhaustion of nervous power, and bodily disease."[113] Interestingly, compared to their Canadian counterparts, American evangelicals more readily embraced the idea that madness often had religious causes. As Ruth Alden Doan suggests, the movement provided an ideal means of promoting the asylum as a new, socially legitimate option for dealing with individuals suffering from Millerism-induced madness, despite the fact that actual cases of such a malady were exceedingly rare. Canada lagged behind its American neighbour in asylum building, for although legislation authorized the construction of such an institution in Toronto in 1839, it took more than ten years to bring this plan to fruition.[114] Much later in the century, Methodist leaders continued to resist the notion, promulgated by Joseph Workman, Unitarian and Medical Superintendent of the Toronto Asylum for the Insane, that excessive religious devotion could lead to insanity. They disdained the assumption that religious zeal was responsible for "undue indulgence of the base animal passions" as the product of

Workman's latitudinarian bigotry, which suggests that even by the 1870s, a cultural consensus regarding the causes of madness remained elusive.[115]

In accounting for American evangelicals' more extreme reaction to Millerism, one might argue that in the United States, where radical Dissent proliferated, the need for control was deemed to be much greater. Although Millerism had made significant inroads into Canadian Methodism in the early 1840s, other groups including the Campbellites and the Mormons made nowhere near the impact on Canadian culture that they had in the United States. Indeed "mainstream Protestantism" in the United States was somewhat of a misnomer, for in this crucible of democratized Christianity denominational splintering was the rule, rather than the exception.[116] As such, American evangelicals' struggle, during the 1840s, to define a more limited orthodoxy was accomplished by greater assertions of Millerite insanity than in Canada where radical Dissent was more truly a minority, albeit significant. In addition, American economic and institutional development was farther advanced, suggesting that the culture's need for a specifically progress-oriented ideology was that much more intense.

In addition to unwittingly contributing to the moderation of elite notions of revival, Millerism engaged Methodists in a forceful debate over the legitimacy of popular preachers. Similar to their American evangelical counterparts, Canadian Wesleyans believed that Millerism had taken the ideal of individual conscience too far by transforming "birth-right liberty" into "libertinism in faith." Those who preached Millerite Adventism were "men with more zeal than knowledge or discretion." Many popular Millerite preachers (and adherents) were "illiterate young men" easily led astray by humbug and uneducated doctrines, and unable to distinguish truth from heresy.[117] In responding to Millerism, Methodist critics articulated a desire to divorce the church from the extremes of democratized Christianity that the movement represented, and to disassociate itself from suspicions that Methodist ignorance made members susceptible to religious scam-artists who dispensed with Christianity's traditional moral constraints. This was done by emphasizing

Canadian Wesleyanism's links to its respectable namesake, and to learned Methodists of broad social vision. In the process, elites doubted that God prepared individuals to preach his Word by solely supernatural means. On the contrary, a God of immanence worked in more worldly ways, particularly through educational institutions, and required that prospective ministers work hard in bringing their spiritual calling to maturity, by means of sound intellectual and moral training.

The frightening popularity of Millerite radical supernaturalism, a system of belief which cast doubts on the godliness of institutional churches, and questioned the need for an educated clergy, challenged Methodism's ability to lead the evangelical endeavour at a crucial juncture in time. Through aggressive missionizing, Methodism had become the largest Protestant denomination in Canada by 1830. After the rebellions, Methodist elites hoped to take part in the move to establish educational infrastructures and municipal institutions, namely through the creation of their own university,Victoria College. There, they sought to combine evangelical theology with liberal education, as a means of producing graduates – clerical and otherwise – of high moral character and accomplishments. In Ryerson's inaugural address as college principal, he emphasized the role that "right principles" would play in acquiring "right knowledge for action" by stating that "education is only valuable as it promotes and elevates ... *moral* interests and relations."[118] With this end in mind, the theologically-based curriculum of Victoria College was designed to be widely accessible. Moreover it preserved the traditional Methodist emphasis on experiential faith.

Unlike its Anglican and Presbyterian counterparts, the Methodist church did not compel candidates for the ministry to seek university-level theological training. Nonetheless, Ryerson and other elites did believe in higher education for ministerial candidates who, "in the judgment of the Church, [were] *endowed* with gifts as well as blest with grace." They maintained that this was a natural progression that accompanied the shift in colonial conditions from rugged frontier to settled society. Because learning was deemed to be "indispensable in the present day," it stood to reason

that the minister, whose "paramount aim" was to glorify God, "should acquire *all knowledge* which can aid him in exhibiting and applying the truths of Revelation." The core of the Victoria College curriculum – biblical study, sacred history and doctrine – would provide ministerial candidates with the foundations of learning, to which would be added Hebrew and Greek, languages essential for understanding Scripture in its original form. Moreover, Judeo-Christian history could not be understood without a solid grounding in ancient history, and nor could "the Prophecies be successfully studied without a knowledge of Modern History." The sciences would assist in "adjusting the situation of places and the succession of those mentioned in the Bible," while mental science would contribute to the candidates' ability to "fathom the depths of the human heart" and "investigate the phenomenon of Christian experience." Logic would act as a "rudder" for the reasoning power, while *belles lettres* and rhetoric were necessary to communicate research results from pulpit and press. In the words of Egerton Ryerson, "[t]he Minister would be justly condemned ... who neglects the acquisition of knowledge... who contents himself with ... ill-arranged generalities; who has no intellectual stores from which to make that skilful distribution, and give that varied illustration of his subjects, which the different characters, states, and tastes of men require. The message was clear: liberal education, when used to promote "the interests, comfort and elevation of society" was "praiseworthy;" when used to assist the Minister in his Divine calling, it was sublime. In contrast, to neglect it out of hand suggested that one disdained hard work, or preferred indolent thoughtlessness to moral self-reflection. Furthermore, to neglect learning from a sense that it fostered pride was misguided, for sanctified knowledge of God's revealed truth could only be useful to both ministers and lay people.[119]

It is in this context that one must understand Methodist criticisms of Millerism. By depicting its leaders and adherents as ignorant and illiterate, Methodist elites sought to promote the superior authority of trained clergy in interpreting Scriptural prophecies. In the process, they produced evidence that the educational services of Victoria College were direly needed. "Sanctified

learning" would set preachers and members upon an orthodox path, and provide them with the intellectual tools necessary to properly channel their religious impulses, ferret out imposture and ably defend the church. Also, the strength and unity of the church would be bolstered, as elites were given an expanded field of influence and the opportunity to disarm their critics before too much damage was done. In this way, Canadian Wesleyanism entered a new phase of history, as elites bid a formal farewell to one of its most democratic traditions – that of the self-educated itinerant – and prepared the church to assume its rightful place within "an accomplished society."[120]

In a similar manner, the Millerite threat provided an added impetus for the creation of a common schools system in a united Canada, an aim closely associated with clergyman-professor Egerton Ryerson, who was appointed Assistant Superintendent of Education in 1844. Unlike their Anglican and Tory counterparts, Methodist critics of the movement did not make explicit links between Millerite ignorance and the need for a general system of education. Nonetheless, Millerism had corroborated their worst fears about the public's credulity, which assisted in consolidating the view that education constituted an effective preventative of social disorder. One critic expressed it thusly: "The prevalence... [of Millerism] shows in the strongest light the necessity of a more extended... system of Education ... among the population of Canada. Nothing but early education can prevent the spread of such delusions." [121] Although Millerism's critics believed in the perfectibility of human character, man, in his natural state, was "inclined to evil" and bereft of a moral compass. Christian revelation was the remedy for human baseness, and combined with training in science and the arts, Christian education would ensure that individuals were subject to the proper mental and moral influences at an early age, when their characters were still malleable.[122] In the Methodist view, an attentive, Christian education would ensure that future "Rulers... Judges, and Pastors" – the arbiters of the country's ultimate destiny – would be trained in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord."[123] Although there was much debate over the precise form that a system of education should take, elites agreed that such a system would act as a

necessary buttress to the social order, regardless of whether the term was defined by establishmentarians or voluntarists.

These findings shed light on the motives which underlay the creation of the educational state in 1840s Upper Canada. Most historians agree that school reform was designed to serve the process of state formation, by which means localistic and working-class expressions of the popular will were neutralized in favour of the hegemonic dominance of a middle class elite. School promoters believed that ignorance was the direct cause of the various political and social ills that challenged the order of Upper Canadian society. As such, the school house was the sole remedy for ignorance-induced vices such as pauperism, crime, intemperance and political unrest. Social harmony would be secured by impressing upon lower-class children the superiority of middle-class values, including orderliness, punctuality, sobriety, reasonability, respect for property, and obedience to both religious and secular authorities. This in turn would create governable individuals dedicated to progress and the achievement of the "common good." While my findings do not challenge the prevailing historiography, they do point to a more nuanced view of Ryerson's decision to become a state functionary in order to build a sound educational system. He witnessed the "horrifying" effects of Millerism on "credulous" members of his own church, and shared with other Methodist elites the desire to use education and centralized authority as an antidote versus the disorder that it and other species of religious "error" produced. Moreover, the Millerite episode underscores the difficulty elites faced in constructing a consensus regarding the twin virtues of progress and Christian citizenship. This provides a more specifically Methodist point of reference to the motivations underlying the creation of the province's common school system: not only did Ryerson and other school reformers participate in what Bruce Curtis calls a "'passive revolution... made from above...in the face of radical agrarian and republican agitation," but in one executed in the context of radical religious agitation, as exemplified by Millerism.[124]

Millerism's pessimistic eschatology assisted in focusing members' energies not on proposals to reform society and re-envision the Constitution, but on personal religion and morality in the shadow of Christ's coming. But despite its rejection of politics, the surrounding culture continued to view Millerism through an eighteenth-century optic that equated Protestant Dissent with political radicalism versus the established Church-state. This was particularly the case amongst tory/Anglican elites, and indeed British Wesleyan missionaries who believed that Millerism's populist style produced a disorderliness reminiscent of the Rebellions of 1837-38, republicanism's most recent incarnation. Social, political and economic stability depended upon crushing the incubus of Millerism, in addition to other forms of American-style Dissent. For Wesleyan Methodist elites, the situation was less explicitly political. They did not fear Millerism for its disestablishmentarian implications, although they did worry about the challenge it posed to Methodist attempts to gain political leverage within society, and to direct church affairs. Nonetheless, Ryerson and others would have viewed the "problem" of Millerite ignorance through a distinctly Whiggish lens: their ignorance threatened the "best security of good government and constitutional liberty" for they were easily made into either "the slaves of despots [or] the dupes of demagogues."[125]

Elite Methodist attempts to articulate the meaning of respectability were paralleled by the experience of contemporary British and American evangelicals. Although they differed in many respects, and despite the fact that they worked within diverse contexts, all three shared the common assumption that salvation should constitute the basis of social power. In Britain, this view was used to counter aristocratic notions of gentility which were premised on externals such as status within the social hierarchy, loyalty to the Church of England, independent wealth and consequent freedom to engage in political, professional or leisure pursuits without having to earn one's keep. In freeing gentility from its aristocratic assumptions, the provincial bourgeoisie contributed to the creation of a social ideology befitting its own, class-based assumptions. No longer was gentility,

or respectability something that one inherited by accident of birth. Rather, achieving respectability mirrored the methods by which the middle class accumulated wealth and advanced in society: through diligent effort.

In the American case, for the early nineteenth-century, salvation was less a mark of gentility, per se, than an avenue to power within post-Revolutionary society. During this time, Christianity was democratized, and its levelling influence was carried through to a protest against religious formality. An emphasis on proper manners, deference, formal learning, fine dress and various other trappings of eighteenth-century gentility were cast aside in favour of a more populistic definition of salvation than that of British evangelicalism. For a time, radical expressions of evangelical piety were more the norm than otherwise, but by the 1830s and 40s, American Protestant elites – representatives of a growing, urban middle-class – sought to moderate such extremes. The result was a definition of respectability similar to that of their trans-Atlantic counterparts.

Where Canadians differed from British and American middle-class evangelicals, however, was in their attitude toward gender. In the American case, Millerism contributed to the consolidation of separate spheres ideology by highlighting examples of female disorder. Anti-Millerites depicted the movement's women as transgressing the bounds of their prescribed role. For example, many were alleged to have acted hysterically in public, while others were said to have killed their children under the mania that Millerism produced. The critics then used such stories not only to discredit the movement, but also to underscore expectations regarding feminine behaviour: women were to be demure, decorous and maternal, tending to the tasks of the domestic sphere. The Canadian response to Millerism was much different in this regard. Although Anglican and tory critics recounted incidents of sexual disorder allegedly perpetrated by Millerites, linking them to the perils of evangelical enthusiasm, Methodist critics made no mention of such stories, and did not attempt to link Millerism to questions of gender ideology. As such, the evidence

suggests that by the mid-1840s, the ethic of domesticity was not yet integral to the definition of respectability, which formed the basis of the values of a nascent middle-class. This accords with Cecilia Morgan's assertion that in the first half of the nineteenth-century, there was no Methodist ideological consensus regarding separate spheres,[126] and it implies that the embryonic stage of middle-class construction in central Canada did not follow contemporary developments in Britain and America, where evangelicalism and domesticity were linked together in common cause. In the Canadian case, it would appear that middle-class self-definition in the early-to mid 1840s drew upon the drive toward centralization within both the liberal state and evangelicalism, and upon the latter's attempts to carve out its fair share of political power as disestablishment was being brokered. This is not to say that middle-class formation was not "gendered." Quite the contrary: middle-class notions of political citizenship were expressly masculine in intent, even though separate spheres ideology did not yet penetrate the intersection of gender, religion, and class.

*   *   *   *   *   *

Canadian evangelicalism was formed within a cultural context which blended American democratized Christianity, and British evangelical and church traditions with official support for establishmentarianism. From the vantage point of the early 1840s, Canada's largest denomination, the Methodist church, and more specifically Methodism's largest division, Canadian Wesleyanism, bore the imprint of this peculiar combination. Its roots were American, but it was influenced by the experience of union with the British Wesleyan Church, and by the moderate reform tendencies of leaders such as Egerton Ryerson. Poised to inherit power as a result of disestablishment, confident with regard to the province's potential for progress, and yet aware of the significant cultural currency of conservative values, Methodist elites sought to moderate the forces of evangelical radicalism that threatened its new-found status, the most daunting being Millerism.

In broad terms, Millerism posed a significant threat to Methodist elites' cultural leadership, for its appeal to evangelical orthodoxy, combined with its premillennial eschatology was incompatible with the church's optimistic theology. As Michael Gauvreau has argued, it was not enough to denounce Millerism's errors in interpreting prophecy. Rather, Methodist elites had to convince the flock that their optimistic vision of the future was the better alternative. At the same time, they had to refute Anglican attempts to use Millerism to discredit Methodism's fitness for leadership in a context of a declining ancien regime. In articulating this vision, Methodist elites both drew upon and reinforced early Victorian assumptions regarding humanity and the social order, with the result that postmillennialism became the religious embodiment of liberal voluntarism.

Most basically, Methodist elites used Millerism as a negative referent, by which means they created a template of respectability. In the process, they succeeded in forcefully pushing the concept beyond the notion of salvation, toward an enlarged constellation of values that underscored a nascent middle-class, elite understanding of human character and social development. For one thing, in characterizing the Millerite combination of premillennial eschatology and date-setting as absurd, Methodist elites set new parameters for respectable belief, based on an assent to postmillennial assumptions. As a result, Millerism was transformed into a dark shadow of evangelical truth, particularly in regard to human agency. Methodist elites made it clear that respectability entailed an optimistic regard for the spiritual potential of one's fellow man, in addition to habits of industry that attested to the individual's faith in the common goal of making the secular world sacred. Thus, church missions, benevolent societies, and educational institutions would gain the unswerving support of the Methodist flock as their leaders steered a steady course toward the future.

Furthermore, respectability meant that some of the most populist, democratic traditions of the Church would have to be modified: Millerism had demonstrated the perils of revivalistic excess

and had cast aspersions not only on the ability of ministers lacking formal education to preach the truth, but also on the general intelligence of the population. By depicting Millerites as uniformly ignorant or illiterate, and by associating the movement with imposture, Methodist elites added "sanctified learning" to their list of what constituted respectability of character. A sanctified education would increase the strength of the individual's higher intellectual and moral faculties, which would result in an ability to discipline the lower passions, and to outwit the schism-producing arguments of heretics and imposters.

Ultimately, Canadian Methodism's victory over Millerism was sealed by the failure of Christ to return either in 1843 or 1844. And in some ways, Methodism's fears regarding the effects of failed prophecy were borne out in reality: a great many Millerites suffered from disillusionment in the aftermath, and Millerite leaders complained of waning ardour and declining numbers, as they struggled to understand the meaning of what had, or rather, had not happened. For a time, however, Millerism had been a force to be reckoned with for it provided individuals with a compelling, yet counter-cultural means of interpreting and responding to change that tapped into elements of evangelical orthodoxy. Its treatment of the Bible as a factual guide to past and future, its millennial expectation, its strident anti-Catholicism, its commitment to revival, in addition to the movement's staunch defence of the values of democratic Christianity – namely, sola scriptura and liberty of conscience – greatly contributed to Millerism's familiarity and hence, its appeal. This was most obviously the case in Stanstead Co., Canada East, where British Wesleyan missionaries endeavoured to refashion their mainly American flock into their own, conservative image, but also in Canada West, where a significant number of Methodists were attuned to the populist nature of Millerism's message. On a broader, cosmological level, the movement was appealing because it offered individuals a way to cope with the upheaval caused by a combination of political, cultural and economic changes including the rise of commercial capitalism and of the voluntarist state. More specifically it provided them with a means of protesting elite Methodism's response to such

changes – namely, its drive toward increasing denominational respectability and worldly clout –

through the radical supernaturalism of Miller's message. In the process, it marked the movement

of Dissent away from eighteenth-century constitutional definitions premised on the unity of Church

and State, toward a more purely social critique of the dominant culture.

Endnotes

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[1] I would like to thank Dr. Jack Little for so generously allowing me to examine his personal collection of William Miller's correspondence.

[2] David L Rowe,"Millerites: A Shadow Portrait," in The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century, eds. by Ronald Numbers and Jonathan M Butler (Indiana:Indiana University Press,1987), 17-23; Illinois. Aurora University. Jenks Collection (JC), Midnight Cry, November 18, 1842.

[3] David T Arthur, "Joshua Himes and the Cause of Adventism," in The Disappointed, 36-49; David L Rowe, Thunder and Trumpets, Millerites in Upstate New York, 1800-1850, (Chico, California: Scholars Press, 1985), 115-18.

[4] The Disappointed, xv-xix.

[5] This is argued most forcefully by Ruth Alden Doan in The Miller Heresy, Millennialism, and American Culture, (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1987), and by Nathan O Hatch in The Democratization of American Christianity.

[6] Westfall, 175. There are no Canadian histories dedicated solely to the discussion of Millerism, but the movement's influence on central Canadian Protestantism is examined at some length in chapter six of William Westfall's Two Worlds, and in chapter three of Michael Gauvreau's The Evangelical Century. John Webster Grant touches upon Millerism's influence in Canada in A Profusion of Spires:Religion in Nineteenth-Century Ontario (Toronto:University of Toronto Press, 1988), 161-8.

[7] Joshua V Himes, ed. Miller's Works, 3 vols. (Boston: Joshua V Himes, 1842), I:II, 20-21, as quoted in Rowe, "Millerites: A Shadow Portrait," 20-21.

[8] Hatch, The Democratization of American Christianity, 131.

[9] Worcester, Massachusetts. American Antiquarian Society, Voice of Elijah (Montreal), 16 February 1844.

[10] Doan, 31-2.

[11]Midnight Cry, 25 November 1842; Doan, 32-3.

[12]Voice of Elijah, 16 February 1844; Doan, 32-3.

[13]Rowe, Thunder and Trumpets, 52-3; Doan, 8-9.

[14]Ernest R Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism: British and American Millenarianism 1800-1830, (Chicago:University of Chicago Press, 1970,) 3-12.

[15]Harrison, 4-5, 218-19; Sandeen, 14-41.

[16]Rowe, Thunder and Trumpets, 52-61.

[17]Sandeen, 60-69; Rowe, Thunder and Trumpets, 42-64.

[18]Rowe, Thunder and Trumpets, 68-9.

[19]Midnight Cry, 25 November, 1842.

[20]BF Hubbard, Forests and Clearings: The History of Stanstead County, Province of Quebec, with Sketches of More than Five Hundred Families, (Montreal: Lovell, 1874), 83-10; JI Little, State and Society in Transition: The Politics of Institutional Reform in the Eastern Townships (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1977) 8-9 Little argues that in the older, American-settled areas of the Eastern Townships there was a variety of Protestant denominations, and the Anglican Church had surprisingly strong presence.

[21]Hubbard, 101.

[22]JC, Advent Christian News, 18 April 1975, vol. 10, no. 15.

[23]Toronto. United Church of Canada Archives/Victoria University Archives [hereafter UCCA/VUA], Wesleyan Methodist Church (GB), Foreign Missions: America, the British Dominions in North America. Correspondence 1791-1825, [hereafter WFMC], 78.128 C, Box 26, File 178, no. 26, Letter from R Cooney of Stanstead to the Reverend, The Secretaries of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, November 9, 1842. Unless otherwise specified, it will be assumed that the letters cited from WFMC were addressed to the General Secretaries of the Wesleyan Missions.

[24]WFMC, Box 27, File 186, no. 2, Letter from R Cooney of Stanstead to... January 20, 1843.

[25]WFMC, Box 27, File 186, no. 15. Letter from John Tomkins of Compton, CE to...April 18, 1843.

[26]WFMC, Box 27, File 186, no. 11, Letter from Robert Cooney, Montreal to ... March 21, 1843.

[27]WFMC, Box 26, File 178, no.26, Letter from R Cooney, Stanstead to ..November 9, 1842.

[28]Midnight Cry, 25 January 1844, and 25 November 1842. The motto of the paper was "Looking to Jesus."

[29]Ibid., 22 February 1844. Caldwell writes that the entire subscription amount for the building of the meeting house was gathered in the two hours after the proposition was first put forth.

[30]Midnight Cry, 21 December 1843, 22 February 1844, 26 September 1844, 1 February 1844, 19 October 1844, 22 October 1845.

[31]JC, Midnight Cry, 28 November 1844. Other centres in Canada West, and in the Eastern Townships were the sites of similar tribulations in 1844 and 1845. In a letter to the Morning Watch, Joshua Himes described Shefford "as the theatre of mob violence, against Bro. HUTCHINSON, and the Advent brethren generally." He accused anti-Millerites, led by a prominent Wesleyan missionary with attempting,to tar and feather Brother Hutchinson. See: JC, Morning Watch, 3 April 1845, 13 March 1845.

[32]Voice of Elijah, 21 July 1843, 21 July 1843.

[33]Westfall, 158-166.

[34]Midnight Cry, 16 November 1843, 22 August 1844.

[35]JC, JM. Orrock, The Army of the Great King; Short Sermons on Short Texts; Miscellaneous Pieces, and Poetic Musings (Boston: JV Himes, 1855), 26-7.

[36]JC, Advent Herald, 27 March 1844.

[37]VE, 21 July 1843.

[38] Orrock, 29-31. See also VE, 16 February 1844.

[39]WFMC, 78.128 C. Box 27, File 186, no. 2, R Cooney, Stanstead, Canada East...20 January 1843.

[40]Francoise Noel, Competing for Souls: Missionary Activity and Settlement in the Eastern Townships, 1784-1851 (Sherbrooke: Departement d'histoire, Universite de Sherbrooke, 1988), 9; John McCallum, Unequal Beginnings: Agriculture and Economic Development in Quebec and Ontario until 1870 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1980), 26; Little, State and Society in Transition, 88.

[41]See Whitney R Cross, The Burned-Over District: The Social and Intellectual History of Enthusiastic Religion in Western New York, 1800-1850 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1950), 317-320; and Richard Cawardine, Trans-Atlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America, 1790-1865 (Westport, Connecticut, 1978), 54-55.

[42]McCallum, 15-55.

[43]Ibid. Douglas McCalla, Planting the Province: The Economic History of Upper Canada, 1784-1870 (Toronto:University of Toronto Press, 1993), 6-8, 64-66, 87-90, 113-114, 159-160. Historians have suggested that the late 1840s and 1850s were crucial years in the transition toward an industrial economy, particularly in centres such as Toronto. As Britain reaped the rewards of industrialization, it began to dismantle its mercantilist policies, including preferential grain and timber tariffs. Although this caused instability toward the end of the 1840s, by the next decade, a new blueprint for prosperity and political stability was put into place, which included protection, railways and Confederation. See for example, Gregory S Kealey, "Toronto's Industrial Revolution, 1850-1892," in Canada's Age of Industry, 1849-1896 eds. Michael S Cross and Gregory S Kealey (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 20-61.

[44]Rowe, "Millerites - A Shadow Portrait," 11.

[45]MC, "Letter from Canada," 28 November 1844.

[46]Neil Semple, The Lord's Dominion: The History of Canadian Methodism, (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's Univeristy Press, 1996), 72-97. This grew out of a union between the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada and the British Wesleyans in 1833.

[47]WFMC, Box 25, Henry Lanton to....29 March 1841.

[48]Ibid.

[49]WFMC, Box 22, File 145, no. 32, Thomas Turner of Stanstead to... November 26, 1838.

[50]WFMC, Box 22, File 145, no. 32, Letter from Thomas Turner of Stanstead, CE, to... 23 March 1838.

[51]WFMC, Box 22, File 145, no. 32, Letter from Thomas Turner, Stanstead, CE, to...26 November 1838.

[52]WFMC, Box 23, File 153, no. 8, Letter from John Tomkins, Shefford, CE, to... 16 January 1839.

[53]See for example WFMC, Box 25, Letter from Henry Lanton, Stanstead to ...March 29, 1841; Box 26, File 178, no.26, Letter from R Cooney, Stanstead to ...November 9, 1842; Box 26, File 186, no. 2, Letter from R. Cooney, Stanstead to ...January 20, 1843.

[54] Stewart, 4-6.

[55]See Rowe, Thunder and Trumpets:, 70-5.

[56]See Lower, 239-243; Landon, 83-9; Semple, The Lord's Dominion, 71-86.

[57]Semple, The Lord's Dominion, 82-96.

[58]SB Sissons, Egerton Ryerson: His Life and Letters (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co., 1937), 1: 229-233.

[59]Ibid., 314-51, 381-430, 476-480.

[60]Sissons, 2: 432-71.

[61]Harrison, 210-17.

[62]In Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming: American Premillennialism, 1875-1982 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), Timothy P Weber discusses such motivations, but for individuals of a later age.

[63]VE, 21 July 1843.

[64]Advent Herald, 14 October 1848, 16 September 1848.

[65]Michael Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 91.

[66]Anson Green, The Life and Times of the Reverend Anson Green, D.D. (Toronto: Methodist Bookroom, 1877), 272-73; See also Christian Guardian [hereafter CG], 13 September 1843.

[67]CG, "Second Advent Men," 20 September 1843.

[68]Rev. John Roaf, Lectures on the Millennium, (Toronto: n.p., 1844), 2-3.

[69]Westfall, 170.

[70]See Canada Christian Advocate, "General Remarks," 2 October 1845; Westfall, 172.

[71]JC, R. Hutchinson, M.D., A Brief Statement of Facts, For the Consideration of the Methodist People, and the Public in General, Particularly of Eastern Canada (Montreal. 1850), 6-9; 18-20.

[72]Semple, 58-9, 87.

[73]JC, Advent Christian News: Newspaper of the Advent Christian General Conference, 10, no. 14, (18 April 1975); Noel, 160.

[74]WFMC, Box 27, File 186, No. 15, Letter from John Tomkins, Compton, CE, to...18 April 1843.

[75]Westfall, 169-71; Semple, 59-60, 130-3.

[76]David T Arthur, "Joshua V Himes and the Cause of Adventism," in The Disappointed, 36-37, 46.

[77]Semple, The Lord's Dominion, 140; Sissons, 1:565; 2:5.

[78]Gauvreau, The Evangelical Century, 113; CG, 7 August 1844; Westfall, 172.

[79] CG, 29 March 1843, 7 June 1843; 6 March 1844.

[80]Ibid., 29 March 1843; 25 September 1843; RK Thornton, The Theory of the Second Advent in 1843, Scripturally Examined, and its Evil Tendency Exposed (Toronto: J Cleland, 1843), 2.

[81]CG,25 September 1843, 10 March 1841; Doan, 118.

[82]CG, 25 September 1843.

[83]CG, 16 August 1843. See also CG, 6 March 1844.

[84]CG, 11 May 1842; 24 August 1842.

[85]Noll, 81.

[86]CG, 11 October 1843, 10 April 1844.

[87]CG, 1 April 1843.

[88]Semple, The Lord's Dominion, 148-53, 166-78; "A Plain Address to the Millerite Adventists," by John Borland, as extracted from Hutchinson, 22-23.

[89]WFMC, Box 26, File 178, no. 26, Letter from R Cooney, Stanstead, CE to ...9 November 1842. See also Box 27, File 186, no. 2, Letter from R Cooney, Stanstead, CE to... 20 January 1843.

[90]WFMC, Box 27, File 186, No. 23, Letter from RL Lusher, Three Rivers, CE to ...12 June 1843.

[91]CG, 16 August 1843.

[92]Doan, 151-7.

[93]CG,3 January 1844.

[94]Alison Prentice, The School Promoters: Education and Social Class in Mid-Nineteenth Century Upper Canada (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1988), 28.

[95]CG, 6 February 1839.

[96]See for example, Jackson Lears, Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of Advertising in America (New York: BasicBooks, 1994), 96-101.

[97]Doan, 14-21.

[98]CG,10 March 1841.

[99]Hansen, 4-8.

[100]JC, Voice of Truth and Glad Tidings, 11 February 1845.

[101]CG, 6 March 1844, 13 September 1843.

[102]Anglican Archives of Canada, [hereafter AAC], The Church, 12 May 1843.

[103]One "old bachelor" in Stanstead allegedly used Millerism as a means of obtaining the hand in marriage of a "coy young lady" he had long wooed but without success. When he approached her with the story that his "guardian angel" had commanded them to marry, the lady "dared no longer reject his suit, but gracefully yielded herself to the favoured of Heaven, and accepted with joy at once a revered lover and crazy husband." See Montreal Transcript, 24 December 1842, 21 February 1843.

[104]See for example, Montreal Transcript, 21 February 1843.

[105]Fahey, 177, 197.

[106]The Church, 18 November 1842.

[107]The Lord Bishop of Montreal, George Mountain took this a step further in asserting that the Church of England provided the only barrier against "the impetuous flood of fanaticism, rushing, at intervals... especially along the frontier." Mountain and others saw in Millerism a "means of opening the eyes of thousands [of Methodists] who have left the Church of their ancestors...." The Church, 5 January 1844.

[108]UCCA/VUA, Personal Papers of Phoebe L Haney, 86.131 C, Box 1, Journal of the Reverend George Ferguson, 111; CG, 6 August 1843, 11 January 1843.

[109]Ibid., 16 August 1843.

[110]CG, 4 April 1832, as quoted in Semple, The Lord's Dominion, 133.

[111]CG, 3 March 1841. Also see the following select articles in the Christian Guardian: "Enthusiasm - a Conversation," 10 March 1841; "On the Pleasures of Intellectual Refinement," 11 May 1842; "Why So Few Think!" 4 October 1843; "The Promised Advent of the Spirit," 3 August 1842.

[112]Doan, 158-72; CG,3 March 1841.

[113] In the parlance of alienists of the day, this condition was manifested as theomania, melancholia, suicidal insanity, mania, and hysteria.

[114]Doan, 158-70; Ronald and Janet Numbers, "Millerism and Madness: A Study of 'Religious Insanity' in Nineteenth-Century America," in The Disappointed, 95-96; Cheryl Krasnick Warsh, Moments of Unreason: The Practice of Canadian Psychiatry and the Homewood Retreat, 1883-1923 (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 7.

[115]Toronto. University of Toronto Archives, Diary, Joseph Workman, Acc. no. B80-0015, 1867-93, 12 March 1873, 463. See also Rainer Baehre, "The Ill-Regulated Mind: A Study in the Making of Psychiatry in Ontario 1830-1921," Ph.D. diss., York University, 1985, 208.

[116]See for example, R Laurence Moore, Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), x.

[117]CG, 13 September 1843; 20 September 1843.

[118]CG, 13 July 1842.

[119]CG, 13 July 1842, 21 September 1842, 20 July 1842, 4 October 1843. .

[120]CG, 13 July 1842, 21 September 1842.

[121]Montreal Transcript, 21 February 1843.

[122]See Prentice, The School Promoters, 29-31.

[123]CG, 6 July 1842.

[124]Bruce Curtis, True Government by Choice Men? Inspection, Education, and State Formation in Canada West (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 4-14; Prentice, The School Promoters, 9, 13-19, 47-68, 88-90, 119-121; Susan E Houston and Alison Prentice, Schooling and Scholars in Nineteenth-Century Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 98-106; Albert F Fiorino, "The Moral Foundation of Egerton Ryerson's Idea of Education," in Egerton Ryerson and His Times (Toronto: Macmillan, 1978), eds.Neil McDonald and Alf Chaiton, 65-67; Neil McDonald, "Egerton Ryerson and the School as an Agent of Political Socialization," in Egerton Ryerson and His Times, 84-85, 95-99; Harvey J Graff, "The Reality Behind the Rhetoric: The Social and Economic Meanings of Literacy in the Mid-Nineteenth-Century - The Example of Literacy and Criminality," in Egerton Ryerson and His Times, 187-192. See also Bruce Curtis, Building the Educational State: Canada West, 1836-1871, (London: Althouse Press, 1988).

[125]CG, 8 October 1831, as quoted in Goldwin S French, "Egerton Ryerson and the Methodist Model for Upper Canada," in Egerton Ryerson and His Times, 56.

[126]Morgan, 133-4.

Chapter V: Aspects of Religious Populism: The Holiness Movement Church and the Crusade Against Consumerism, 1887-1916

The Holiness Movement Church of the late nineteenth century continued along the same trajectory set by Millerism half a century before. The church emerged in the 1880s and 90s – within the context of the shift from producer-oriented capitalism to consumerism – as a socio-economic critique of middle-class culture, which by this point was undergoing a process of consolidation. During this period, Protestantism's frequent fracturing resulted from a desire of minorities to give more constant expression to their faith. But the main difference between grass-roots denominations such as the Holiness Movement Church and metropolitan Methodism was predicated on social characteristics that divided their respective adherents along class lines, and to a significant extent geographically: the former was a more emphatically rural and small-town phenomenon. Similar to its millenarian predecessor, the Holiness Movement Church was a populist form of Christianity that drew upon democratic notions of religion in protest against elite Methodist attempts to accommodate the demands of a new era. Moreover, in defending the religious sensibilities of an increasingly urban, prosperous middle class, the Methodist leaders of the 1880s and 90s were very much the latter-day avatars of Egerton Ryerson. But whereas the engagement with Millerism worked primarily to discredit popular preaching and to cement the early Victorian cultural consensus on the value of progress, education and ceaseless toil, Holiness forced Methodist elites to come out strongly against enthusiastic display and sudden conversion, experiences that both threatened church leadership and offended middle-class sensibilities.

In the mid-nineteenth century, United States Protestant popular culture was consumed by a desire for Christian perfection, or sinlessness in Christ. In the zealous pursuit of this goal, a

sizeable number of Eastern Methodists banded together into national, state and local organizations

which sponsored a number of publications and hundreds of camp meetings and revivals, and

attracted a large flock from both inside and outside the Methodist faith. Horrified by their

perceptions that the Methodist Church was becoming increasingly worldly, formalistic, and lax in

both spiritual rigor and doctrine, leaders in Christian holiness spread the word that justification by

faith had to be followed by what John Wesley called "entire sanctification." This state of "perfect

love" was so complete that no evil thought, word or deed would intrude in the mind or the life of

the sanctified one. Wesley himself believed that the experience could be attained suddenly, but

only as the culmination of a gradual, life-long growth in grace. However, American holiness

advocates, under the direction of such leaders as Phoebe and Walter Palmer believed that entire

sanctification was experienced as suddenly as conversion.[1]

In Canada, the first references to this kind of holiness stretch as far back as the late 1830s.

However, the doctrine only began to catch fire in the 1840s and 50s when American Methodists

James Caughey and the Palmers held a number of revivals in central Ontario. From 1853 onward,

the annual pastoral address of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada made it clear that it was

the duty of each member to seek the blessing of entire sanctification.[2] Similar to the experience of

their US counterparts, the majority of Canadian holiness advocates eventually broke with the

mother church in the years 1893-1907, as twenty-five separate holiness denominations were

formed.[3] Perhaps the most prominent example of this phenomenon was the rise of the Holiness

Movement Church in the 1890s.

The leader of this schismatic group was Reverend Ralph Cecil Horner, who in 1887 had

been ordained in full connection with the Montreal Conference of the Methodist Church, which

recognized his enthusiasm for conversion by appointing him Conference evangelist. Problems

arose when the conference ordered him to a specific circuit, which Horner refused to travel,

preferring instead to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit in special evangelism. During this time,

Horner managed to secure significant followings in the Ottawa Valley, the St. Lawrence River

counties, Montreal and Ottawa, so that by mid-decade, when his differences with the mother

church could no longer be resolved, a strong basis of support for his ideas had been established.[4]

Despite the fact that it has received some attention from Canadian church historians, the

larger significance of the Holiness Movement Church, its cultural appeal and ideological origins

have been more or less ignored. The denomination must be looked at in the larger context of the

changes wrought to late nineteenth-century Canadian life by the forces of urbanization and

industrialization. Contrary to what some scholars have suggested, Methodism in the 1880s and

90s was not a monolith. While there is some truth in the assertion that the church was becoming

increasingly concerned with middle-class, urban conceptions of social and religious respectability,

it is arguable whether or not a complete transition from a "traditional" emphasis on personal

conversion and spirituality to a social reform focus was made, even by the 1930s. As far as

holiness was concerned, Methodist leaders in the 1880s and early 1890s trod carefully. The only

agreement on holiness teaching at this time was that the experience of entire sanctification was an

important part of spiritual life, something that the individual should work towards. What nobody

seemed to agree upon, was how entire sanctification should be obtained, and how necessary it was

for individual salvation. The basic divide was as follows. Certain members believed that holiness

was an important, but supplementary goal of religious life which should be attained gradually,

without tasteless displays of enthusiasm. In addition, these people feared the antinomian tendencies

associated with claims to Christian perfection and direct communication with the Holy Spirit.

Other members believed that sanctification was as essential as, or even more important than

conversion. It was attained suddenly or not at all, and it was generally accompanied by an outpouring of emotion in the context of revival. Methodist elites tried to maintain unity by means of compromise. What was important was that people struggled towards holiness in their own lives, by whatever means, and that they experienced the fruits of this blessing. This became increasingly difficult to do when holiness leaders such as RC Horner began to flout church authority directly, in favour of the "leadings of the Spirit." Horner in particular combined a disrespect for Methodist authority with a zeal for enthusiastic religion that did not sit well with Methodist leaders. It could be argued that the Methodist leadership's latent distrust of emotional display was galvanized by the Hornerite schism. This led to a growing consensus on the dangers of holiness-centred theology and revival from the mid 1890s onward.

The schism forced Horner and his followers to justify the separate existence of the Movement by developing a systematic critique of Methodism that caricaturized the church as a spiritually bereft, worldly, elitist organization that had abandoned both the values of "Oldtime" Methodism,[5] and the "true believers." In opposition to this conception of faith, Holiness Movement members argued for the superiority of religious experience, freely available to all, over formal learning which was restricted to a minority of the population. Closely associated with this democracy of the spirit was the church's rejection of separate spheres ideology: unlike mainstream Methodism, it supported female evangelists as in every way equal to their male counterparts, based on the "genderless" experience of entire sanctification. Moreover, in reaction to the "worldliness" of the mother church and the decline of Methodism's ascetic behavioral standards, Holiness advocates adhered to a number of prohibitions governing personal character, dress, consumption of food and drink, political and associational involvement, and financial decisions.[6]

In the last quarter of the nineteenth-century, North American society experienced a

transition characterized by the decline of an economy based on production by small-entrepreneurs

and farmers. The next century would be dominated by the corporation and the ethic of mass

consumption. In its attack against Methodist tendencies toward middle-class respectability, its

waning passion for enthusiastic revival and its increasing participation in consumer culture,

Hornerite Holiness asserted a desire for the preservation of the pre-industrial, rural island

community with its emphasis on thrift, sobriety, personal responsibility and mutual cooperation.[7]

In the eyes of Holiness members, Methodism had compromised with the values of the age in

making common cause with consumerism, and in applying the values of rationality and

functionality to religion. By contrast, the Holiness Movement Church developed a defence of the

rural island community of the nineteenth-century. It did not constitute just another form of

modernity. As such, Holiness can be seen as an integral part of the larger fabric of populist protest

in late nineteenth-century Ontario. Holiness was in many ways, the religious counterpart of the

Patrons of Industry which arose in the 1890s as a political movement of farmers in Ontario who

were critical of big government, monopoly capitalism, professionalization, and the protectionist

impulse.[8] While the latter sought to counteract the effects of rapid urban-industrial growth and the

decline of rural values legislatively, via political involvement, the former sought to redress its

economic and cultural grievances by reinforcing the bonds of community through Christian

perfection.[9] In this way, Hornerite Holiness presented a counter-cultural alternative to the

compromise with modernity that mainstream Methodists and urban and small town elites were

making.

Before the place of the Holiness Movement Church in the larger fabric of late nineteenth-

century social and religious life can be discussed, it is necessary to delve more deeply into the

background of RC Horner and the context of his ministry. Horner was born on December 22nd,

1854 on a farm near Shawville, Quebec, the eldest son of parents James and Ellen. Growing up in

the exclusively Protestant milieu of Clarendon Township, Horner was converted in July 1872 at a

Methodist Camp meeting near his home, less than two years after his father had been killed by the

kick of a horse. Horner implies that the shock of his father's death, and the way it made him dwell

on "the solemn realities of the great eternity" led him to Jesus. Two months after his conversion, he

heard of the doctrine of entire sanctification and began to seek deliverance from sin, without any

doubt that he would receive it. He was given this privilege on a camp ground where "instantly the

second work of grace was wrought and God seemed to let the whole heavens upon me, and the

witness of the Spirit was clearly received."[10]

Shortly thereafter Horner received the call to preach and at the age of twenty-five, while he

led all manner of special revival services, travelling and converting people to Christ, he began a

course of study to prepare himself for entrance into the High School at Renfrew. This was no

small feat, considering that he had to acquire for himself the rudiments of education. In 1883 he

was received on trial for the ministry. Horner claimed that he was promised the right to special

terms of ordination in order to evangelize, though the church did not normally make such

allowances. In any case, between 1883 and 1885, he studied at Victoria University at Cobourg,

and in 1887 he was ordained to the Methodist ministry by the Montreal Conference of the church.[11]

From the time of his ordination to the schism of his band of Holiness workers in 1895,

Horner demonstrated difficulties in accepting the limits of the office of minister in the Methodist

Church. He balked at the idea that the Conference and its committee structure was the formal

representation of God's will, with the power to order Horner to serve in places and in ways

contrary to the leadings of the Spirit within him. In an effort to appoint Horner to a task that

recognized his special evangelistic mandate, he was given a position as one of two designated

Conference Evangelists. After this, he attempted to convert the inhabitants of the Ottawa Valley,

and by his own accounts, he achieved much success in the task. A "revival flame" swept across the

area, and in the years leading to his schism with the mother church, Horner began to encourage

half a dozen or more untrained but zealous young people to assist him in the evangelistic

ministry.[12] As the Montreal Conference of the Methodist Church became increasingly suspicious

of the kind of wild enthusiasm that Horner inspired, it began to try to exert more control over his

efforts. This plan eventually failed, and in 1895, Horner was ejected from his evangelistic office

and with his band of followers, started up the Holiness Movement Church.

Horner's church was based in Ottawa, but the majority of its members came from a

number of villages, small towns and rural centres in the Ottawa Valley, places such as Athens,

Arnprior, Kemptville, Matilda and Williamsburg. Of ninety Holiness Movement Church members

traced to Lanark, Dundas, and Leeds and Grenville counties, fifty-eight percent surveyed lived in

rural areas while forty-two percent resided in small towns or villages. Fifty-six percent of the

sample were listed as farmers by occupation, or as the wives and grown children of farmers.

Sixteen percent were listed as skilled labourers or artisans, or as the wives and grown children of

same. Thirteen percent identified themselves as ministers, evangelists or as their wives and grown

children. Eight percent of the sample was made up of those classified as labourers or the wives

and grown children of such. Two percent of those surveyed were domestic servants. Two percent

were boarders. The remaining members included one merchant, one widowed boarding-house

keeper and one widow. Fifty-six percent of the sample was female and forty-four percent was

male. In terms of ethnic origin, thirty-seven percent of those surveyed were Irish, thirty-six percent

were English, fourteen percent were Scottish, eleven percent were German, one percent was Dutch and one percent was French.[13]

The Movement was concerned with forwarding the doctrine of Christian perfection by means of almost continuous flaming revivals. Both men and women could receive the privilege of ordination in the church as either preachers or evangelists. If women did not wish to be ordained, they could become deaconesses. In 1895 a Holiness Movement Church college was established in Ottawa to train candidates for ordination. As the church grew, conferences were organized in Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta and Michigan. Eventually the work spread to Ireland, Egypt and China where native preachers were enlisted for the cause. By 1911, the group had attracted 3800 members, three thousand of whom were in Ontario.[14]

In 1916, Horner left the church and in his own words, organized the Standard Church of America, "to uphold the same radical principles and to promulgate the same scriptural doctrines which he had maintained from the beginning."[15] Evidently, he believed that the Holiness Movement Church had strayed from the traditional and time-honoured standards of Christian holiness. The majority of Holiness Movement Church members did not follow him. The group merged with Canada's Free Methodists in 1959.

There is a consensus among scholars of Canadian history that 1890-1920 was a period of accelerated urbanization. During this time, the populations of both Montreal and Toronto nearly tripled and surpassed the half-million mark. Between 1901 and 1911, there was a sixty-three percent growth in urban population in general.[16] During this period, the traditional forms of nineteenth-century evangelical Methodism were in a process of decline, at least in the minds of a new generation of church leaders. Apathy, affluence, expansion and urbanization had combined to trigger the demise of the itinerant preacher, the camp meeting and the conversion experience.

Furthermore, standards of behaviour began to be liberalized so that by 1910 drinking, card playing, dancing and theatre attendance were no longer prohibited. Rules of specific conduct were replaced by an emphasis on the educated Christian conscience as a guide to morality.[17]

Holiness represented the radical edge of this persistent, locally-based culture of populist evangelicalism. Working from outside of the Methodist Church, Hornerites were able to criticize those elements within Methodism that sought to "modernize" the faith by steering it into unacceptable directions. A number of indications in the documents pertaining to the Holiness Movement Church suggest that its members were highly critical of both the style and substance of this emergent form of Methodism. Indeed, in his autobiography, Horner makes frequent reference to the soul-destroying formalism of mainstream Methodism. In the following example, Horner, still on probation for the ministry, describes his work in igniting the revival flame, and the opposition he encountered. He writes:

> When the power of God would fall upon the people, and fifty of them would commence to pray at once, the heavens would come down and formalists would be terrified. I was more than a preacher who wished to be popular could endure. The Christians who were aiming to build up a fashionable, popular society had no use for such demonstrative services. They were obliged to repent or fight. In some places the people were brought under such strong conviction of sin that they had to die or seek salvation. The devil tore some and made them foam at the mouth before he would come out of them....[18]

The suggestion was that Methodism, in moving away from its early emphasis on revivalistic repentance and conversion had lost the core of its faith. Years later, this theme would be revisited time and again in the pages of the Holiness Era, the official publication of the Movement. For example, in the 24 March 1897 edition of the paper, mainstream churches were criticized for placing "numbers and financial influence" over personal piety. It was suggested that "generally speaking, a person wholly sanctified is more objectionable in the average church than a score or more [of] dancing, theater going, and card playing, professors.[19]

To Horner and Holiness members, lack of revivalist piety, an overweening emphasis on

higher learning, and participation in worldly amusements were part of the same package. They

thought that the pursuit of intellectual and cultural attainments in the Methodist church had

reached the level of idolatry, and they criticized the ministerial training system which produced

leaders "way ahead of the people in learning and away behind them in spirituality."[20] Methodist

ministers, ruined by vanity and "longing for honor and applause," had lost their nerve and their

zeal, and feared to "preach of hell to sinners, or of holiness to believers." Instead, they

> adopt[ed] the methods of medicine venders on the street; [they] strive to be eloquent,
> humorous, pathetic and witty. [They] get them to laugh at their funny anecdotes, and cry
> over touching incidents....Under the excitement and enthusiasm of such meetings, hundreds
> of people are induced to make professions of faith in Christ, when really they have had no
> true conviction for their sins. The Holy Ghost has not revealed to them their real condition,
> neither has he witnessed to them that they are born of God. Take such people in your
> church and they make a fine strawberry brigade, [sic] they will rattle dishes at your
> festivals....Poor deluged, lost souls....They will woop for Doctor anybody who writes
> against sanctification, it matters not what his theory is.[21]

Holiness Movement members equated the hallmarks of urban sophistication – wit, eloquence, and

humour – with the chicanery of the snake oil salesman. To them, the excitement created in a

middle-class revival meeting was a bastardization of true revivalist enthusiasm, lacking in heart-

felt contrition and in the witness of the Spirit. Such "converts" would never be soldiers of Christ in

the battle to win souls. Rather, they would take their places in the Strawberry Social brigade,

wasting their time with amusements and middle class pleasantries, while their souls were lost on

the battle-field of perdition.

A brief discussion of Jackson Lears' Fables of Abundance: A Cultural History of

Advertising in America will help to illuminate and contextualize the Holiness Movement' critique

of the Methodist minister as patent medicine vendor. Lears argues that 1880-1906 was a

transitional period in American advertising. Commercial image production was idiosyncratic in

nature, and still largely based on local entrepreneurial enterprise. By 1906, national, corporate

advertisers, fired by a secularized vision of post-millennial Protestantism, and intent on

professionalizing their craft, had consolidated control over the industry. This resulted in increased

systematization and standardization of images, and an emphasis on the physical and psychological

perfection of "man" as an efficient and well-regulated machine. The animistic, sensual and

carnivalesque tendencies of image-production that characterized the earlier period were

marginalized, as the celebration of fleshly excess gave way to the championing of industrial

efficiency. Concomitantly, desire was disembodied, as the urge to accumulate more and more

consumer goods triumphed over pleasure in the possession of things.[22]

Prior to the marginalization of animism, the American commercial vernacular sustained a

number of conflicting idioms. Nineteenth-century America's official culture of moralism

contrasted sharply with subcultures of fantasy and sensuality. The latter was represented by seedy

promoters and performers, magicians and mesmerists, and most importantly by peddlers promising

"seductive enchantments" to those who purchased their lush fabrics and transformative elixirs.

Lears argues that continued expansion of commercial life created and reinforced fears of losing

control, and of losing oneself in the formlessness of overabundance. Two Protestant ethics merged

as means of controlling the carnivalization of American life. The first was Max Weber's Protestant

Ethic which was based on the Puritan drive toward disciplined hard work and self control. The

excesses of frivolous consumption were avoided by channelling wealth into investment. Divorced

from the world of material pleasures, moneymaking was transformed into an etherealized process

of self-definition. Coexistent with this world view was what Colin Campbell has called the "Other

Protestant Ethic." This ethic was based on the emotional core of ecstatic conversion, when the soul

transcended the limits of the human body, becoming one with God through Christian rebirth. The

individual was transformed by this inward experience, as the gap between the material and spiritual

worlds lessened. As such, the "Other Protestant Ethic" promoted a longing for spontaneously

flowing spiritual abundance. In secular terms, longing was directed toward material things, not for

their inherent sensual value, but for their transformative possibilities.[23]

The patent medicine vendor of the 1880s and 1890s, with his materialist version of Protestant regeneration was the main icon of this culture.[24] Seen in this context, Holiness' equation of Methodist minister and medicine vendor was more than just a means of ridiculing middle class pretensions and religiosity. The patent medicine man was untrustworthy for two reasons. First of all, with the zeal of a hot gospeller, he attempted to sell "salvation in a bottle," which both parodied and carnalized the claims of evangelical religion. Secondly, the claims he made about his product's efficacy were rarely, if ever born out in reality. In short, the elixirs did not work, and the consumer, having been tricked, and fast-talked into purchasing the medicine was left uncured, disillusioned and short on cash. Proponents of Holiness viewed the Methodist minister in a similar light. Not only was he a sham artist who dealt in false grace and false conversion, he was pandering to the base instincts of a deluded, mindless congregation that stubbornly refused to validate the claims of Christian perfection. In so doing, they demonstrated that the "carnal mind," the source of all human baseness, sin and imperfection continued to rule the soul, thus negating all claims to conversion and regeneration.

Instead of this kind of limp religiosity, what was needed, according to Horner and his followers, was faith rooted in revivals spurred by the power of the Holy Spirit. The true seeker in Christ must groan under the weight of sin and through God's grace be regenerated, and justified by faith. Following this, he or she must move on to a higher state of entire sanctification, testified to by the presence of the Holy Spirit, and by the fruits of clean living and victory over sin. In the editorial pages of the Era, RC Horner explained that the "grace of entire sanctification destroys every unholy tendency of the nature of God's people and gives them... complete mastery over...their natural...appetites." Moreover, "[t]he souls of the entirely sanctified are filled with all the fullness of faith, joy, love, goodness, meekness, patience, temperance, etc." Sin remained in Christians who were not yet entirely sanctified, but did not reign. Once the Christian moved beyond regeneration to holiness, the soul was purged of inbred sin, and all tendencies toward anger, pride, selfishness,

envy, fretting, murmuring and fear were eradicated. It was not enough for one to repress one's

sinful tendencies, for the carnal mind was to human nature as cancer was to the body. It could be

removed without destroying anything inherent to the human soul, provided that the individual

struggled willingly toward this experience.[25] If the cancer of carnality was allowed to remain

within the human soul until the time of death, the individual would face certain damnation.

This was one of the lines of division separating Hornerite Holiness from the kind of

Methodism propagated by church elites. The columns of the <u>Christian Guardian</u> in the 1870s to

90s tell an interesting story about the tensions surrounding holiness. In the earlier part of this

period, the editors of the paper published all manner of letters and articles on holiness, and when

asked to cast their vote in favour of one kind of holiness over another, they consistently demurred,

preferring instead to emphasize the importance of seeking perfection over the various means by

which it could be obtained. Methodist leaders sought unity in diversity by allowing its members

the freedom to pursue the experience gradually, or suddenly within the context of revival.

This compromise became increasingly difficult to maintain by the late 1880s and early

1890s when reports of doctrinal irregularities and enthusiastic excess sullied the reputations of

such holiness preachers as Nelson Burns, president of the Canadian Holiness Association, and later

Ralph Horner. Burns and his followers crossed the line of theological acceptability when they

began to claim that the experience of perfection under the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit had

made them infallible in all areas of judgement. This led them to downplay the centrality of the

Scriptures to Christian life, and even to contradict Biblical authority when it contrasted with the

leadings of the Spirit. The editors of the <u>Christian Guardian</u> were forced to speak out against the

antinomian tendencies of this kind of holiness, cautioning readers to guard against unscriptural

and un-Wesleyan teachings on sanctification. They strongly criticized the tendencies of certain

holiness evangelists and associations to disparage the conversion experience by suggesting that it

was "of no account compared with the second blessing." Regeneration of the heart and justification

by faith marked the Christian's "passing from death unto life." An overweening emphasis on sanctification caused many an earnest Christian to become disheartened if his or her experience was not similar to the type of experience that such holiness advocates portrayed as essential.[26]

Similar objections were raised against Hornerite Holiness in the mid-1890s. The editors increasingly warned readers to take great care in pursuing the experience of holiness. They were told to guard against pride which brought division in the Church of Christ; to "beware of that daughter of pride, enthusiasm;" and to avoid antinomian tendencies by constantly performing good works. Dr. Nathaneal Burwash was called upon by the editors of the Christian Guardian in October of 1895 to respond to a letter written by WJ Conoly of the Montreal Conference which described the divisions and confusion created "in many places in the Montreal Conference [by] the teachings of RC Horner." In this letter, Conoly lamented the fact that Horner's books had been recommended by some of the best educated and most reliable men of the Church, and that the Conference, while condemning his methods, refused to disavow his doctrine. In this matter, Burwash referred to Wesley's teachings on the subject, and criticized Horner's view that regeneration was insufficient for salvation. Through conversion, individuals were made joint-heirs with Christ. Contrary to Horner, Wesley believed that sanctification was simply the perfection of the love experienced through regeneration. It was not a more important experience, or a more marked experience. Furthermore, Burwash cast grave doubts on Horner's assertions that entirely-sanctified people were freed from desire for "forbidden objects" or from temptation. He argued that sanctification did not destroy the natural appetites, but rather restored them to "something of the original simplicity of innocent action." What was more, Burwash underscored Wesley's "careful avoid[ance of] refinements on accidental forms of subjective or individual experience as leading to a dangerous and foolish enthusiasm which magnified frames and feelings above practical Christianity."[27]

For several reasons, Methodist elites felt they could no longer tolerate Homerite Holiness by the mid-1890s. Ostensibly, Ralph Horner was removed from the Methodist ministry because of his refusal to serve any specific circuit assignment. Yet, it is clear from the 6 June 1893 Report of the Committee on Evangelists and Evangelism which was appointed to investigate his conduct, that the opposition to Horner went far beyond questions of obedience to Church authority, and indeed hinged on allegations that he wilfully promoted enthusiasm among his "followers." The report found that

> ...there have been serious irregularities in the prosecution of our evangelistic work, especially in the following particulars, viz: In the mode of conducting prayer and inquiry meetings, in which the people were permitted and sometimes encouraged to pray aloud simultaneously, tending to confusion and disorder. We find that physical manifestations not calculated to commend our common Christianity to the hearts and consciences of men, but tending rather to bring it into disrepute, such as prostration, ecstasy, immoderate laughter, etc., are common; and we judge that sufficient effort is not exerted toward their restraint and control.[28]

As such, Methodist elites differed from Horner and his followers over both the style and substance of true holiness. To the latter, entire sanctification was sudden, emotionally charged, and necessary for eternal life. Additionally, Homerites believed that the "radical and uncompromising" presentation of the doctrine was essential in keeping it before a world not easily shaken from its formalist foundations.[29] In contrast, during and after this "holiness crisis," the official editorial position of the Christian Guardian on perfection hardened. The editors increasingly championed the gradualist approach to holiness over all other means, and defined the "holiness movement" as the movement of the whole Church when each member seeks heart purity, and the progressive perfecting of the image of Christ within.[30] Not all Methodist leaders supported this view. For one, Albert Carman, general superintendent of the Church at the time feared the effects that holiness heresy would have on the vital doctrine of Christian perfection. Carman, one of Horner's initial supporters joined the Church in censuring the evangelist, but feared that the

controversies over holiness would discredit the doctrine in the eyes of Methodist ministers and leaders.[31] He cautions:

> What with prostrations, floor-poundings, hysterical screaming, the substitution of self-exaltation and censorious and uncharitable arraignment of others for Christian testimony, the loud claims of a sinless perfection, of superiority to other Christians...the scorn of the Church of God and her ministers and opposition thereto, there is evident danger that these and other monstrosities...will be laid at the door of Christian perfection....[32]

Carman emphatically argued that if the Methodist Church did not attend to people's desires to attain holiness as a vital and even sudden experience, and if it did not accept the emotional aspects of holiness cleansing, people would leave the church. His remarks were prescient. The Christian Guardian almost totally lost interest in discussing holiness by the late 1890s. Letters and articles on the subject were few and far between. This was in marked contrast to the situation of a few short years before, when the experience of holiness and its relation to individual salvation were subjects of lively debate. It would seem that the Methodist media at least, consciously sought to distance itself from questions surrounding holiness teaching.

Early in the century, Methodism had been successful in the scattered rural communities of Upper Canada, partly because of its emotional appeal and its concern with simple, ascetic personal piety. By the 1890s, Methodist officials had become increasingly uncomfortable with this kind of religious experience. Holiness was too volatile. It promoted antinomianism, fanaticism and schism. The holiness crises of the late 1880s and early 1890s proved this, and served to solidify the resolve of many Methodist leaders to guard the respectability of institutionalized Methodism against those who too easily trespassed the line separating ardent zeal from ignorant enthusiasm.[33] Gradualism and the intellectual quest for salvation were officially victorious. This no doubt served to alienate not only members of Horner's group, but also many Methodists who continued to hunger and thirst for a more "authentic" religious experience, one less bound by concerns over middle-class propriety and respectability.

Once the Hornerites separated from the Methodist church, their message became more "radical and uncompromising." This was deemed to be necessary if the doctrine were to survive and flourish in a world not easily shaken from its formalist foundations. In Religious Outsiders and the Making of Americans, R Laurence Moore argues that historically, new religions have acted as "vehicles through which people have nurtured a sense of antagonistic culture."[34] In the case of Holiness, "outsiderism" nurtured a sense of separate identity. Holiness defined itself in opposition to the "dominant" culture, and mercilessly caricaturized the deficiencies of that culture. Members of the Holiness Movement Church were engaged in a context with middle-class Methodism over questions of religious integrity. Horner and others cultivated Holiness' outsider identity as a means of appealing to converts' zeal to defend their new-found faith against Methodist apostates, and other unbelievers. The discourse of battle was often epic in nature, as the following excerpt from RC Horner's editorial for 29 December 1897 suggests. "The enemies of Jesus," Horner warned, "are more numerous and more bitter than ever they have been in the past....The war between right and wrong, between sin and holiness, between heaven and hell, and between God and the devil, never was stronger or more persistent than at this time." Such passages were designed to reinforce the commitment of Holiness members, and empower them in their struggle against the forces of evil. Unlike their middle-class Methodist counter-parts, advocates of Holiness had the Holy Spirit on their side, and with his help could strike terror in the hearts of evil-doers everywhere, and "pray down a flaming revival of religion ... [to] deluge the whole community."[35] Time and time again, Holiness leaders asserted that the radical presentation of the doctrine of Christian perfection was necessary to the success of the movement. Stylistic radicalism was integral to the Holiness message, and those ministers of the Gospel who were not despised, persecuted and rejected by the "fashionable churches of [the] age" were "guilty of blood."[36]

These findings point to some questions that can be raised about Lynne Marks' Revivals and Roller Rinks: Religion, Leisure and Identity in Late-Nineteenth-Century Small-Town Ontario.

Marks argues against the notion that religion in small-town Ontario was strongly and monolithically Protestant. She finds support for her argument in the popularity of the Salvation Army among members of the working class, in "vocal" minorities of middle-class secularists, spiritualists and free-thinkers, and in the division and decline of religious loyalties that occurred as leisure opportunities became more widely available. The problem with Marks' argument is that she simultaneously downplays the ability of the mainstream churches to broker compromise, while ignoring expressions of religious alienation that occurred outside of the Salvation Army paradigm. In the 1890s, the Salvation Army suffered a loss of evangelical zeal and was transformed into a social rescue agency.[37] The reader is left with the impression at the end of the book, that religious Dissent died in the 1890s, and that the only real challenge to middle-class religion and hegemony would have to come from a secular direction. This could have been avoided had the author examined the Salvation Army as part of a larger context of holiness Dissent.[38] As support for the Salvation Army declined in the 1890s, Homerite Holiness, and indeed other forms of Christian perfection were on the rise. In this way, Holiness articulated the principle critique versus the main-line churches in small-town and rural Ontario. Contrary to what Marks asserts, those people who were alienated by the respectable classes, most often farmers and skilled labourers, were not thus denied the experience of conversion or participation in church life.[39] Affiliation with the religious alternative of Holiness empowered the marginal and gave them a voice.

Hand in hand with this attack on middle-class Methodism was Holiness' critique of the increasing importance of wealth and social distinction within its communities. American historians echo Robert Wiebe's thesis in arguing that one can place holiness in the larger context of the search for order in American society in the face of urban, industrial change. As "island communities," the dominant social unit of pre-industrial capitalist America were broken down and reordered, the individuals who came to populate the rising towns and cities of late nineteenth-century America banded together into institutional units. Holiness associations and churches were but one kind of

institutional grouping created in reaction to a crisis of confidence in the powers of community to provide individual members with a sense of meaning and cohesion.[40]

In the Canadian case, farmers flocked most eagerly to Holiness churches, but a significant minority were members of the working class, some of whom had only recently made the transition from rural to town life. These people would be most likely to feel out of place in churches and in congregations that tended to put their wealth on display, however tastefully. This sense of discomfort is reflected in the exhortations in the Era for Holiness preachers and members to bathe frequently, comb their hair, change their linen, brush their teeth and trim their fingernails in order to appear presentable.[41] Clearly, many adherents of Homerite Holiness were separated from their more prosperous Methodist brethren by such distinctions. Indeed, as Methodism became the church of the tea social or fundraiser, of the hired opera singer and the university-educated guest lecturer – in short, as it became nearly synonymous with middle-class culture – it began to alienate those who did not share its values. In response to this, members of the Holiness Movement Church forwarded an alternative faith and class paradigm based on what they believed to be a retrenchment of Wesleyan ideas of perfect love, and on a return to the strict behavioral standards of early nineteenth-century Methodism.

In an effort to minimize class distinctions among Christians and to eliminate sophistication and wealth from the top of the cultural hierarchy, Holiness advocates claimed that preachers in the Spirit "know no difference between men," and that "rich and poor are alike."[42] In reality, however, their view was that it would be easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to get into heaven. Homerites suggested that those with the desire to accumulate worldly wealth were "not consecrated to God." As such, they courted hell-fire and damnation. Only those who could separate themselves entirely from the world by means of entire sanctification would go to Heaven. In the New Jersusalem, only those who sought "His glory, need hope to enter into His presence."

Instead of pursuing wealth in the world, people were urged to "lay up a treasure in heaven" and to "have a single eye to the glory of God."[43] Contrary to what Nathanael Burwash and many of his contemporaries believed, Holiness Movement Church members thought that the pursuit of wealth was inherently evil because of the fact that it was inextricably linked with the desire for pleasure, ease and amusement. They did not agree that the wealthy could exercise Christian stewardship over their money and that development of character and moral good could be the result.[44] Instead, the accumulation of wealth was the antithesis of personal religion, as described in Section XV of the Holiness Movement Church Discipline:

> How little faith is there among us! How little communion with God, how little living in heaven, walking in eternity, deadness to every creature! How much love of the world! Desire of pleasures, of ease, of getting money! How little brotherly love! What continual judging one another! ...What want of moral honesty! To instance only one particular: who does as he would be done by, in buying and selling.[45]

The intensity of the Holiness Movement Church's criticism of wealth, ease and pleasure-seeking must be viewed in the context of the economic transition that was occurring in the late nineteenth-century. Prior to this time, the North American economy was based on production by small-entrepreneurs and farmers. The Protestant ethos of salvation through self-denial, perpetual toil, compulsive saving, civic responsibility and a rigid sense of morality rationalized this economic order. As society moved away from a producer-based economy to one of mass consumption dominated by bureaucratic corporations, people's values changed. The new consumer culture of the twentieth century was one characterized by periodic leisure, compulsive spending, and a seemingly permissive morality of individual fulfilment.[46] In this light, one can better comprehend the strict behavioral standards of Holiness, its insistence on plainness of dress and household furnishings, on abstinence from not only tobacco and liquor, but also tea, coffee and strong foods, and its prohibition of various amusements and financial practices. These things constituted a retrenchment of Oldtime Methodist values as a means of expressing dissent versus the rising ethic of consumerism in middle-class Methodist culture.

One need only glance casually at the contents of Canadian Methodism's official newspaper, the Christian Guardian, in the latter years of the nineteenth century to appreciate how strongly consumerism had penetrated its larger message. Columns upon columns of advertisements compete with the printed word for the reader's attention. Everything from the latest in women's fashion to the finest of dining-room suites is advertised by means of drawings, and slogans in large print. The pages of the Holiness Era is a study in contrast. Indeed, it was a matter of pride for the editor of the paper to announce to his readership that the publication was intended to float without advertisements, and that despite the dire warnings of the printer that this would not be possible, the paper did indeed survive on subscriptions alone. What this implies was a desire to preach a pure kind of holiness, unsullied by the consumerist message. Indeed, Holiness advocates warned against treating religion as a commodity to be had at the cheapest price. They equated consumerism which increased the availability of goods on the market, while decreasing their value and workmanship with "cheap religion" which required no self-denial or sacrifice. People who internalized the consumerist ethic "made their religious calculations chiefly on the basis of dollars and cents." This cheapness was reflected in their revivals, camp meetings and conversions which were treated like articles of consumption and as a result bore the fruit of such spiritual pollution – backsliding.[47]

In addition, Holiness members desired to return to the old producer-based economy, as evidenced by their critique of those who incurred personal debt. In an article entitled "Owe No Man Anything" based on Romans 13:8, the editor of the Era writes:

> In these days of hurry and rush in the business world, we are not surprised if business men overlook their obligations in money matters, and lack promptness in meeting them. But we are surprised when Christian men and women, who testify to the highest religious experience, are…so negligent about their financial obligations…. [Many] contract debts with very little thought as to how they are to be liquidated, and afterwards feel no burden of responsibility with regard to meeting them. 'These things ought not so to be.' The word of God is clear….[W]hen the title to the heavenly treasure is secured, it cannot be retained unless there is prompt attention given to the settling of these monetary claims.[48]

While more lenient of those who had fallen into debt through no fault of their own and who desired to meet their obligations honestly, Holiness Movement members believed that the incursion of dishonest debt represented a breach of the "old covenant" of producer-oriented society. Bankruptcy and debt were suggestive of the economic sins of fiscal irresponsibility or greed. These sins prevented the attainment of Christian perfection and, concomitantly, salvation because they were reflective of the larger immorality of the pursuit of success, pleasure and profit.[49]

The question of dress was also intricately woven through with threads of anti-consumerism and strict personal morality. Male members of conferences and local preachers were not allowed to wear white or showy fronts, velvet, and high collars. Members of conference were not allowed to wear showy neckties and preachers were prohibited from wearing neckties altogether.[50] Members of the church were required to wear plain clothing, and nobody could be received into the Movement "until they have left off the wearing of gold and superfluous ornaments." For women, tight skirts, waists of a different colour than the skirts, large sleeves, pleats, yokes, gathers, frills, ruffles, netting, velvet, high heeled boots with narrow toes, corsets, fancy hats, pins, buckles, belts and fashionable hair were all off limits.[51] This plainness was to act as an outward symbol of the internal reality of holiness, and a Christ-like spiritual life. Consumption of fashion did great evil by engendering pride, breeding vanity, inflaming anger and lust, impoverishing families and begetting dishonesty. Furthermore, there was no excuse for spending one's money on fancy dress and expensive furniture when the poor and unevangelized continued to exist. The end result of such greed and vanity was temporal ruin and eternal perdition.[52]

These attacks on fashionable dress represented a critique of rising consumer culture, and an attempt to retrench early Methodist plainness, when this value was itself falling out of fashion. As such, the Holiness critique of fashion was an expression of the continued cultural resilience of the rural "island community" with its adherence to "the Bible standard [of] self-denial."[53] It was a means by which Hornerites fostered common bonds of holy community at a time of significant

social and cultural dislocation. It was also a way for Holiness members to separate themselves from the apostate practices of the mother church. Plainness was the uniform of outsider Holiness, easily distinguishable as the garb of the virtuous. The ideal of the plainly-arrayed Christian stood in stark contrast to the following description of Methodist church-goers by R.C. Horner. He urged those who wished to see the latest style, "in blazing colours, in plumes in feathers, in lace and ruffles...in gold and diamonds," to go attend the Methodist Church. There they would see the minister in the pulpit "with his gold watch and chain, buttons and studs, and his wife dressed up in the very latest from Paris." Moreover, they would see church officials "trimmed up in all the pomp and vanity of this proud age, and their wives as if they had slipped out of the band box."[54]

The Holiness Movement's stand on the use of tobacco, coffee and tea served similar functions. Along with being a means of creating allegiance to the group as an "outsider" community, such prohibitions extended Holiness' critique against consumerism and carnality. Section XVIII of the Discipline prohibited tobacco users from being received into membership in the church. Tobacco was a consumer item of dubious merit, and a waste of money that could be used for better purposes. Tobacco use was blamed for "blunt[ing] the moral sense" in that it destroyed true gentlemanly regard for the rights of others to breathe pure air. The very craving of the substance suggested corruption of appetites and morals. Once indulged in, it robbed the user of freedom by making him a slave to habit. In undermining health, tobacco also undermined the ability of the individual to make solid and sober moral decisions. In this way, the drug was the handmaiden of the devil who was consistently trying to undermine the power of the Holy Ghost as divine Comforter and moral guide.[55] Although the use of coffee and tea was not prohibited by the Discipline, almost the same arguments were forwarded to warn against their consumption.[56]

There were a number of other behavioral standards that governed the lives of Holiness Movement Church members. Dancing, card-playing, novel-reading, amusements, political involvement, drink, participation in secret societies and the purchase of insurance were all

forbidden. It was incumbent upon members to express themselves with "great plainness" in trying to eliminate these sins from their midst. Members were exhorted to prevent the "ghost of unpopularity, the ghost of starvation or lack of support, the ghost fear of criticism and the ghost fear of offending" from standing in the way of their task.[57] This was one of the means of enforcing the peculiar culture of Holiness in a decreasingly supportive environment.

Additionally, the role of the travelling preacher was exceedingly important, in theory at least, in ensuring the continuation of the bonds of Holiness communities. It was his or her duty to "meet the societies and classes" that constituted his/her circuit, and to visit the sick. A preacher was expected to "tell every one under [their] care, what [he/she] thought was wrong in [their] conduct and temper, and that lovingly and plainly, as soon as may be...." Those in charge of the administrative details of circuits were to oversee the behaviour of the preacher, to appoint class leaders in conjunction with the wishes of the class, to receive, try and expel members according to discipline, to regularly hold watch-nights and love-feasts, and to ensure that each society was duly supplied with books. Presiding elders were appointed to oversee the spiritual and temporal business of the church in their districts. They were given the power to enforce discipline in the districts.[58] Travelling elders were elected by a majority of the General Conference, a body made up of all ordained members of the movement. In addition to the tasks of the travelling preacher, they performed baptisms, marriages and presided over all aspects of divine worship, including the Lord's Supper. Travelling deacons and deaconesses, and special evangelists also took part in the creation of Holiness culture. The former assisted elders in their sacramental duties in addition to urging sinners to seek conversion, and pressing the converted to go on to entire sanctification. Bonds of community were thus maintained, through a system which reinforced the discipline and style of social relations of an earlier form of Methodism.

Women, in their roles as deaconesses and travelling lady evangelists were exceedingly important to the perpetuation of Holiness culture. Female evangelism in the Methodist Church

suffered a sharp decline in the 1890s. As evangelism became the purview of the trained professional, schooled in the science of conversion, there was a shift away from the kind of local initiative and enthusiasm that allowed female evangelism to flourish. Methodist women were encouraged to become deaconesses, created as a new professional role to channel women's religious zeal. Structured, institutionalized organizations such as the Epworth League allowed young women and men to take part in revival work, without committing their entire lives to itinerant evangelism. Furthermore, in the early twentieth-century, Methodist elites began to de-emphasize personal conversion and revival in favour of a social gospel and service orientation. These changes served to disempower Methodist women as Gospel preachers. Once, Methodism authorized women to speak out publicly for their faith. By the 1890s, however, these avenues were closed to women, as they were encouraged to assume a more auxiliary role in church life.[59]

Interestingly, after the 1890s, existing female evangelists either married, died, or joined the Holiness Movement Church.[60] Indeed, the pages of the Holiness Era are filled with reports of female evangelistic work, and articles written in support of women's authority within the church. This must be viewed in light of Holiness' desire to retrench the value of individual perfection in the life of the believer, and to reinforce the revivalistic style which had declined in popularity within the Methodist church. Moreover, because leaders in Holiness were wary of the spiritually deleterious effects that professionalization and higher education could have on true, heart-felt faith, they resisted the pressure to credentialize church offices. A modicum of Scriptural knowledge and training was a necessary prerequisite for church leadership, but it was clear that the basis of evangelistic success lay elsewhere, in a faith spurred by the Holy Spirit, and unlimited by gender, lack of wealth or education, age, illness or any other earthly disability. These factors contributed to the continued support for female evangelistic work and the belief that women were equally as effective as men in spreading the Word and gaining converts.

According to an article appearing in the September 22, 1897 edition of the Era, both men

and women had been chosen by God to preach. "Perfected in holiness," many of the women, like

the men were intellectually gifted, and "fearless in preaching the terrors of the law and the power of

the gospel. Moreover, they "sing, pray, preach and exhort in the demonstration of the spirit and of

power and they have seals to their ministry and souls for their hire."[61] Clearly the promise of

sanctification was empowerment. The Holy Spirit would descend on men and women alike,

cleanse them of their propensity for evil thoughts and deeds, and transform them into fearless

preachers, and mental giants. Sinners would fall at their feet in terror, and be converted. While it

is true that the author makes sure to underscore women's intellectual abilities, perhaps as a means

of heading off potential criticism of their public role, it is apparent from this passage that men and

women were not only equal in the Spirit, but that the Spirit had given them equal roles to play in

winning souls. In preaching and evangelization, both genders, once transformed by sanctifying

grace, and commissioned by the Spirit, would draw on the qualities of strength, boldness and

clarity of intellect. In the context of late-Victorian Canada, these characteristics, and indeed public

preaching itself were deemed to be typically masculine. Women who had experienced entire

sanctification, and who sought the vocation of church leadership were enjoined to move beyond

submissiveness, domesticity and other common notions of feminine propriety. And contrary to

what one historian argues about Methodist female evangelists, women's power within the

Movement was not premised on their maternal abilities, or on the extension of their private,

domestic sovereignty as mothers, to the public realm.[62] Female evangelists were not valued

primarily for their ability to 'mother' the world, or to engage in social house-keeping. Rather, their

power was premised on the 'genderless' experience of entire sanctification. Similar to the Quakers

and the Children of Peace, the Holiness Movement Church were inspired by their faith to suggest

gender roles that varied from those espoused by the larger society. In moving away from

traditional definitions of women's role in evangelization, Hornerite Holiness both implicitly and

explicitly criticized the culture of separate spheres, a fact that underscores the propensity of

nineteenth-century Dissenters, on the whole, to offer alternatives to the dominant gender ideology.

It is interesting to note that these "masculine" fruits of entire sanctification were based on

the "feminine" demeanor of holiness Christians toward God. Those who wished to be made perfect

were urged to "submit to divine will unto repentance and faith," and to "consecrate ... every

member of the body, every faculty of the mind and soul, when purified by the sanctifying power of

the Holy Ghost, to be filled ... [with] the love of God, and used in joyful service for God's glory.

Holiness members were to bear cheerfully all crosses, and remain perfectly obedient, even when

under trial. Sanctified souls would "undertake with enthusiasm that which is humiliating, painful

and laborious," never shrinking from mortification of self as "an indispensable accompaniment of

consecration in its various forms." God was to be praised in all conditions of life, and equally in

times of joy and sorrow. Sacrifice, labor, offerings and tears were needed to build a "spiritual Zion

and support her against all the encroachments of earth and hell combined."[63]

As they reached toward entire sanctification, both men and women were like passive and

loving "brides of Christ" in relation to God. But once the grace of the Spirit filled them, both sexes

alike were expected to be confrontational in their attempts to ward off formalism, contempt from

an ungodly world, and other manifestations of evil.[64] Because Holiness made no spiritual

distinction between the sexes, women were able to break free of many traditional gender constraints

in their zeal to win souls. Gender equality was only strengthened by Holiness leaders' propensity

for generating an atmosphere of crisis that emphasized worldly opposition to Holiness teachings.

In the epic battle between Good and Evil, or between Holiness and its formalist detractors, all

individuals, male and female, old and young, sick and healthy were expected to unite as a Christian

army to the rescue.

There are several possible reasons why the Holiness Movement Church took a

comparatively liberal attitude toward female preaching. American studies of rural religion in

upstate New York suggest that opportunities for female leadership were frequently greater amongst new religious groups, whose lack of accumulated wealth often forced them to rely on the non-monetary resources of women. And historically, women have gained freedom when old rules and social structures have been dissolved but not yet replaced by new ones. This window in time allows for greater expressions of novelty, spontaneity, egalitarianism and ecstasy. The Holiness Movement Church was a new religious denomination that made no distinction between genders in the spiritual life, and that relied upon the grass-roots ministry of women to spread the Gospel of Christian perfection. Furthermore, as an expression of the religious populism of farmers, artisans and labourers, Holiness responded to the various effects of economic and social transition, from a producer-oriented to a consumer-dominated culture.[65]

Like a number of American denominations dating back to the Revolution, the Holiness Movement constituted a culture of the marginal. As long as the group operated outside the bounds of respectable society, and as long as it emphasized the necessity of submission, self-sacrifice, heart-felt faith, and enthusiastic revival, Holiness would continue to put forward an egalitarian view of woman's spiritual role.[66] What appeared as weakness in the eyes of the world was the source of Holiness' strength. The faith of the weak, the marginalized, the poor, the uncouth and the unlettered was the engine that drove Holiness forward, propelling its members to great deeds, and heroic spiritual acts. The larger society viewed women as the "weaker sex." In the context of the Holiness Movement, this weaker sex claimed its rightful inheritance of the strength resulting from total submission to God. Viewed in this light, it comes as no surprise that Holiness women were among the strongest and most aggressive proponents of the Movement, evangelizing the sinner, and preaching the pure Gospel of salvation.

This is exemplified by the work of several female evangelist teams including Sisters Eligh and Cross, Sisters VanCamp and Hamilton, Sisters Moke and Coulthart, and Sisters Birdsell and Mason. Their names appear frequently in reference to both male and female members' conversion

and sanctification experiences during the early years of the Movement. Additionally, Sisters

Birdsell and Mason, former Methodist lady evangelists periodically reported on the rallies, tent

meetings and revivals they organized and at which they preached, in the Holiness Era.[67] Their

accounts were equally bold as those of their male counterparts. Indeed, in the following excerpt,

they described a meeting at Napanee in almost martial terms:

> ...We came...and started war on sin of every kind and degree. At first...all hell seemed
> moved, but Jesus was in view, and through the Holy Ghost we were enabled to prevail
> mightily in prayer...and souls were born into the kingdom. Some who for forty years were
> bound down by the demon drink have been saved and sanctified.... [G]lory to the Lamb,
> his precious blood has not lost its ancient power, [though]...wicked men and devils has
> [sic] been testing the cure on many lines....One old infidel is raging to-day, wishes he
> could get the law against us....Lord God, shake the town...no matter who it offends. We
> have a type of Phariseeism to break down here that will need heaven's dynamite.[68]

This passage suggests that Holiness women's sense of authority emanated from the Spirit who saw

no distinction between the sexes when it came to accomplishing God's noble work. In their role as

evangelists, such women worked outside of the mainstream paradigm of proper feminine behaviour

set forth by groups such as the Women Christian's Temperance Union, the largest female

organization in Ontario during the last quarter of the nineteenth-century. The WCTU based its

attempts to strengthen the middle-class family, during a period of social and intellectual

uncertainty, on the values of evangelical feminism. Female moral superiority enabled women to

seek public, collective action versus male vices such as gambling, intemperance, and the sexual

double-standard, for the purposes of protecting the sanctity of home and family.[69]

Although the Holiness Movement joined the WCTU in condemning several of the same

vices, in the church's early history, the ideological basis for allowing women a public, religious role

was comparatively un-gendered. It rested on the experience of Christian perfection: entirely

sanctified men and women had lost their propensity to sin, and as such, they were not prone to the

vices of the unsanctified, which remained distinctly gendered. Unsanctified men were deemed more

likely to be intemperate, or to indulge in smoking. Unsanctified women were more likely to commit

sins against plainness. Women also bore the exclusive blame for tempting men into sexual sin, often a direct result of the lust inflamed by "costly and gay dress." As such, the two types of carnality were combined to dreadful effect, particularly in Holiness criticisms of middle-class churches. In this context, the sight of Sunday School girls singing hymns before "large audiences" while "arrayed gaudily and in the extreme of fashion" was considered scandalous, for the girls were being taught to draw attention to themselves. Pleasure taken in lush fabrics and physical beauty was a sign of carnality that could lead to sins of sexual impurity. Similarly, the prominent public role that many women assumed in the charitable work of running church fairs, festivals, socials, teas, parties, concerts and charades was also a cause for scandal: it was one thing for sanctified women to preach the Word of God, but quite another for unsanctified women to place themselves amidst a corrupt world's "rush after money."[70] In general, Hornerites believed that the female experience of worldliness contained the added dimension of sexual unseemliness, which the male equivalent distinctly lacked.

But just because Holiness advocates believed both sexes to be equal when sanctified, did not mean that women and men were equally represented in the ranks of the Church's ministry. Unlike the organization of the Gospel Workers' Church, a Holiness contemporary with early links to the Movement, the Hornerite Church was hierarchical, and mimicked the Methodist form. At the top was the Leader who was elected by a General Conference made up of all ordained members. The Leader's role was to fix the appointments of preachers for the several circuits and stations, to ordain elders, deacons and deaconesses, and to choose presiding elders who took on the Leader's role in his abscence. Travelling elders, deacons, deaconesses, and preachers were elected by the Annual Conference, made up of all travelling preachers over thirty years of age, and those ready for ordination.[71] Although women could be ordained, it is unclear, from the records as to how many women sought to augment their status as travelling evangelists by taking orders, and whether or not any were elected as elders, or chosen as presiding elders. Indeed, among the several

women evangelists mentioned in the Holiness Era, only Sister VanCamp was present at the first

General Conference of the Movement, held in Ottawa, in 1899, thus suggesting that at the time, she

was the Church's only ordained female.[72] In subsequent years, General Conference attendants were

almost exclusively male, and as such, men generally occupied positions of administrative authority

within the various committees charged with the Movement's business. And despite a concerted

effort to employ female evangelists part time in the church's "publishing house," the editorial staff

of the Holiness Era, and other denominational publications were consistently male, with the

exception of the Child's Treasure, which was regularly edited by women.[73]

Due to the fragmentary nature of the historical record, it is difficult to account for the

difference between Holiness' gender ideals and practice. The Holiness Era continued publication

for many years after 1899, but unfortunately, copies of the paper are not generally available after

this date. Minutes of the General Conference of the church span from 1899-1958, but they are

lacking in detail as to the personal motivations of the Movement's members. As such, conclusions,

in this regard, remain somewhat elusive. Nonetheless, the following factors are important to

consider. First of all, both men and women were encouraged to enter the ministry if so moved by

the Spirit. Secondly, ordained individuals were free to marry. Theoretically, then, it was possible

for a woman to both be married and to work as a travelling preacher or deaconess. Although

articles in the Holiness Era emphasized the duties that both parents had in attending to their

children's moral and spiritual development, it is likely that married women were expected to take on

the lion's share of house-keeping and childcare responsibilities. This is what happened to women in

the Gospel Workers' Church, which in its early years supported full equality of the sexes in

evangelistic work. As a result, the theoretical ideal of equality in preaching was a practical

impossibility. Conversely, married men were free to itinerate, though they might make financial

pleas to the membership on behalf of their family's welfare. Moreover, because it was morally

censurable for individuals to marry "with the avowed purpose to prevent off-spring" upon

marrying, it was inevitable that most female preachers would be forced to cease working in an official capacity. It must have been tacitly assumed that women's position in the church was dependent upon maintanence of their single status. Perhaps they behaved as did their counterparts in the Gospel Workers' Church: a few female evangelists remained single and continued their work, while others married male colleagues and continued to be active in the church, but usually in support of their husbands' ministries. Still others left the church. It is also possible that the Holiness Movement Church shared with the Gospel Workers' Church the tendency to conform "to cultural attitudes regarding woman's natural role" as the years passed. For the latter, this eventually resulted in women's professional marginalization, as distinctions were made between ordained men and evangelizing women.[74]

Methodist elites entered the twentieth century with a desire to effect a rapprochement between religion and culture. This would be accomplished by applying the bureaucratic method of reform and intervention to society in an effort to bring forth the Kingdom of God on earth. Methodist leaders increasingly accented the organic nature of social relationships and the interconnectedness of home, community and nation, and of personal and social well-being. According to Phyllis Airhart, Methodism became part of a broad new "capitalist-socialist, reformer-revolutionary" intellectual and social consensus, based on values created in the crucible of mid-to late-nineteenth century growth of urban life, prosperity, professionalism, voluntarism and scientific knowledge.[75] The problem with this assessment is that it assumes that Methodism was transformed with very little reference to, or opposition from antagonistic forces. In addition, it takes a part for the whole in assuming that desires for change were supported unequivocally by all members of the church elite, and by the larger membership. In contrast, this chapter has demonstrated that Methodist leaders were cautiously supportive of Holiness evangelization to the mid-1890s, when conflicts with RC Horner and other Holiness preachers over the proper style and substance of Christian perfection led to a hardening of the Methodist position on Christian

perfection. These conflicts cast suspicions on the quest for instant sanctification because henceforth, the experience was closely linked to heterodoxy, schism, and fanaticism. The last of these was a thorn in the side of Methodist leaders who were embarrassed by reports of members transgressing the bounds of middle-class propriety through experiences of religious ecstasy.

As elites came to a consensus on the parameters of acceptable belief, elements of the old evangelical consensus became fragmented. Part of this fragmentation, according to historians was the rise of fundamentalist groups claiming to be the true heirs of the nineteenth-century evangelical tradition.[76] The Holiness Movement Church can be understood in this context of reaction and retrenchment. Similar to their Calvinist proto-fundamentalist counterparts, members of the Holiness Movement emphasized personal religion, and held tenaciously to literal over figurative explanations of Biblical text.[77] They also emphasized supernatural interpretations of God's work on earth over natural ones. But, unlike Baptist and Presbyterian proto-fundamentalists, adherents of Hornerite Holiness forwarded an optimistic vision of human destiny, based on a belief in boundless spiritual progress as exemplified by the doctrine of entire sanctification.

For Holiness members, the betterment of society hinged on evangelization and convincing all people of the necessity of attaining Christian perfection in this lifetime, if salvation were to be attained in the hereafter. If all people adhered to this righteous doctrine, with its concomitant emphasis on strict behavioral standards and the responsibility of the Christian individual to see to the needs of his or her neighbour, then there would be no need of social reform on a grand scale. If all people sought their rightful inheritance of perfect love, then the world itself would become a model of millennial perfection. This message was particularly appealing to the people of small towns and rural communities in Ontario and Quebec who were spared many of the problems peculiar to big city life, problems that required a more organized and massive plan of attack. As such, this study in religious Dissent implies the existence of a significant divide in late Victorian social, religious and cultural life based on the divergent experiences of small town and city folk.

Moreover, it underscores that from the 1840s onward, Dissenting denominations gained their

inspiration from the efforts of "mainstream" church leaders to accommodate their respective faiths

to socio-economic shifts within the larger society. Just as Dissent had more fully addressed

political concerns earlier in the century, when Church and State were united, "New Dissent" acted

as a vehicle of populist protest versus the creation of new and purely cultural establishments which

arose in the age of voluntarism. In the cases of both Millerism and the Holiness Movement

Church, in addition to denominations studied by other historians, the Salvation Army for example,

"New Dissent" challenged the increasing propensity of "mainstream" Methodism to articulate the

evolving aspirations of middle class elites.

Endnotes

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[1] Charles Edwin Jones, Perfectionist Persuasion: The Holiness Movement and American Methodism, 1867-1936 (Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1974), xiv, 4; Timothy L Smith, "Righteousness and Hope: Christian Holiness and the Millennial Vision in America, 1800-1900," American Quarterly 31 (Spring 1979): 28.

[2] Marguerite Van Die, Nathanael Burwash and the Methodist Tradition in Canada, 1839-1918 (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1989), 79-80.

[3] Ron Sawatsky, "Unholy Contentions About Holiness: The Canada Holiness Association and the Methodist Church, 1875-1894," Papers of the Canadian Society of Church History (1981-82): 1.

[4] Ralph C Horner, Evangelist: Reminiscences From His Own Pen (Brockville, Ontario: n.p., n.d.), xvi-xvii.

[5] The pillars of "Oldtime Methodism" included the itinerant preacher, the sudden conversion experience, the camp meeting, the love feast, the class meeting, and the prayer meeting. This term connotes a quality of spiritual life that was focussed on the simple, emotional expression of individual piety in conversion, ordinary religious life, and in revival. To Holiness advocates, "oldtime religion" and "oldtime revivals" eschewed the formalism and intellectual pretensions of the contemporary mainline churches, in favour of the direct experience of God's redeeming and sanctifying grace. See UCCA/VUA Holiness Era [hereafter Era], 7 April 1897; 19 May 1897.

[6] Although mainline Methodism also emphasized the need for thrift, sobriety, personal responsibility and mutual cooperation, Hornerites believed that far too many ministers, and well-to-do members of Methodist congregations did not practice what the church preached.

[7]See Robert H Wiebe, The Search for Order: American Society, 1877-1920 (New York: Hill & Wang, 1967). Wiebe's describes how industrialization, urbanization, and immigration helped shift America's cultural centre away from the small town. This was accomplished with the help of a new, bureaucratic-minded middle class who sought to advance socially by applying the values of functionality, rationality and scientific management to the problems of modernity.

[8] Lawrence Goodwyn argues that populism can be best understood as a cultural assertion of mass democratic aspiration on the part of late nineteenth-century American farmers. It attempted to create egalitarian communities based on economic self-help and democratic autonomy, as bulwarks against monopoly capitalism and the corporate state. Similarly, the Holiness Movement argued for a kind of faith that made ample room for lay people to get involved in the important work of evangelization and preaching. In doing so, it attacked the declining emphasis on lay participation in the Methodist church, which Neil Semple describes in The Lord's Dominion, 225-9. The use of the term "populist" to describe religious movements is corroborated by Nathan Hatch. He argues that populist denominations of the nineteenth century "refused to defer to learned theologians...associated virtue with ordinary people rather than with elites, exalted the vernacular in word and song," and were open to a variety of signs and wonders. See Hatch, The Democratization of American Christianity, 4-5, 9-11.

[9]See SED Shortt, "Social Change and Political Crisis in Rural Ontario: The Patrons of Industry, 1889-1896," in Oliver Mowat's Ontario, ed. Donald Swainson (Toronto: Macmillan, 1972), 210-235, and RD Gidney and WPJ Millar, Professional Gentlemen: The Professions in Nineteenth-Century Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1994), 303-317. Gidney and Millar suggest that the Patrons represented the rough edge of a larger political culture which had become increasingly suspicious of professional privilege. The desire to exert individual authority against the claims of professional people to superior knowledge was evident not only in the populist press, but also in the mainstream press amongst Liberals and Conservatives who shared space with the Patrons in the Ontario Legislature. My study corroborates their findings by illustrating that this phenomenon was more widespread than previously imagined. It also demonstrates that populism was far more diverse than its political incarnation in the Patrons of Industry would suggest.

[10]Ralph C Horner, v-xvi, 5, 10-11.

[11]Ibid., 25-33, 37-40, xvi-xvii.

[12]Ibid., 113-158; Brian R Ross, "Ralph Cecil Horner: A Methodist Sectarian Deposed, 1887-1895," Journal of the Canadian Church Historical Society XIX, no. 26 (1977): 98.

[13]AO, 1901 Ontario Census, Microfilm Reels T6477, T6478, T6493, T6462.

[14]Ralph C Horner, xv-xvi; Ross, 101.

[15]Ralph C Horner, xvi-xvii.

[16]See R Louis Gentilcore, ed., Historical Atlas of Canada, Vol II: The Land Transformed, 1800-1891 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 77-80; and Donald Kerr, ed., Historical Atlas of Canada, Vol III: Addressing the Twentieth Century (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 1-5.

[17]Phyllis Airhart, Serving the Present Age: Revivalism, Progressivism, and the Methodist Tradition in Canada (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992), 94-122. In contrast, Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau have suggested that historians such as Airhart have produced a distorted

image of late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Methodism by basing their arguments on the opinions of the Toronto-based Methodist leadership, who supported the shift away from revivalist piety to progressive social service. Christie and Gauvreau argue that conservatism and populist evangelicalism persisted at the local, congregational level into the 1930s, particularly in smaller cities and towns. See: Nancy Christie and Michael Gauvreau, A Full-Orbed Christianity: The Protestant Churches and Social Welfare in Canada, 1900-1940 (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996), xii-xiv; 56-61.

[18]Ralph C Horner, 90-93.

[19]Era, 24 March 1897.

[20]Ibid., 7 April 1897, and 27 January 1897. The key problem was with preachers, many of whom "every day think more about culture than about Jesus, who every week read more on art and science than they do the Bible...who talk more about culture than holy things, nay many poitively nauseate on personal holiness."

[21]Ibid., 14 July 1897.

[22] Lears, Fables of Abundance, 4-12, 154-180.

[23]Ibid., 38-48.

[24]Ibid., 142.

[25]Era, 13 January 1897, 24 March 1897, 18 October 1899.

[26]CG, 12 March 1890; 22 July 1891; 20 May 1891.

[27]Ibid., 28 August 1895, 2 October 1895.

[28]UCCA/VUA, Montreal Annual Conference of the Methodist Church, Minutes, "Report of the Committee on Evangelists and Evangelism," 6 June 1893.

[29]Era, 24 March 1897, 19 May 1897.

[30]CG, 17 July 1895.

[31]It is interesting to note that in the quarrel over the higher criticism which emerged publicly in 1909, Carman headed up the "conservative" faction which opposed the introduction of theological liberalism into the Methodist curriculum. Nathanael Burwash was the key proponent of the "modern" camp. (See Ross, 97; and Van Die, Nathanael Burwash, 91.)

[32]CG, 15 January 1896.

[33]Semple, The Lord's Dominion, 212-215.

[34]Moore, xi.

[35]Era, 29 December 1897, 13 January 1897.

[36]Ibid., 11 August 1897; 24 March 1897.

[37]Marks, Revivals and Roller Rinks, 44-50, 208-19, 165.

[38]Other groups within this larger culture of Holiness include the Free Methodists, the Gospel Workers Church, the Canada Holiness Association, and later on, Pentecostalism.

[39]Marks, Revivals and Roller Rinks, 23-25.

[40]Melvin Easterday Dieter, The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century (Metuchen, New Jersey: Scarecrow Press, 1980), 236-7; Wiebe, passim.

[41]Era, 8 September 1897; see also 2 June 1897.

[42]Ibid., 24 February 1897.

[43]Ibid., 13 January 1897.

[44]Van Die, Nathanael Burwash, 84.

[45]Era, 10 March 1897.

[46]TJ Jackson Lears, "From Salvation to Self-Realization and the Therapeutic Roots of the Consumer Culture, 1880-1930," in The Culture of Consumption: Critical Essays in American History, 1880-1980, eds. Richard Wightman Fox and TJ Jackson Lears (New York:Pantheon Books, 1983), 3. In Fables of Abundance Lears revises his view of consumer culture by suggesting that it was "less a riot of hedonism than a new way of ordering the existing balance of tensions between control and release." With the rise of consumerism, sensual fulfilment was subordinated to the larger goal of personal efficiency. Sensuality survived in the world of advertising, but it was "increasingly clothed in the sterile idiom of clinical frankness." Interestingly, Holiness attacked the consumerist tendencies of middle-class church-goers by caricaturizing them as hedonists and carnally minded pleasure-seekers. Holiness advocates used this discourse to undermine middle-class cultural values, and to argue for the superiority of their particular brand of spirituality which sought to transform people's fascination with material abundance, into an enjoyment of free-flowing spiritual abundance. (See Lears, Fables of Abundance, 10-11). One should not mistake such rhetoric for absolute reality. Methodism was not monolithic. The Church had room to accommodate those with ascetic tendencies, along with others who were more self-indulgent.

[47]Era, 11 January 1899, 6 October 1897.

[48]Ibid., 7 February 1900.

[49]In reference to this, it is instructive to consult Boyd Hilton's In the Age of Atonement: The Influence of Evangelicalism on Social and Economic Thought, 1795-1885 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 155-223. This work suggests some deeper reasons for Holiness members'wariness of bankruptcy and the new consumerism. British evangelicals of the first half of the nineteenth-century lived in an Age of Atonement in which self-improvement was not construed as an end in itself, as it would later be, but as a means of attaining both personal and public salvation. In this era of great uncertainty caused by the French Revolution, the rise of English Jacobinism, and increasing industrialization and urbanization, many conceived of life as a time of moral trial during which the human soul was suspended between the

warring forces of sin and grace, depravity and salvation. Social and economic life was ordered by divine Providence. Bankruptcy was seen as a disruption of this divine social order, and a logical result of sin.

[50]UCCA, Minutes of the General Conference of the Holiness Movement Church of Canada, 1899, p. 64.

[51]Era, 28 July 1897, 25 July 1900.

[52]Ibid., 6 October 1897, 10 March 1897.

[53]Ibid., 22 February 1899.

[54]RC Horner, Original and Inbred Sin (Ottawa, 1896), 105.

[55]Era, 10 March 1897, 4 October 1899.

[56]See Era, 7 March 1900; and 16 June 1897. Many Protestants in Canada did not think twice about the potential dangers of drinking coffee and tea. In fact, many churches structured social gatherings and business meetings around the ritual of tea drinking. Perhaps Hornerites frowned upon tea-drinking because of the fact that the Methodist tea-meeting, traditionally an opportunity to find spiritual succour among members of one's religious community, had been transformed into an opportunity for fund-raisers to collect money for church projects. By abstaining from tea, Holiness advocates might have been trying to dissociate themselves from tea as an icon of middle-class culture. It is interesting to note, however, that the Women's Christian Temperance Union, which in the nineteenth century served the same Protestant constituency opposed tea-drinking as harmful to one's health. In Through Sunshine and Shadow, The Woman's Christian Temperance Union, Evangelicalism, and Reform in Ontario, 1874-1930 (Montreal/Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995), Sharon Cook argues that according to the WCTU, physical health formed the basis of the "pyramid of character." Bodily vigour was undermined by numerous threats including poor ventilation, spicy foods, pork, "unbalanced exercise," and constricting dress. Strong tea and coffee were placed in the same category as alcohol and narcotics which led the body to compulsive excess by exciting it, depressing it, and finally deranging it. Such a state allowed the base human passions to upset the equilibrium of good character. Both WCTU and Holiness members believed that once this happened, it became exceedingly difficult for the individual to achieve redemption. (See Sharon Cook, 87.)

[57]Era, 6 October 1897.

[58]Era, 10 February 1897.

[59]Marilyn Fardig Whiteley, "Modest Unaffected, and Fully Consecrated: Lady Evangelists in Canadian Methodism," in Changing Roles of Women within the Christian Church in Canada, eds. Elizabeth Gillan Muir and Marilyn Fardig Whiteley (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 194-5.

[60]Ibid., 194.

[61]Era, 22 September 1897.

[62]Whiteley, 192.

[63]RC Horner, Entire Consecration, (Toronto: W Briggs; Montreal: CW Coates, 1890), 5-7, 45, 54.

[64]Ibid.. 21.

[65]Curtis D Johnson, Islands of Holiness: Rural Religion in Upstate New York, 1790-1860 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 9-10; Jonathan M Butler, "The Making of a New Order: Millerism and the Origins of Seventh-Day Adventism," in The Disappointed: Millerism and Millenarianism in the Nineteenth Century, eds. Ronald Numbers and Jonathan M Butler (Bloomington/Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1987), 196.

[66] Susan Juster's arguments shed light on the question female leadership in the Movement. Juster examined the lives of eighteenth-century Baptists in Rhode Island, and found that they supported a relatively egalitarian church polity compared to the Puritans. Until late in the century, sexes took part in all major decisions of church governance. They participated in electing and dismissing pastors, admitting new members, and disciplining backsliders. After the First Great Awakening, Baptists and other evangelicals remained on the margins of New England religious life. Juster claims that the First Great Awakening exalted feminine forms and language over the masculine. The emotionalism, sensuality and porous sense of self that defined evangelicalism were viewed as typically female qualities to the eighteenth-century mind. Evangelical religion exalted the heart over the head, and removed the experience of grace from the bonds of law, placing it in the realm of affection. An emphasis on heart-felt faith replaced visible signs of wealth and status as indications of religious integrity. This new evangelical community was on the outside of the dominant religious culture, and converts "were like so many women constrained not by sex but by conditions in life." Women were at the centre of this religious experience because they shared a sense of marginality with dissenting brethren, versus the larger Puritan culture. See Susan Juster, Disorderly Women: Sexual Politics and Evangelicalism in Revolutionary New England (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1994), 4-6.

[67]See for example, Era, 21 April 1897; 11 January 1899; 22 March 1899; 21 May 1899; 12 July 1899; 9 August 1899; 1 November 1899.

[68]Ibid., 9 August 1899.

[69]Cook, "Through Sunshine and Shadow," 76-153.

[70]Era, 13 June 1900, 21 May 1899.

[71]Era, 10 February 1897.

[72]UCCA/VUA, Minutes of the General Conference of the Holiness Movement Church of Canada (1899-1958), fonds 533, 95.065C;/MR, 25 November 1899, 53.

[73]Ibid., 12 May 1910, 122; 1913, 155-7.

[74] Helen G Hobbs, "'What She Could': Women in the Gospel Workers Church, 1902-1955," in Changing Roles of Women within the Christian Church in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1995), 207-12; Era, 21 April 1897.

[75]Airhart, 123-141. It is true that Holiness was a reaction against this new intellectual and social consensus. However, Airhart's claim that Methodism was transformed with very little opposition must be revised. My evidence suggests that these changes were accompanied by a great deal of dissent.

[76]Ibid., 134-135; Richard Allen, The Social Passion: Religion and Social Reform in Canada 1914-1928 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).

[77]Ronald G Sawatsky, "'Looking for that Blessed Hope,' The Roots of Fundamentalism in Canada" (Ph.D. diss., University of Toronto, 1984). See also Weber, Living in the Shadow of the Second Coming, and Sandeen, The Roots of Fundamentalism.

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Conclusion

Since the publication of SD Clark's <u>Church and Sect in Canada</u> in 1948, historians have largely ignored the contribution of Dissent, in its variety of forms, to the political and cultural life of ninteenth-century central Canada. Indeed, Clark's monumental study prepared the way for future historians' assessments of Dissent's role by characterizing the "sect" as the product of a socially primitive frontier. Unlike churches, which were activist and committed to mature economic and social development, sects were essentially "otherworldly" – bound up with narrow theological and eschatalogical concerns, and hence both socially insular and politically indifferent. In addition to providing the rationale for historians to ignore Dissent's significant contribution to Canadian political life, Clark's legacy has also fostered a tendency to equate Upper Canadian Dissent with Methodism. While this thesis has not contested the centrality of Methodism in the cultural development of Upper Canada, is has sought to understand the specific ways in which a variety of Dissenters – more specifically, the Quakers, Children of Peace, Disciples of Christ, Millerites and the Holiness Movement Church – contributed to the societal dialogue in the areas of politics, gender, family and cultural formation. As a result, it has discovered a much greater propensity for religious diversity than has been implied by the recent historiography.

From the late eighteenth to the mid-nineteenth century, Dissenters were forced to grapple with the social and political disabilities thrust upon them by the Constitution of 1791, which made provisions for an established Protestant church to act as the guarantor of public loyalty and order. Until the 1840s, when the links between church and state gradually began to be dismantled, Upper Canadian establishmentarianism, with its distinctly religious conception of human affairs functioned as an "official" culture. This culture best represented the ideals and aspirations of the colony's tory elite: hierarchy, attendance to the duties of one's station, and deference to one's social

superiors were ordained by God as the best means of achieving the common good. In Upper

Canada, this system entailed significant limitations on democratic freedoms and religious toleration

which, contrary to Clark's view, assisted in Dissent's manifest politicization, under Reform's broad

banner. In short, during this period, the alliance of Protestant Dissent and Reform was fashioned as

a more pluralistic, reverse image of the Upper Canadian Church-State.

Because there were many varieties of Dissent, however, no one religious body could speak

as the definitive voice of Reform. Indeed, this thesis teaches us the necessity of examining the

political contributions of a wide range of Dissent in order to fully grasp the nature of efforts to

reform the Constitution, and to thereby create viable alternatives to establishmentarianism. During

the 1820s and 30s, the Davidite ideal of monarchical republicanism sought to preserve the current

form of government, while infusing it with a distinctly democratic conception of political virtue.

All those who reaped the rewards of ancien regime society – the colonial "gentry," its educated

gentlemen, and especially the corrupt priests of the Church of England would be cast down from

their positions of political authority, while godly individuals of various denominations would assist

a Christ-like "Patriot King" in safeguarding democratic liberties and in championing the cause of

the oppressed. Willson drew upon eighteenth-century re-interpretations of the indefeasible right of

kings in combination with Paineite concepts of the divine right of "the people" in formulating his

commitment to political reform. Davidite leaders' links to William Lyon Mackenzie in the 1830s,

in addition to the fact that several of its members participated in the Rebellion of 1837 highlights

the close relationship between religious and political radicalism in Upper Canada. This affinity

continued to be expressed in the 1840s and 50s: in the context of establishmentarianism's decline,

and the rise of a secular state, the Disciples of Christ contributed to the articulation of Clear Grit

ideals in Canada West, based on the values of democratized Christianity and radical liberalism.

They believed that the complete separation of church and state would result in the true

Christianization of government, as ordinary, virtuous and knowledgeable individuals, committed to

reform according to New Testament standards entered political life in defence of the common good. Moreover, my findings on the Disciples of Christ suggest that after the War of 1812 and the decrease in American immigration to Upper Canada, "radical Dissent" continued to be nourished by British sources. Contrary to the commonly held view, the effects of British immigration after 1815 were not entirely conservative.

Although different, these two approaches to Constitutional reform were united by several beliefs which formed the core of Dissenting culture. These included a passionate defence of Reformation values, most particularly liberty of conscience, the priesthood of all believers, sola scriptura or alternatively mystical knowledge of God's will. These values nourished Dissent's defense of democratic Christian principles in opposition to establishmentarian culture by emphasizing the superiority of independence over submission, of egalitarianism over hierarchy, and of vernacular over educated authority. Dissenters were united by a rejection of ecclesiasticism and its manifold adulterations of the truth in another, related sense. The Churches of England and Scotland, in addition to other churches which shared their ecclesiastical pretensions, were compared with the Church of Rome, the very model of formalism, corruption and licentiousness. In articulating their commitment to democratic Christianity, Dissenters relied on a version of history which allied them with religious outsiders of centuries past, who had been persecuted by the established churches due to matters of conscience. The equation of sin in the forms of greed, unreason and indulgence in bodily pleasures, with ecclesiastical pretension was crucial to the Dissenting mind-set for the entire nineteenth century, persisting far beyond establishmentarianism's demise, and recurring with renewed vigour in Hornerite criticisms of the Methodist Church.

Dissent was not only constructed in opposition to establishmentarianism. Indeed, during the 1840s and 50s, as the links between church and state were dismantled in favour of more voluntarist arrangements, Dissent shifted its focus from primarily political to socio-economic concerns, fashioned partially in response to the attempts of Methodism and other mainlines

Protestant denominations to assume several of the attitudes and prerogatives of the old established churches. Moreover, "New Dissenters" such as the Millerites and the Holiness Movement Church criticized the tendency of these self-styled religious establishments to articulate the concerns of a rising and later consolidating middle class. Despite the socio-economic focus of such groups, they were never, as Clark suggests, entirely apolitical. Even the Millerites, whose sights were fixed on the Second Advent near protested Canadian Wesleyan Methodism's accommodation of the tories, the church's rejection of the radical voluntarist option, and its acceptance of government patronage during the 1830s and 40s. Similarly, the Hornerites' fin de siecle critique of middle-class Methodist culture functioned as a religious counterpart to the upsurge in political populism in late nineteenth-century Ontario.

In addition to furthering our understanding of the nature and appeal of "New Dissent," this thesis sheds light on the ways in which the Dissenting "margins" helped mainline faiths to develop a new cultural consensus befitting the age of voluntarism. This was particularly the case with Millerism which elite Methodists used as a negative referent – a dangerous example of religion run amok. Despite Millerism's appeal to several traditional evangelical verities, Methodist elites attempted to discredit the character of its adherents by depicting them as ignorant, lazy and unbalanced. This assault on Millerites' intellectual and moral qualities masked a deeper discomfort with the centrifugal effects of the movement's defense of democratic Christianity, in addition to its rejection of the power of human agency to effect social and spiritual progress. Methodism's victorious battle versus Millerism was central to the church's ability to express, in precise terms, its support of Victorian liberalism's essential cultural elements, and to underscore its commitment to higher education and social leadership. Later in the century, Methodism's engagement with Hornerite Holiness acted as the catalyst for the former's rejection of traditional revivalism's "enthusiastic" style, and its increasing propensity to support a gradualist approach to conversion

and entire sanctification. The result was the creation of a new, elite consensus that reflected the style and aspirations of an increasingly sophisticated middle class.

This thesis further illuminates the ways in which Dissenting denominations – the Quakers, Children of Peace and the Holiness Movement Church in particular – drew upon their respective faiths in articulating and constructing gender roles and family relations contrary to those advocated by the larger culture. My study of the Quakers and Children of Peace underscores the persistence of early-modern modes of social organization in Upper Canada until mid-century. Within these denominations, family, faith and community were closely intertwined, moral values held greater weight than economic considerations, and individuals were encouraged to sacrifice personal desires for the collective good. Moreover, child-rearing was approached as a sacred, public trust, a duty that went beyond the particular connections between biological parent and child to embrace the entire community. In addition, this study demonstrates the irrelevance of separate spheres ideology amongst the members of these rural, pioneering denominations. Although both groups divided labour according to sex, male and female spheres of activity overlapped to a significant degree. In its early period of development, the Society of Friends gave formal recognition to the role that mothers played in nurturing godly offspring by creating a set of offices which guaranteed women's authority within the sect, most notably with regard to proposals of marriage, and enforcement of the discipline. Despite the fact that women generally worked within separate business meetings, a number of factors prevented both the physical separation of the sexes, and the bifurcation of gender attributes, including the interdependent nature of the rural family economy, women's control over men as keepers of the marriage testimony, and the practice of joint cooperation in prosecuting disciplinary infractions. Within the Children of Peace, the situation was more complex. Indeed, the courtship and marriage crisis of the 1830s illustrates the tensions between the sect's belief in individualistic piety and the theoretical equality of the sexes on the one hand, and its commitment to communitarianism and Willson's role as sect patriarch on the other. For years, Willson

attempted to reconcile these disparate elements through his vision of monarchical republicanism, and by comparing his role within the sectarian community to that of a divinely appointed king, charged with protecting the welfare and liberties of his subjects. However, by the 1830s, the Davidite moral economy was challenged by young adults' increasing economic independence, and a rising propensity to place their own desires in courtship and marriage above the interests of the larger community. This led Willson and the elders to strengthen patriarchal controls which ultimately reduced women's political authority within the sect. Later in the century, the Holiness Movement Church challenged both Methodist limitations on female preaching, and the central assumptions of separate spheres ideology by putting forth the view that women's spiritual equality was rooted in the experience of Christian perfection. Female preachers were viewed as integral to the perpetuation of the religious community, however the limits of reality made it difficult to bring this ideal to fruition: women evangelists were forced to grapple with a number of impediments which their male counterparts did not experience. Although each of the three groups considered tended to base claims of female equality on the impact of the Spirit on a genderless, human soul, this study underscores the difficulty in drawing simple parallels between Dissent, and either proto-feminism and gender oppression. Additionally, it illustrates the difficulty of forming generalizations about gender roles without taking into consideration the different ways they were moulded by faith, in addition to other variables such as class, race, and ethnicity.

This thesis has illustrated that Dissent was a common characteristic of nineteenth-century central Canada, a phenomenon that contrary to SD Clark's assertions, operated outside of the boundaries of specific institutions to engage the larger society. In pushing the historical consideration of Canadian Protestantism beyond the Anglican/Methodist paradigm, it has furthered our awareness of how some of the era's most controversial political questions were imagined and resolved, how notions of gender and family were both envisioned and put into operation in day-to-day life, and how cultural beliefs and practices were challenged and modified. In so doing, it

speaks to the necessity of further investigation of Dissent' manifold incarnations as a means of achieving a more sophisticated understanding of Canada's nineteenth-century past.

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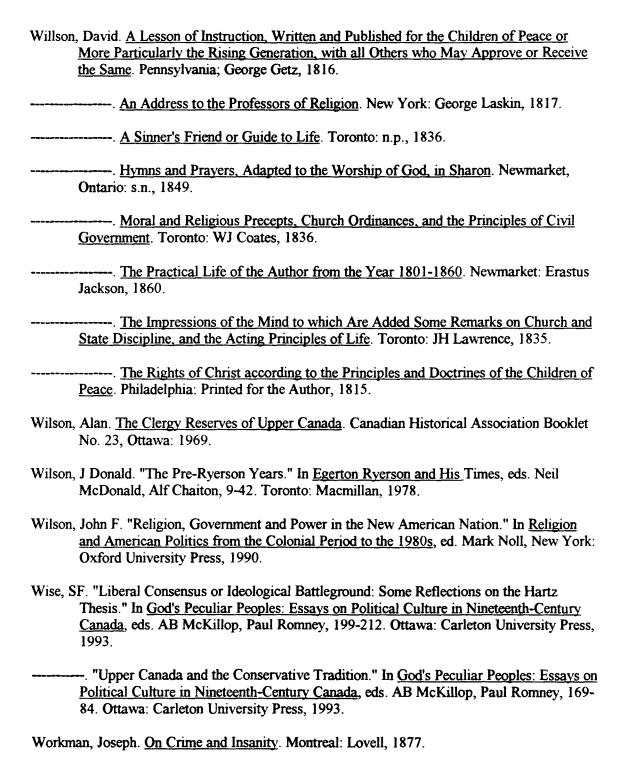Ralph C Horner, Evangelist: Reminiscence from His Own Pen. Brockville, Ontario: n.p., n.d.

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