

**"OUT AND OUT FOR THE LORD"  
JAMES EUSTACE PURDIE  
AN EARLY ANGLICAN PENTECOSTAL**

TORONTO SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

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BY

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## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to one who sat at the feet of James Eustace Purdie imbibing the Gospel which is the "power of God to salvation for every one believeth" and then faithfully committed that Gospel to me in his lectures on Paul's Epistle to the Romans,

Dr. Charles A. Ratz

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## INTRODUCTION

During an interview conducted in 1973, James Eustace Purdie (1880-1977), reflecting back some seventy years to his student days at Wycliffe College in Toronto, commented concerning a Miss Emma Naftel, the head deaconess in charge of the young ladies who attended Wycliffe College,

She was, oh she was a regular Puritan you know. . . , very deeply spiritual, Keswick type, you know. Oh she was out and out for the Lord.<sup>1</sup>

The importance of being "out and out for the Lord" was on Purdie's mind as he and Ronald Kydd toured the Lutheran Seminary building in Saskatoon that was to become Central Pentecostal College. As they entered the library, Purdie asked what Dr. Kydd felt was his key question regarding the spirituality of the building's former occupants: "Are they out and outers?" Dr. Kydd reports he heard Purdie use the phrase many times and he is certain Purdie would have considered himself an "out and outer for the Lord."<sup>2</sup> This phrase encapsulates the spirituality of Pentecostals both today and in 1925 when Purdie joined the newly formed Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC).

Many of the early Pentecostals were such "out and outers" for the Lord that they ended up as "come-outers," who were either rejected by their church leaders or felt the need to separate themselves from the churches to which they belonged when they received the Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Spirit.<sup>3</sup> This was true even though in some cases the churches they left were solidly evangelical, such as those in the holiness tradition or the Mennonite Brethren

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<sup>1</sup> J.E. Purdie, interview by Gordon Franklin, 1973, 21 (hereafter, Franklin). In the same interview Purdie says of the Honourable Samuel H. Blake, brother of the Premier of Ontario, "Oh he was a wonderful Christian, you know. He was an out and out, you know." 27, 28.

<sup>2</sup> Ronald Kydd, interview by author, 25 August 1994.

<sup>3</sup> The expression "baptism of the Holy Spirit" is traditionally understood among Pentecostals as an experience of empowering received subsequent to regeneration and evidenced by glossalalia.

in Christ. Yet one "out and outer" felt no need to reject his Anglican roots after he was welcomed into the PAOC and given a position of considerable influence as the founder of its first Bible College.

This thesis will argue that Purdie's spirituality was the key to his acceptance into Pentecostal ranks even though, in some respects, it would seem his non-sectarian vision of Pentecostalism differed from that of other early Pentecostals.<sup>4</sup> I will compare Purdie's spirituality with that of other early Pentecostals in an effort to demonstrate certain commonalities in three areas: *ways of articulating spiritual experiences, stated or implied priorities for the Christian life, and practices of ministry.* His acceptance as a Pentecostal on the basis of his spirituality suggests that early Pentecostalism shared some common ground with the evangelical Anglican spirituality of Purdie's time. An examination of his spirituality, therefore, provides an interesting starting point for the attempt to understand the relationship of Canadian Pentecostalism to the religious context out of which it emerged.

The discussion will be divided into five chapters. Chapter 1 will look at Purdie's early life, his days at Wycliffe College and his early ministry as an evangelical Anglican priest up to 1925 when he accepted the invitation to found Canada's first Pentecostal Bible college in Winnipeg. Chapter 2 will sketch the historiography of Pentecostalism in North America and suggest that Purdie is of interest because his case does not fit the explanation given by some historians as to why people joined the Pentecostal movement. Purdie was also unique compared to many of his Pentecostals colleagues because unlike them, he did not repudiate his parent tradition. Still he was received into

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<sup>4</sup> Brian Ross has written, "Most observers would classify Pentecostalism as a sectarian group." He concludes, "It is at least possible to assert that in 1925 the PAOC was clearly a sectarian operation." Brian Robert Ross, "The Emergence of Theological Education within the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada" (M.A. thesis, Knox College, 1971), 33, 116.

their ranks and given an important role in shaping its future leaders. Chapter 3 will place Purdie in the context of nineteenth-century Protestantism by describing his evangelical Anglican background while Chapter 4 will describe the holiness movement out of which a number of Pentecostal leaders emerged. Chapter 5 will examine Purdie's ways of articulating spiritual experiences, stated priorities for the Christian life and practices of ministry and compare these to some early Canadian Pentecostal leaders in an attempt to demonstrate commonalities. The Conclusion will discuss some of the ways Canadian Pentecostalism stands in continuity with aspects of evangelical spirituality in Canada despite the sense of discontinuity experienced by many of its early adherents.



## CHAPTER 1 BIOGRAPHICAL BACKGROUND

### Early Life (1880-1904)

On June 9, 1880, Jane Bovely Purdie (nee Douse, 1847-1928) gave birth to her first of five children, James Eustace. Some ninety-seven years later, a second son, Victor Purdie recounted his mother's reaction when presented with her first-born: "The first time our mother held Eustace in her arms her prayer was, 'O God, I consecrate this child to Thee.'"<sup>5</sup>

Both of Purdie's grandfathers had been prominent citizens of Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island. His maternal grandfather, Captain William Douse (1800-1864), had held a Conservative seat in the Provincial Legislature for twenty-seven years. He owned a number of shipbuilding yards and served as an agent for Lord Selkirk. James Purdie, Sr. (1797-1869), his paternal grandfather, had been a merchant and owned the largest department store in Charlottetown.

James Thomas Purdie, Jr. (1843-1932), Eustace's father, followed his father in the merchant business in Charlottetown and for a time in San Francisco, California. He and his wife returned to Charlottetown from California just three weeks before Eustace was born. Evidently, James Thomas was not as successful in business as his father had been. In Charlottetown he worked as a salesman and bookkeeper in a hardware store. He was deeply involved in the Presbyterian Church where he served as an elder for thirty-eight years.

Jane, Eustace's mother, came from a family of fourteen children. She had been raised in St. Paul's Anglican Church in Charlottetown, the first Anglican

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<sup>5</sup> W. Victor Purdie to Ronald Kydd, 29 June 1977.

church on the Island. Eustace described St. Paul's as "the Reformed Protestant church" and commented approvingly that its services were "very, very plain."<sup>6</sup> He described his mother as "a real out and out Reformed Protestant of the Reformed faith."<sup>7</sup>

Eustace grew up in the house where his mother had been born, a magnificent seventeen-room mansion overlooking the Charlottetown harbour. He was an active boy who enjoyed a wide variety of sports. In his teens, his greatest joy was to sail the family's small ten-ton schooner, *Bertha*, around the Island to visit the lobster factories. Despite his active and carefree youth, even as a young child Purdie sensed a calling to the ministry. His brother Arnold recalls him gathering together his friends and siblings to play church, on one occasion appropriating the cloth from an old umbrella and wearing it as a cassock while he conducted the "service."<sup>8</sup>

Purdie and his mother attended St. Peter's, Charlottetown's high Anglican congregation, and he apparently worshipped there until his conversion. He was taught for five years by the clergy at St. Peter's Day School, where the quality of the teaching was reputed to be excellent.<sup>9</sup> He completed his education up to the tenth grade at the West Kent School. Purdie then studied Latin, Hebrew and Greek with two retired ministers.

Purdie's conversion came about in March of 1899 at age nineteen through the influence of his mother's oldest sister who lived next door. She was an avid personal evangelist who taught Purdie the way of salvation during his

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6 Franklin, 3.

7 Ibid., 3.

8 W. Victor Purdie to Ronald Kydd, 29 June 1977.

9 St. Peter's was founded in 1869 as the Cathedral of the Island but without a bishop. It was built by Anglicans favourable to the Tractarian Movement who "were restless under the extreme conservatism of St. Paul's." Spencer Ervin, *The Political and Ecclesiastical History of the Anglican Church in Canada* (Ambler, PA: Trinity Press, 1967), 153.

frequent visits. She shared gospel tracts and copies of the holiness magazine, *A Guide to Holiness*, with her nephew.<sup>10</sup> Purdie was particularly impressed with the testimonies published in this magazine: "There [was] a great deal in that magazine about the fire of God and how to get the fire into your soul so that you could get it into others."<sup>11</sup>

Inspired by these stories, immediately upon his conversion Purdie went out and told people he met that he had found Jesus. Not long after, he was invited to address a group of young people who often gathered in a home after playing ball in Watchford Square. When Purdie arrived he found sixty young people packed into the house. After he read the Scriptures and said, "Let us pray," he recalled hearing the thump of knees hitting the floor all over the house.<sup>12</sup> Purdie was soon preaching in a variety of local churches and other religious gatherings.

Purdie had farmed with his uncle for three years after leaving school in 1886. On his application to Wycliffe College, he said he had thought this was his calling in life until his conversion experience. Following his conversion, Purdie reported, "The call of the ministry began to impress upon me [sic]. I had to preach the gospel or die."<sup>13</sup> Through the influence of Leo Williams, the rector of St. Paul's and himself a Wycliffe graduate, Purdie concluded that Wycliffe was the place to go for his theological education. Where else in Canada could an ardent young Anglican find such a "strong, militant, Protestant evangelical centre"?<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The *Guide to Holiness* was edited by the prominent American holiness leader, Phoebe Palmer from 1863 until her death in 1874. Her husband, Walter Palmer, and others carried on publication until 1901. Charles E. White, *The Beauty of Holiness* (Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1986), 91-99.

<sup>11</sup> Franklin, 69.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 9.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 13.

### Wycliffe College (1902-1907)

In October 1902 James Eustace Purdie found himself standing on the steps of Wycliffe College in Toronto. Wycliffe had been born in 1877 out of the High Church/Low Church controversies that disturbed the diocese of Toronto in the last half of the nineteenth century. In Purdie's view, Wycliffe was a deeply spiritual institution that had been "born in a prayer meeting" through the efforts of a number of prominent Toronto Anglicans who were "born from above," men who "mean business for God."<sup>15</sup> In his words it was "a marked institution" and "everyone [that] came out of it was a marked man."<sup>16</sup>

In his estimation, the school was based upon two principles: evangelicalism and evangelization.<sup>17</sup> Years later, he noted that "Wycliffe College was the strongest centre of Reformed Theology and aggressive Evangelical Protestantism and evangelistic zeal for God."<sup>18</sup> Its impact was felt in all of Canada as well as other parts of the world. He appreciated the training he received not only because it was scholarly, but also because "Wycliffe was strong on separation from the world. . . . It was a really clean, separated place."<sup>19</sup> On another occasion he noted, "The Principal and other members of the [Wycliffe] faculty were all champions of the Bible and the victorious life of the believer."<sup>20</sup>

Purdie's summers were spent in ministry in Albertson, P.E.I. (1903) and the vicinity of Neepawa, Manitoba (1904-1906). Two events from his summer

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 9; J.E. Purdie, "The Anglican Church in Canada", TMs, n.p., n.d. Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Archives, Toronto (hereafter PACAT), 18.

<sup>16</sup> Franklin, 6.

<sup>17</sup> Purdie makes a similar statement regarding early Methodism commenting it was "full of Evangelical and evangelistic fire," "The Anglican Church in Canada," 9.

<sup>18</sup> Purdie, "The Anglican Church in Canada," 19.

<sup>19</sup> Franklin, 23.

<sup>20</sup> *The Portal*, Annual Yearbook of Western Pentecostal College (1947), 6.

ministry in Western Canada stand out as indicative of his early affinities with Pentecostalism. In 1904, he worked as a student missionary in rural Manitoba with financial support provided by the Diocese of Rupert's Land. At a small place called Freeland, Purdie was unable to use the school house for services so he obtained permission to use an old granary. After several days of cleaning up, he made seats using planks and sections of logs and a simple pulpit. He held Thursday evening prayer meetings in the building which was often packed to its modest capacity of thirty-five with a variety of Presbyterians, Methodists, Baptists and Anglicans. He comments, "It was a purely informal service, you might call it Pentecostal. . . . It was even freer than Calvary Temple's Wednesday night service."<sup>21</sup> This comment suggests Purdie understood his approach to at least some church services as having Pentecostal features.

The second incident took place the following year near Wellwood, Manitoba. One Sunday morning, just as he was preparing to leave for a service, a man drove up and told Purdie that a Mrs. Alexander who lived nearby was close to death. He had already ordered her coffin. Purdie rushed to the house, got everyone down on their knees and then laid hands on the woman "in the name of the Lord Jesus."<sup>22</sup> Her condition seemed to improve immediately. He returned that evening to find her sitting up in bed laughing and talking to visitors. The healing "had a great effect on the . . . family and the people of the community."<sup>23</sup> Purdie understood this as "a great help to a man who hadn't graduated and was endeavouring to do his best going from house to house . . . telling out the story of the gospel."<sup>24</sup> The concept underlying Purdie's

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<sup>21</sup> Franklin, 24. Calvary Temple is the largest PAOC church in Winnipeg.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 36.

interpretation of the event is not dissimilar to the Pentecostal notion of signs and wonders, often in the form of physical healing, as validating and enhancing one's evangelistic ministry.

Purdie spent a total of five years attending Wycliffe, graduating in late April 1907. Two weeks earlier he had been ordained a priest on behalf of the Diocese of Rupert's Land by Bishop William Day Reeve of the Diocese of MacKenzie River at the Church of the Redeemer in Toronto. He returned to Manitoba following his graduation after a brief trip home to P.E.I. to see his family.

There can be little doubt that in Purdie's mind, his time at Wycliffe had been both formative and beneficial. He noted in an autobiographical article in 1938 that the Wycliffe faculty were "champions of the Evangelical truths of the Bible and the Reformed faith of the Reformation," but more particularly he pays them what would seem to have been his highest compliment when he writes they were "scholarly men who were out and out for God."<sup>25</sup>

### **Anglican Ministry (1907-1925)**

Purdie spend a little over a year pastoring three small charges in rural Manitoba in 1907 and 1908.<sup>26</sup> In September 1908 he was called by Rev. R.P. McKim to assist him in St. Luke's Anglican Church, a congregation of 900 in Saint John, New Brunswick. Both the church and the Rector were well suited to Purdie's aggressive understanding of evangelicalism. He describes McKim as "one of the best soul-winners you'd ever want to meet."<sup>27</sup> In addition to their regular work of personal and visitation evangelism, McKim and Purdie held open

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<sup>25</sup> Purdie, "Principal of the Western Bible College for 13 Years," *The Pentecostal Testimony* [hereafter *PT*], May 1938, 17.

<sup>26</sup> Franklin, 36, 37.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

air meetings on the church lawn in the summer following the Sunday evening service. There was a large platform with a choir and a magic lantern to throw Bible pictures up on a sheet stretched over the side of the church. The pictures were "well adapted to the evangelistic appeal."<sup>28</sup> Purdie reported that the crowds ranged from 250 to five thousand people.<sup>29</sup> Following the evangelistic message, opportunity was provided for enquirers to come into the prayer room for assistance.

Purdie was an aggressive personal evangelist. He described one occasion when he felt led to enter a store to share the gospel. The lady behind the counter was busy with a customer so she directed Purdie to a room in the back. There Purdie met the woman's daughter and after five minutes of casual conversation, he read some "striking" verses from the Gospel of John and then spoke to her about receiving Christ:

Well, I put it to her so strongly that she just trembled. . . She was face to face with it. Well, I said, I was terribly busy and I guess I better go [sic]. 'Oh, oh, no,' I can just hear her voice, 'Oh, no, don't go yet, don't go yet till we go further with this.' 'Well,' I said, 'you'll have to take action on this. I'm presenting to you salvation through the blood and righteousness of Christ to be taken by faith, so,' I said, 'you'd better make up your mind.' So she broke down and accepted Christ as her Saviour.<sup>30</sup>

Purdie eagerly participated in other evangelistic events while in Saint John including a memorable crusade in November 1910 with Reuben Archer Torrey (1856-1928) whom Purdie met at this time and a two-week mission in St. Luke's Church conducted by John Andrew Richardson (1868-1938), the Bishop of Fredericton whom Purdie described as "a strong evangelistic preacher."<sup>31</sup> The Bishop's mission was well attended with crowds of up to one thousand crowding

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28 Ibid., 38.

29 Ibid., 38; W. Victor Purdie to Ronald Kydd, 29 June 1977.

30 Franklin, 40.

31 Ibid., 42.

into St. Luke's and as many as 250 seeking salvation in the prayer room at the conclusion of the service.<sup>32</sup> Purdie also conducted evangelistic missions for other churches such as the one held over several evenings for Rev. A.H.F. Watkins, a fellow Wycliffe graduate stationed in Newcastle, N.B.

The evangelical and interdenominational character of Purdie's ministry is illustrated by a funeral service he conducted just outside of Saint John. Purdie and McKim took turns preaching each week at a smaller church about three miles out of the city. Through this congregation, Purdie learned of an "old infidel" who lived up the river and so he visited the man and led him to Christ. Shortly afterwards, the man died. He had requested that Purdie perform the funeral despite the fact that he was a Baptist as were most of the people in his community. After conducting the service which included "a pretty strong message on salvation," Purdie noted that the people "were so absolutely impressed with the plainness and the simplicity of that funeral service they said it was just like a Baptist service." The incident convinced the community to request an Anglican student minister to assist them the following summer.<sup>33</sup>

While ministering in Saint John, Purdie was married to Frances Emma Morrison of Brantford, Ontario, with whom he had maintained a lengthy correspondence. They had met at Wycliffe where Frances had attended classes with the other students of the Anglican Deaconess House. Purdie had spent three weeks in her home during his vacation when he pastored in Manitoba. They were married by Wycliffe's second Principal, Canon T.R. O'Meara in the college chapel on October 13, 1909. The Purdies had two children. Helen was born in Saint John in 1910. She married Dr. Earl E. Cairns who taught briefly with Purdie on the faculty at Western Bible College and spent the remainder of his

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 51, 52.



career as Professor of Church History at Wheaton College. Their son, J. Arnold Purdie, was born in 1913 in Campbellton, N.B. He became a minister with the Protestant Episcopal Church in the United States.

In the fall of 1911, Purdie's Bishop asked him to take charge of the parish in Campbellton in the northern part of the province on the Quebec border at the mouth of Chaleur Bay. The town had been almost completely destroyed by fire in July, 1910. Purdie set about organizing the congregation and soon had a rectory and a fine brick church that seated five hundred constructed. He continued his usual, "aggressive" visitation evangelism and soon the new building was full. Frances Purdie actively assisted her husband in his evangelistic visitation: "She'd have her Testament with her and every place . . . she went she talked salvation."<sup>34</sup> In addition to Sunday morning and evening services, Purdie held a public prayer meeting on Wednesday evenings, a cottage meeting on Thursday evenings during the winter in various locations and an unannounced "sacred meeting" on Tuesday nights at the rectory for intercessory prayer. Purdie attributed much of his success in Campbellton to the Tuesday evening prayer meeting.

Purdie's next parish was St. James in Saskatoon. True to his convictions, his first message preached on February 4, 1917, was strongly evangelistic. Four people left the church as a result. This did not concern Purdie because, as he put it, "for every man that left there were a half dozen that came in."<sup>35</sup> The church had dwindled to about twenty-five under the supply minister that had preceded Purdie. Within a short time chairs had to be put in the aisles to accommodate the expanding congregation. This growth was the result not only of his evangelistic visitation, but also of the outdoor evangelistic

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 58.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 62.

services he held on Thursday evenings on a street corner. Purdie said, "I just couldn't keep myself exempt from the aggressive outdoor work."<sup>36</sup> He developed a reputation in the community as the "hell fire preacher."<sup>37</sup> His services and prayer meetings attracted evangelicals from other denominations including Methodists and Plymouth Brethren.<sup>38</sup> Purdie had such well-known evangelicals in his pulpit as Presbyterian Dr. William Evans (1870-1950) of Moody Bible Institute who was considered one of the outstanding Bible teachers of the day and Baptist Roland Victor Bingham (1872-1942), founder of the Sudan Interior Mission (1898), Evangelical Publishers (1912), and the Canadian Keswick Conference (1924). Purdie gave strong support to cooperative evangelistic efforts among the Saskatoon churches such as the G. Campbell Morgan crusade held at Knox Presbyterian Church in 1918.<sup>39</sup>

Two aspects of Purdie's work in Saskatoon show affinities with Pentecostalism. The first was his strong emphasis upon the premillennial understanding of the second coming of Christ. The first year he was in the city, he preached a lengthy series on the subject. Since his sermon titles were published along with a brief synopsis on the church page in the local newspaper each week, this series caused something of a stir in the province.<sup>40</sup> In 1924, he read a detailed paper on Bible prophecy before the American Society of Prophetic Study.<sup>41</sup> The second aspect was the place he made for the ministry of women. Purdie claimed he had about a dozen women in the Saskatoon

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36 Ibid., 64, 65.

37 Ibid., 64.

38 Ibid., 65, 66.

39 Ibid., 77, 78.

40 Ibid., 76.

41 J.E. Purdie, "After the Thousand Years-What?" *Papers Read Before the American Society for Prophetic Study* (Philadelphia, PA: American Society for Prophetic Study, 1925): 4-15.

church that he could call upon to speak.<sup>42</sup> This willingness to allow women a place of public ministry was a distinctive feature of the holiness movement, the most significant precursor to the Pentecostal movement. It allowed a wide scope to the ministry of women as a result of the influence of leaders like Phoebe Palmer and Hannah Whitall Smith. This development was also related to the theology of the movement with its emphasis upon Spirit-empowered testimony.<sup>43</sup> Quaker evangelist Seth Cook Rees who frequently taught at God's Bible School in Cincinnati summed up the holiness view of the role of women in the church:

Nothing but jealousy, prejudice, bigotry, and a stingy love for bossing in men have prevented women's public recognition by the church. No church that is acquainted with the Holy Ghost will object to the public ministry of women.<sup>44</sup>

Purdie's first direct contact with Pentecostal people came in 1911 while in Campbellton.<sup>45</sup> An earlier account placed his first contact in 1912.<sup>46</sup> His own Pentecostal experience occurred in August 1919 in Saskatoon. At the insistence of an unidentified church member, Purdie agreed to meet a Mr. and Mrs. Crouch, Pentecostal evangelists from the United States who apparently had a background in the holiness movement. During a prayer meeting in the rectory, they laid hands on Purdie and he fell off his seat and started to speak in unknown tongues. Immediately he began to preach the Pentecostal experience in his church, although only a few members of the congregation received a similar experience. He also recounted his experience frequently and a number of

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<sup>42</sup> Franklin, 79.

<sup>43</sup> Melvin E. Dieter, *The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century* (Methuen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1980), 42.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 43, 44 citing Seth Cook Rees, *The Ideal Pentecostal Church* (Cincinnati: Revivalist Office, 1897), 41.

<sup>45</sup> Purdie, "My Own Pentecost," *PT*, June 1970, 9.

<sup>46</sup> J.E. Purdie, "Principal of the Western Pentecostal Bible College," *PT*, (May, 1938): 17.

individuals received the Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Spirit when he prayed for them.<sup>47</sup> Purdie's understanding of his Pentecostal experience will be discussed in the next chapter.

In 1923 Purdie was invited to hold a week of meetings in a prosperous congregation in Philadelphia that was searching for a pastor. It belonged to the Reformed Episcopal Church, an evangelical group that split from the Protestant Episcopal Church in 1873 over Tractarianism. Roland V. Bingham had recommended Purdie to the church. Out of the 200 applicants for the position, Purdie was invited to become their pastor. The church was very evangelical and strongly committed to missions. He did not feel he could preach his Pentecostal convictions there, however, because the congregation was so conservative. He enjoyed his ministry in Philadelphia because the people loved expository preaching with an emphasis on evangelical doctrine. Unfortunately, his stay there was brief. The extreme humidity of the climate took its toll on his health and he lost forty pounds. After only eighteen months, he resigned in 1924 and returned to Charlottetown where he was immediately approached by the rector of St. Paul's to look after the parish for six weeks in his absence. Purdie accepted and spent the time preaching Bible prophecy: "I gave them the whole panorama of the dispensational teachings on the second coming. [They] swallowed it like a cat taking milk."<sup>48</sup> He spent the next eighteen months speaking in other churches across the Island and supplying at St. John's Anglican Church in Milton just east of Charlottetown in the morning, an unnamed church at Rustico in the afternoon and Highfield Presbyterian in the evening.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Franklin, 70-75; J.E. Purdie, "My Own Pentecost," *PT*, June 1970, 8, 9.

<sup>48</sup> Franklin, 92.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 92.

In August 1925 Purdie received a letter from Robert E. McAlister, the General Secretary of the PAOC, informing him that he had been unanimously elected Principal of the Bible college the Assemblies wanted to start in Winnipeg. It is not entirely clear how the PAOC leaders who made this decision came to know enough about Purdie to entrust him with such a responsibility sight unseen. The most likely connection was through Robert's brother, Harvey McAlister (1892-1978), who visited Purdie and spoke in his church. The problem is in determining which church Purdie was pastoring when McAlister made his visit. In his interview, Purdie says it was in Saint John. But he also said that he was the *rector* of the church and when McAlister arrived, they were having a tarrying meeting with "Pentecostal glory . . . falling in the front room."<sup>50</sup> It would seem this was probably in Saskatoon at some point after August, 1919 when Purdie received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. In the first place, Purdie was not the *rector* in Saint John but the *curate* and in any case, the date seems far too early. Secondly, he described a number of "Pentecostal" experiences taking place in the rectory in Saskatoon once he had begun praying for others to receive the Pentecostal blessing.

When they did meet, Harvey McAlister had asked Purdie if he had ever thought of working in a college or an independent gospel church where he could have complete freedom to preach all his convictions which were evidently the same as McAlister's. Purdie's response is not recorded. Some time later, Harvey told Robert McAlister and George Chambers about Purdie and his ministry in Saskatoon. As far as Purdie could tell, this led to his appointment. The 1925 General Conference in Winnipeg, acting upon recommendations from the Eastern and Western District Conferences, decided to establish a Bible school

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 94.

in that city. The Minutes recorded the appointment of five "faculty" members: Dr. H. Geddes, Brother Schwab, G.A. Chambers, A.G. Ward and R.E. McAlister."<sup>51</sup> In interviews with PAOC leaders, Brain Ross was assured that these minutes were in error and should instead record the unanimous appointment of Purdie as Principal.<sup>52</sup> Perhaps the error was in the word "faculty." Purdie recalled that both Geddes and Schwab were members of the "committee" in Winnipeg formed to assist in the establishment of the College.<sup>53</sup> Perhaps the vote to install Purdie as Principal was taken by the five members of this committee composed of two local members and the three key national leaders, Chambers, McAlister and Ward, at some point during the conference.<sup>54</sup> Whatever the details were, Purdie took two months before he accepted the offer. He then travelled to London to meet McAlister, stopped in Toronto where he was able to recruit a faculty member and then arrived in Winnipeg in October to begin the work of starting the first Pentecostal Bible school in Canada. This work would occupy him almost exclusively for the next quarter of a century.

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<sup>51</sup> Minutes of the General Conference of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, 14, 15, 17 August 1925.

<sup>52</sup> Ross, "Emergence," 65 n 8.

<sup>53</sup> Franklin, 95. D.N. Buntain, pastor of the Winnipeg church that was to house the college, was also part of the committee according to Purdie.

<sup>54</sup> It is current practice for duly appointed conference committees to hold sessions during the period of the conference when all the members are gathered in the conference city.

## CHAPTER 2

### PURDIE'S SIGNIFICANCE

#### Historiographical Background

James Eustace Purdie's involvement with early Pentecostalism as presented in the previous chapter raises some questions about the way historians have tended to see the movement's development. Traditionally the rise of Pentecostalism has been explained among many historians by the so called "deprivation thesis."<sup>55</sup> This approach views the movement as a reaction to the social upheavals produced by industrialization, urbanization and immigration in North America in the early decades of the twentieth century. These phenomena, it is argued, produced a mass of rootless individuals who had little share in the material prosperity, educational opportunities or social mobility enjoyed by the middle class. Scholars have suggested that the growing sophistication of the established Protestant denominations and the decline of their evangelistic fervor rendered them ineffective in meeting the needs of this group of people.

It is my contention that by examining an individual like J. Eustace Purdie, the shallowness of such a view can be exposed and an attempt made to understand the Pentecostal movement not merely as a instrument of social integration, but as a religious phenomenon that developed out of the existing religious landscape in Canada at the turn of the century. This chapter will review a number of influential interpretations of Pentecostalism in general and its Canadian expressions in particular. The three assumptions underlying

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<sup>55</sup> Pentecostal historian Grant Wacker has written: "The conviction that Pentecostalism is best accounted for as a functional adaptation to social disorganization or real or perceived cultural deprivation is nearly universal in scholarly studies of the movement." Grant Wacker, review of *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism* by Robert Maps Anderson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979) In *Pneuma, The Journal of the Society for Pentecostal Studies* 4 (Fall, 1982): 56, 57.

my exposition of Pentecostalism's religious links with other Christian groups, as illustrated by the case of J.E. Purdie, will then be detailed.

Robert Anderson's *Vision of the Disinherited* is perhaps the best example of the deprivation thesis of Pentecostal origins applied to the American scene.<sup>56</sup> In his view, Pentecostalism arose as a functional adaptation by working class individuals to the anxieties produced by their economic, social and cultural deprivation. Rather than take the path of protest against the social system that resulted in their deprivation, Pentecostals took refuge in ecstatic religious experience, preferring a "religious resolution that was almost wholly other-worldly, symbolic, and psycho-therapeutic."<sup>57</sup>

Anderson is one of a number of scholars who have interpreted Pentecostalism in terms of the deprivation theory. Two earlier significant studies by Nils Bloch-Hoell and John T. Nichol set forth the same thesis with some variations.<sup>58</sup> Bloch-Hoell writes:

When the Pentecostal Movement came into being a great deal of the U.S.A. must have been spiritually and socially rootless. Three mutually connected elements converged to bring this about: the mass immigration, the industrialization and the enormous growth of the cities at the expense of the agrarian districts.<sup>59</sup>

He views Pentecostalism as an attempt to counteract the trends of secularization and modernism in the churches by looking to supernatural "manifestations of divinity" that were believed to remove all intellectual challenges to the Christian faith:

This solution purported to afford a sensible, verifiable proof of God's existence and the same time [sic], to serve as a means of revival,

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<sup>56</sup> Anderson. Grant Wacker calls Anderson's book, "the central landmark in the historiography of American Pentecostalism." Wacker review of Anderson, 54.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid., 229. Cf. 512, 223-240.

<sup>58</sup> Nils Bloch-Hoell, *The Pentecostal Movement* (Oslo: Universitetsforlaget, 1964); John T. Nichol, *Pentecostalism* (New York: Harper and Row, 1966).

<sup>59</sup> Bloch-Hoell, 9.



gathering in the masses to the Kingdom of God in an eschatological harvest.<sup>60</sup>

Block-Hoell suggests that a tendency toward interconfessional co-operation made it easier for individuals to cross denominational barriers to join the new movement. Purdie's ministry reflects this interconfessional trend from its very inception.<sup>61</sup>

Nichol's adaptation of the deprivation thesis is reflected in his contention that Pentecostalism provided a valuable outlet for emotional release for a certain segment of society through its spontaneous and unrestricted worship forms:

At a Pentecostal meeting a person could, if he wished, clap his hands, tap his feet, cry, pray audibly, speak forth in tongues if he "felt the Spirit's leading," dance, or exhort his brethren during the testimony meeting.<sup>62</sup>

He suggests that such activities as dancing, shouting, clapping, "jazzy" singing and playing (normally shunned due to their association with the worldly amusements of the theatre and the dance hall) were deemed acceptable in Pentecostal services because they were "Spirit-directed."<sup>63</sup>

Among the list of works on Pentecostalism, the landmark study of Walter Hollenweger is particularly notable for its international scope and scholarly yet irenic tone.<sup>64</sup> It adopts the deprivation thesis as its basic stance but presents it in a positive light. Hollenweger believes the religious experience of the early Pentecostals served a valuable social function. He does, however,

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<sup>60</sup> Ibid., 12.

<sup>61</sup> Franklin, 6.

<sup>62</sup> Nichol, 65.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 65.

<sup>64</sup> Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1972).

reject the attempt to explain Pentecostalism solely in such terms particularly with reference to the leaders of the movement.<sup>65</sup>

Church historian Martin Marty proposes that unlike fundamentalism, which represented a response to modernity by means of a Baconian rationalism over against modernism's naturalistic rationalism, Pentecostalism was a form of "emergent irrationalism" that deliberately looked back to "long-buried models of primitive Christian ecstasy and enthusiasm."<sup>66</sup> He believes that because of their consciously restorationist outlook, the early Pentecostals viewed the major denominations as "modernist compromisers or eroders of the faith." As a result, they encouraged people to "come out from among them" and join their ranks.<sup>67</sup>

James E. Purdie, as a well-educated and successful minister of an historic denomination, does not fit these descriptions of the typical early Pentecostal. In this regard, he is not unique since a number of early Canadian Pentecostal leaders came from "respectable" backgrounds. Pentecostalism drew the support of lay persons like Andrew Harvey Argue (1868-1959), who was said to have been the most successful real estate salesman in the city of Winnipeg, as well as clergy such as Methodist Daniel Newton Buntain (1888-1955) and Presbyterian Thomas Thompson Latta (1886-1969).<sup>68</sup>

Purdie also provides an interesting exception to the scenario of Pentecostals rejecting the Christian bodies from which they came. He had nothing but the greatest respect for the Anglican Church throughout his long

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 457-496.

<sup>66</sup> Martin E. Marty, *Modern American Religion*, Vol. 1, *The Irony of It All, 1893-1919* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 238, 239.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 239.

<sup>68</sup> On A.H. Argue see Thomas W. Miller, "The Significance of A.H. Argue for Pentecostal Historiography," *Pneuma* 8 (Fall, 1986): 120-158; on D.N. Buntain and T.T. Latta see Ronald A. N. Kydd, "The Contribution of Denominationally Trained Clergymen to the Emerging Pentecostal Movement in Canada," *Pneuma* 5 (Spring, 1983): 17-33.

life. Given the typical vilification of other denominations by the Pentecostals, Purdie's acceptance into their ranks with a position of considerable doctrinal influence raises some interesting questions. For example, how did Purdie understand the significance of his Pentecostal baptism in the Holy Spirit? Did the early Pentecostal leaders see Purdie as one of themselves? Had he really come into the same revolutionary experience as his fellow Pentecostals if it had not opened his eyes to the deadness and formalism of his Anglican background?

I believe questions like these make it difficult to explain the ready acceptance of an Anglican like Purdie into the PAOC solely on the basis of his having received "the baptism." This thesis will attempt to demonstrate that there were other common factors at work which enabled the Pentecostal leadership to recognize Purdie as one of their own despite his non-sectarian vision of Pentecostalism.

Scholars such as Vinson Synan and Edith Blumhofer have developed an ideological explanation of Pentecostal origins. They connect the movement to its theological roots in the holiness movement and the Reformed tradition with the former constituting the more significant source.<sup>69</sup> Purdie emerged from the Reformed tradition in contrast to R.E. McAlister (1880-1953), one of the founders of the PAOC and its first General Secretary, and many other early PAOC leaders who had a Wesleyan background.<sup>70</sup>

Blumhofer has emphasized the importance of viewing Pentecostalism primarily as a restorationist movement that seeks to return to the ways of the

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<sup>69</sup> Vinson Synan, *Aspects of Pentecostal-Charismatic Origins* (Plainfield, NJ: Logos International, 1975); Edith Lydia (Valdvoegel) Blumhofer, "The Overcoming Life: A Study in the Reformed Evangelical Origins of Pentecostalism" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard University, 1977).

<sup>70</sup> On McAlister see, James D. Craig, "R. E. McAlister, Canadian Pentecostal Pioneer," *Eastern Journal of Practical Theology*, 3 (Spring, 1988).

earliest church in all things. Referring to Bennett F. Lawrence's early history of the movement, *The Apostolic Faith Restored*, Blumhofer writes,

Lawrence located the movement's driving force in its restorationism. After years of careful study of primary sources, I am convinced he was right. Other streams of nineteenth-century piety--the diffuse holiness movement, German pietism, premillennialism, and "higher life" teaching--intermingled in important ways in the Pentecostal subculture. . . . Overarching all of them, however, was restorationism.<sup>71</sup>

Purdie is once again unique in this regard since his sense of restorationism tended to focus more on the Reformation era rather than the time of the primitive church. This clearly aligns him with Wycliffe's evangelical Anglicanism as regards his philosophy of history rather than with his Pentecostal colleagues.

As well as contributing to the ongoing discussions of the international Pentecostal movement, this study contributes to the investigation of its Canadian forms. For the most part, the literature to date has largely consisted of uncritical accounts by PAOC insiders such as Gloria Kulbeck and Gordon Atter.<sup>72</sup> These are primarily chronicles of people and events with no discussion of historical analysis. Thomas William Miller has recently completed a detailed official history of the PAOC which includes the best treatment to date of Canadian Pentecostalism in the pre-organizational period (1906-1919).<sup>73</sup> He too challenges the deprivation thesis suggesting that the people who became Pentecostals were representative of North Americans as a whole both in their economic status and level of education:

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<sup>71</sup> Edith L. Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God, A Chapter in the Story of American Pentecostalism*, Volume 1 to 1916 (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1989), 15. Cf. Bennett F. Lawrence, *The Apostolic Faith Restored* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1916).

<sup>72</sup> Gloria Grace Kulbeck, *What God Hath Wrought* (Toronto: Full Gospel Publishing House, 1958); Gordon F. Atter, *The Third Force*, 3rd ed. (Peterborough: The College Press, 1970).

<sup>73</sup> Thomas William Miller, *Canadian Pentecostalism, A History of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada* (Mississauga: Full Gospel Publishing House, 1994).

It was not "social protest" nor "economic deprivation" that motivated the early 20th-century believers to carry out a program of worldwide evangelization. It was their strong conviction that God was reviving His church in the "last days" in preparation for the "soon return of Jesus."<sup>74</sup>

Not surprisingly, Purdie has figured in some of these studies of Canadian Pentecostalism. However, this thesis takes issue with some of their conclusions, and expands on previous findings. For example, Miller has suggested that the fact that Purdie was not expelled from his denomination made his case atypical. He attributes Purdie's ability to continue functioning in the Anglican ministry following his Pentecostal experience to the fact that his bishop was sympathetic.<sup>75</sup> Although this was no doubt helpful, I will argue that affinities between evangelical Anglicanism and Pentecostalism made possible the continuing support of his bishop, Jervois Arthur Newnham (1852-1941), himself a strong evangelical and a premillennialist.<sup>76</sup> Brian Ross's thesis on Purdie's role in the emergence of Pentecostal theological education in Canada provides a useful survey of the movement's early theological flavour and is a basically sound exposition of Purdie's role at Western Bible College from 1925 on. However, his brief overview of the development of the movement in Canada does not attempt to examine any of the connections with other Christian groups.

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<sup>74</sup> Miller, *Canadian*, 103. Miller does not cite demographic data to prove his point although this is not surprising since there have been no extensive studies of what sorts of individuals became Pentecostals in Canada at the turn of the century. See also James R. Goff, Jr., *Fields White Unto Harvest* for the view that "the essential character of this new faith revolved around an intense millenarian-missions emphasis." James R. Goff, Jr., *Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism* (Fayetteville, AK: University of Arkansas Press, 1988).

<sup>75</sup> Miller, *Canadian*, 101. In a similar vein, Donald Gee says that Alexander Alfred Boddy (1854-1930), an early Pentecostal leader in England, "was fortunate in having a Bishop who was exceptionally lenient, and even sympathetic, where the notorious Pentecostal meetings in All Saints [Boddy's church in Sunderland, England] were concerned." Donald Gee, *The Pentecostal Movement* (London: Elim Publishing Company, Limited, 1949), 88.

<sup>76</sup> Franklin, 67.

Beyond these studies, Pentecostalism has hardly registered on the screen as far as the writings of Canadian church historians are concerned. This is not surprising due to the size of the movement. Even the largest Pentecostal group in Canada, the PAOC, had fewer than 225,000 members and adherents as of 1994. Brief passages in standard works on Canadian church history by John Webster Grant and Robert Handy give a bare outline of the rise of the Pentecostal movement with little analysis, although Grant does apply the deprivation thesis to the new immigrants to the Canadian West to explain the rise of various sectarian movements.<sup>77</sup> This explanation fails to do justice to the story of Purdie and other well-educated individuals among the early Pentecostals in Canada. Nor does it attempt to identify any significant links with existing Christian bodies or movements.

W.E. Mann and, more recently, Hans Mol have included Pentecostalism in their surveys of Canadian sectarian movements.<sup>78</sup> Both of these scholars employ elements of the deprivation thesis to explain the emergence of Pentecostal groups in Canada. In Mann's view, Pentecostalism as well as the other evangelical sects in Alberta played an important role in its social organization:

In general, evangelical sects defended basic interests of marginal groups among both the rural and urban lower classes. In the country, they provided a means of social integration to the scattered and lonely, and a socially approved emotionalized "escape" to the economically and socially depressed. In the city they attracted mainly the unorganized working class, including general labourers, petty clerks, and unskilled factory workers who stood on the margin of the economy and were relatively unprotected from economic disaster.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> John Webster Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1972); Robert T. Handy, *A History of the Churches in the United States and Canada* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1977).

<sup>78</sup> W.E. Mann, *Sect, Cult and Church in Alberta* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1955); Hans Mol, *Faith and Fragility: Religion and Identity in Canada* (Burlington: Trinity, 1985).

<sup>79</sup> Mann, 155.

Mann suggests that because the sects were more effective in meeting the needs of these marginalized segments of the population, they were able to shift support away from the established denominations who tended to serve the interests of the "established social classes."<sup>80</sup>

Mol's approach applies the deprivation thesis with virtually no supporting research or analysis of the individuals or events associated with the genesis of the movement in Canada. He supports the generalization that "the early Pentecostals were generally not well educated and came from the poorer classes" with a vague reference to the Hebden as "English immigrants with little education."<sup>81</sup> A quick discussion consisting of one paragraph of data from the Canadian census in 1971 and 1981 is used to confirm this generalization. He characterizes the "good charismatic leader" as one who "evokes in his charges an exuberant sense of fit" commenting that the "charges" in question are all people who "struggle with their marginality."<sup>82</sup> He cites immigration, industrialization and urbanization as key factors in producing masses of individuals who "found in the Pentecostal movement the forge for identity crystallization."<sup>83</sup>

One generalization Mol makes is particularly relevant to the rationale of the present undertaking in the light of the historiographical background sketched above:

For the first fifty years of its existence [until approximately 1960] Pentecostalism was regarded as unconventional, if not downright weird. Scholars, even more than average churchgoers, felt that the lack of emotional restraint, the irrational babbling, the faith healing and the

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 154.

<sup>81</sup> Mol, 148. Ellen and James Hebden established the first Pentecostal mission in Canada on Queen Street East in Toronto in 1906. It became a very influential Pentecostal centre in the earliest days of the movement in Canada. Cf. Thomas W. Miller, "The Canadian 'Azusa': The Hebden Mission in Toronto," *Pneuma* 8 (Spring, 1986): 5-29.

<sup>82</sup> Mol, 146, 147.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 148.

strong belief in the return of Jesus were both absurd and abnormal. Those who joined the various Pentecostal movements were therefore, *by definition*, people on the periphery of established opinion.<sup>84</sup>

This brief overview of the historiographical background suggests that very little detailed examination of the possible links between the Pentecostal movement and other Christian bodies in Canada has been undertaken. It also indicates that at least in the case of individuals like J.E. Purdie, a simple overlaying of the deprivation thesis upon the Canadian experience may not be the most fruitful approach to the study of the Pentecostal movement in Canada.

The remainder of this chapter will attempt to establish three assumptions which form the basis of my analysis of Pentecostalism's links to other Christian bodies in Canada.

To begin with, Purdie was accepted into Pentecostal ranks where he enjoyed a long and respected career and was credited with having a significant long-term impact on its development. In other words, there is no question that Purdie became a member of the Pentecostal movement.

Second, in general, the Pentecostal movement in Canada looked upon the established churches as formal and spiritually dead. It was considered appropriate for Spirit-baptized believers to sever their ties with these bodies. In this sense the self-understanding of the movement can be described as "sectarian."<sup>85</sup>

Third, despite his having become a Pentecostal, however, Purdie retained a high opinion of the Anglican Church throughout his life. In the light of these three facts, it is fair to conclude that there were certain aspects of

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 148, emphasis added.

<sup>85</sup> Ronald Enroth describes a sect as a "minority religious group" which "leaves the parent body not so much to form a new faith as to reaffirm and establish the old one. They are radical in that they often reject the activities and hierarchy of their parent body." Daniel G. Reid, ed. *Dictionary of Christianity in America* [hereafter DCM] (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1990), s.v. "Sects," by Ronald Enroth. Concerning sectarianism see also Brian Wilson, *Religious Sects* (London: World University Press, 1970).



Purdie's understanding of Pentecostalism that were unique. These can be summarized by describing his vision of Pentecostalism as non-sectarian. The possibility of such an non-sectarian understanding suggests that there were certain commonalities between his understanding of Pentecostalism and more established segments of the Christian tradition in Canada specifically in the area of Christian spirituality.

### **Purdie's Acceptance and Impact**

J.E. Purdie is widely recognized within the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada as having played a foundational role. As one General Superintendent once put it:

There isn't a man in all of Canada who has contributed more of a lasting nature to The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada than J. Eustace Purdie. He has laid for us a foundation of Biblical doctrine that has paid dividends, and will continue to pay dividends so long as the Lord owns and acknowledges us as a branch of His church serving Him in this great Dominion."<sup>86</sup>

It is estimated that between the years 1925 and 1950 while Purdie was principal at what came to be called Western Bible College, approximately six hundred individuals were trained for ministry in the PAOC and beyond.<sup>87</sup> This number included forty graduates who became faculty members at other colleges and Bible schools.<sup>88</sup> Approximately the same number of graduates became Pentecostal missionaries. One writer in *The Gleaner*, the school magazine at Western Bible College, commented in 1950, the year the school closed:

The young movement was most fortunate in securing. . . this consecrated minister, teacher and theologian. . . . He contributed to

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<sup>86</sup> Tom Johnstone (PAOC General Superintendent elect) to J.E. Purdie, 26 December 1962.

<sup>87</sup> R.W. Taitinger, "Editorial Tribute," *PT*, June 1977, 3.

<sup>88</sup> Thomas W. Miller, "James Eustace Purdie, Portraits of Pentecostal Pioneers," *PT*, February 1987, 22.

the . . . Assemblies a solidity and strength which has left an indelible mark on . . . hundreds of its ministers and missionaries.<sup>89</sup>

The depth of Purdie's personal impact upon these students is suggested by his almost complete control over the appointment of the faculty and the preparation of the curriculum, including the extensive notes that were used in each course. He based the curriculum upon his studies at Wycliffe: "I didn't have any of Dr. Sheraton's notes but I remembered it all, you see. And I worked it out with about 350 books, too, documented, you know."<sup>90</sup> According to Brian Ross, for the students, who looked upon Purdie as a theological giant, these notes were "the only theological textbook many of them ever studied" and as a consequence, they were "devoured" and "often memorized, verbatim."<sup>91</sup> Purdie's notes were also used in Bible colleges in Edmonton, Saskatoon, British Columbia, North Dakota and Australia.<sup>92</sup>

Beyond the sheer numbers of leaders in whose training Purdie played a large role, several graduates later occupied key positions of leadership in the PAOC including Campbell B. Smith, who served as the Superintendent of the Eastern Ontario and Quebec District, the General Superintendent and the Principal of Eastern Pentecostal Bible College in Peterborough, Ontario. Another graduate, E.W. Robinson, became the founding President of the British Columbia Bible Institute which later became Western Pentecostal Bible College in Abbotsford, British Columbia. Earl N.O. Kulbeck was for several years the editor of the *Pentecostal Testimony*, the house organ of the denomination, and then Director of Public Relations for the PAOC.<sup>93</sup> Historian

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<sup>89</sup> Willard C. Pierce, *The Gleaner*, 11 April 1950, 12.

<sup>90</sup> Franklin, 13.

<sup>91</sup> Ross, *Emergence*, 117.

<sup>92</sup> "What God Has Wrought in Western Bible College," *PT*, 15 September 1949, 17; Franklin, 106-108; Miller, *Canadian*, 210, 211.

<sup>93</sup> Miller, *Canadian*, 206, 210.

Ronald Kydd's assessment of Purdie's impact is similar to the accolades he has received from many of the movement's leaders:

The one who made the greatest individual theological contribution to the PAOC was undoubtedly J. Eustace Purdie. . . . Dr. Purdie has to be acknowledged as the primary figure in mediating theology to several generations of Pentecostals.<sup>94</sup>

### **"No Creed Nor Form Can Stand the Storm"**

The literature of early Pentecostalism provides abundant evidence of the turmoil that resulted in churches when one or more of their members or particularly their pastor received the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Robert Anderson notes that "unlike most revivals, which are greeted with enthusiasm and only later spurned, the Pentecostal movement was resisted from the beginning."<sup>95</sup> Similarly Gordon Atter observed, "By 1907 the denominations in both Canada and the United States had turned their backs on the Revival and were actively opposing it."<sup>96</sup>

At first glance, the literature seems to suggest the enmity was quite one-sided.<sup>97</sup> As C.B. Smith, one of Purdie's students who became the President of Eastern Pentecostal Bible College, noted, "Many ministers were dropped from their particular affiliations because they received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues according to Acts 2:4."<sup>98</sup> Smith's statement accords with the traditional Pentecostal understanding of their rejection which suggests the early Pentecostals did not intend to start new groups but were forced to do so sooner or later when their churches rejected their boisterous expressions of worship and their doctrinal innovations associated

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<sup>94</sup> Ronald Kydd, "The Contribution of Denominationally Trained Clergymen," 26, 28.

<sup>95</sup> Anderson, 140, 141.

<sup>96</sup> Atter, *Third Force*, 89.

<sup>97</sup> Miller, *Canadian*, 45.

<sup>98</sup> C.B. Smith, "Our First Bible College," *AMS*, n.d., PACAT.

with glossalalia as evidence of the fullest experience of Christian spirituality.<sup>99</sup>

The story of George Augustus Chambers (1879-1957), the first General superintendent of the PAOC, is a classic example. In 1906, while pastoring a Mennonite Brethren in Christ church, Chambers had come under the influence of the Hebden Mission in Toronto. People had been receiving the Pentecostal baptism there shortly after the revival broke out at the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles.<sup>100</sup> Previously, Chambers had opposed what he considered to be the fanaticism taking place at Azusa Street. His attitude changed, however, when he heard his friend Alfred George Ward (1881-1966), who had recently received the baptism with the Holy Spirit, speak at a Mennonite Brethren convention in Kitchener, Ontario.

Upon returning from the conference to his church in Toronto, Chambers and his wife began attending the Hebden Mission to seek the Pentecostal experience. The Mennonite Conference instructed Chambers and seven other of its ministers to cease preaching "on the baptism of the Holy Ghost as believed by the Hebdens and Mr. Ward."<sup>101</sup> Chambers refused and was suspended until the next conference where he and seven other ministers were told to cease preaching the Pentecostal experience or face excommunication. Six of the eight refused to recant and were dismissed. Thomas Miller reports that about ninety people were expelled at this conference over the Pentecostal issue. As Pentecostals tell the story, a dove flew in the open window and alighted above the delegates while they were discussing the contentious issue. Once the conference decided to reject the Pentecostal teaching, the dove flew out the

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<sup>99</sup> See for example, Atter, *Third Force*, 89; Gee, 88, 89; Miller, *Canadian*, 101, 113.

<sup>100</sup> Miller, "The Canadian 'Azusa,' " 41-46.

<sup>101</sup> Chambers, *Fifty Years in the Service of the King* (Toronto: The Testimony Press, 1960), 13.

window.<sup>102</sup> Similar experiences of official rejection are described by Thomas T. Latto and Daniel N. Buntain.<sup>103</sup>

Thomas Miller points out that the process of separation was rarely one-sided since "the Latter Rain Christians refused to keep quiet about their glorious experiences, or to refrain from pointing out the "deadness" of their pastors and churches."<sup>104</sup> In some cases, the virulent criticism of the deadness and formalism of the churches led to the Pentecostal version of "come-outism" associated with the move to form independent holiness churches in the United States in the 1890's.<sup>105</sup>

This was sometimes accompanied at first by a total rejection of the validity of any kind of religious organization. George Chambers initially rejected calls for the organization of the Pentecostal Missionary Union in 1909 by his friend A.G. Ward because "after all, God has taken us out of organized churches, why bind ourselves up?"<sup>106</sup>

As Clara Hammerton wrote in a letter in *The Good Report*, a paper published by Canadian Pentecostal pioneer Robert Edward McAlister,

I attended the church [of England] regularly, 'Having the form of godliness, but denying the power thereof,' 'No creed nor form can stand the storm, nothing but the blood of Jesus.'<sup>107</sup>

This attitude towards the Anglican Church (then called the Church of England) forms a sharp contrast to that of J.E. Purdie both before and after

<sup>102</sup> Miller, *Canadian*, 45, 46.

<sup>103</sup> T.T. Latto, "From Presbyterian Church to Pentecost," *PT*, May 1958, 7, 28; D.N. Buntain, "How I Came Into Pentecost," *PT*, December 1925, 13, 14.

<sup>104</sup> Miller, *Canadian*, 45. Cf. also 101.

<sup>105</sup> *DCM*, s.v. "Holiness Movement," by H.E. Raser. Charles Fox Parham (1873-1929), who is acknowledged by many as the founder of the Pentecostal movement in America, had left the Methodist Church in 1895 because it had become "organization-bound and compromised its purity and power," John W. Stephenson, "The Centrality of a Common Interpretation of History to the Self-Definition of the Early Pentecostals" (M.A. thesis, Toronto School of Theology, 1990), 36.

<sup>106</sup> Miller, *Canadian*, 113. On the attempt to organize the Pentecostal Missionary Union, see Atter, *Third Force*, 95, 107; Miller, *Canadian*, 105-107, 113.

<sup>107</sup> *The Good Report*, May 1911, 4.

he became a Pentecostal as we will see in the next section. It seems never to have occurred to Purdie that the "old church" was so bound by deadness and formalism that it must be abandoned. On the contrary, he felt quite comfortable forty-eight years after he had joined the Pentecostals in describing the Church of England in the early part of this century as possessing

a wonderful Evangelical background and all the aggressiveness of out and out ultra evangelical Bible teaching and praying for the sick and everything else. . . . *The Church of England lent itself to everything that's truly Pentecostal* in the real biblical sense of that term.<sup>108</sup>

The contrast between Purdie and the early Pentecostals is also evident in the use of creeds. The preamble to the initial constitution of the PAOC adopted in Ottawa on May 26, 1919, by a number of the original signatories of the denomination's federal charter, including R.E. McAlister and George Chambers, stated:

Be it further resolved that we disapprove of making a doctrinal statement a basis of fellowship and cooperation but that we accept the Word of God in its entirety, conducting ourselves in harmony with its divine principles and Apostolic example, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace until 'we all come in the unity of the faith.'<sup>109</sup>

Although the early Pentecostals were concerned about sound doctrinal teaching, they rejected the practice of making creeds. In their thinking it smacked too much of the deadness of the denominations from which they had been delivered. While doctrinal controversies led to a more sympathetic view of creeds even before Purdie entered the movement, at no point would he have shared the early suspicions about creeds.

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<sup>108</sup> Franklin, 65, emphasis added.

<sup>109</sup> Miller, *Canadian*, 116.

His commitment to clear doctrinal formulation can be demonstrated in two ways. First, his published list of the seven items necessary for a successful divinity college begins with "a Doctrinal Statement."<sup>110</sup> Second, he wrote a detailed explanation the PAOC's doctrinal statement entitled *What We Believe*. In the introduction to the booklet, Purdie stated:

Frequently the question has been asked, "What is the doctrinal position of the Pentecostal Movement?" The answer can be given that the movement believes the same basic doctrines as are contained in the teaching of historic Christianity as set forth in the three Ancient Creeds of the early Church known as the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian; and also the Confessions of Faith drawn up at the time of the Reformation by the Reformed churches of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These Creeds and Confessions are not considered to teach anything above or beyond the Scriptures, but only set forth in systematic form the truths contained within the Holy Scriptures.<sup>111</sup>

One can see the potential for conflict with his fellow Pentecostals over the issue of creeds. Such potential was never realized. Neither did Purdie ever find it necessary to criticize or denigrate his beloved "old church," rather, quite the opposite. Purdie's experience suggests that, at least in some respects, for him Pentecostalism represented a continuation of the Christian tradition in Canada rather than a departure from it.

### **Purdie's Anglicanism**

What is particularly interesting about Purdie's impressive record as a Pentecostal is that he was able to function within a burgeoning sectarian movement despite the fact that he had not severed his ties with nor changed his attitude toward one of Canada's oldest Protestant denominations. The details of Purdie's early involvements as an Anglican before he joined the Pentecostal movement in 1925 have been discussed in Chapter 1. What needs to

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<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 205.

<sup>111</sup> J.E. Purdie, *What We Believe* (n.p., n.d).

be demonstrated is his continuing positive regard for and periodic involvement with the Anglican Church after he joined the PAOC.

The many churches in which Purdie preached over his long career included Saint Margaret's Anglican Church in Winnipeg where he was preaching the first Sunday of every month as late as 1966.<sup>112</sup> He not only preached in Anglican churches, but also recommended them as faithful transmitters of the gospel. During his interview with Gordon Franklin, he praised Toronto's Little Trinity Anglican Church with the comment: "It was a great gospel church *and still is today.*"<sup>113</sup>

His own behaviour suggests his high regard for what he affectionately called the "old church." The archives of the Central Pentecostal College in Saskatoon contain a sizeable collection of Purdie's sermon notes ranging in date from 1908 to 1969. A good number of these notes include a reference to the liturgical calendar in their date, for example, "First Sunday in Epiphany" on a set of notes from 1968. It is doubtful that another Classical Pentecostal could be found in Canada who would use such a dating method on his sermon notes.<sup>114</sup>

The second practice is Purdie's life-long use of the clerical collar. He defended the practice in 1973:

Rome had nothing to do with the origin of the clerical collar. It's an English product. And all the Methodists wore it and the Holiness church that broke away from the Methodists, they were shouting people you know. . . . The old Evangelicals . . . were men of prayer and men of

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<sup>112</sup> Franklin, 69.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 30, *emphasis added.*

<sup>114</sup> Pentecostals are frequently divided into three groups: Classical Pentecostals belong to explicitly Pentecostal denominations; Charismatics have experienced a baptism with the Holy Spirit but have remained in their various denominations and Third Wavers (who do not like to be classified as Pentecostals) are evangelicals who emphasize the use of spiritual gifts especially healing and exorcism. They are presently forming their own quasi-denominations.



salvation. They always wore the clericals. I wore the clerical collar and the black vest . . . for 25 years in the College.<sup>115</sup>

Other Pentecostal ministers have worn the clerical collar on occasion, usually while engaged in hospital visitation, but the practice has not been widespread. Pentecostals have tended to look down on such clerical practices as the wearing of a "dog collar" probably because the superior spiritual status implied offended their sense of spiritual egalitarianism and because of the perceived connection with elaborate liturgical garb and ritual.

Purdie not only appreciated the Anglican Church, but also believed it was an authentic vehicle of God's work in the world. This comes out clearly in two ways. The first is a brief reference found in the Introduction to *What We Believe*. Purdie repeated the Pentecostal belief that the movement had no human founder but was a sovereign work of God's Spirit. He then identified two centres from which the revival spread around the world. As expected, the first is Los Angeles. The second is one that would not come immediately to the mind of the average Canadian Pentecostal leader:

In 1907, in All Saints' Evangelical Anglican Church in Sunderland, England, the power fell in a similar way. The Rector of this church was a converted lawyer, and the congregation was made up of people who had experience the New Birth, and the joy of the Victorious Life as taught by the Conference held at Keswick since 1875.<sup>116</sup>

The reference is to the work of Alexander Boddy who is perhaps the earliest Anglican minister to have received the Pentecostal experience. He never left the Anglican Church.

The second relates to a paper Purdie wrote probably in 1966 at the request of the PAOC, to which he responded with a highly laudatory, ten thousand word essay on the history of the Anglican Church.<sup>117</sup> Although he

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<sup>115</sup> Franklin, 30, 31.

<sup>116</sup> Purdie, *What We Believe*, 2.

<sup>117</sup> Purdie, "The Anglican Church in Canada."

seems to have misunderstood the terms of reference (which are no longer extant), the very fact that he could imagine the PAOC might want such a document produced indicates his continuing high regard for Anglicanism.

In the document, Purdie attempted to impress his fellow Pentecostals with the spiritual authenticity of Anglicanism, for example, by alluding to the myth that the Apostle Paul had first brought the gospel to England.<sup>118</sup> He drew a parallel between the early Church and the birth of Anglicanism:

The same forces, namely the Holy Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, which inaugurated the Primitive Church, also inaugurated in England a revival of Primitive Christianity.<sup>119</sup>

He also pointed out that the Church of England had returned to the "simple worship of the Primitive Church and Pauline Theology"<sup>120</sup> and asserted that the commitment to holiness on the part of a large number of Anglicans in the past "meant that the Church, as a result of her walk, had greater power with God and greater power with man."<sup>121</sup> He defended the prayer of consecration over the communion elements in the Prayer Book because it "bears faithful witness to the completeness and finality of what Christ did for us on the Cross."<sup>122</sup>

As if to distance himself somewhat from more recent developments, Purdie spoke of the rejection of biblical authority in the theological seats of learning in the Anglican Church. This had led to a great change in the Church's "walk" and her "separation from the world" among both clergy and

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118 Ibid., 2.

119 Ibid., 6.

120 Ibid., 7.

121 Ibid., 17.

122 Ibid., 21.

laity.<sup>123</sup> This fascinating study reads like a pro-Anglican tract designed specifically for a Pentecostal audience.

Perhaps the strongest indicator of Purdie's attitude toward Anglicanism is the little known fact that on at least two occasions, he attempted to return to parish ministry in the Anglican Church during the 1930's. The reasons for his dissatisfaction with the PAOC relate to its leaders' hostility to education, questions about Purdie's theology which he described as "modified Calvinism," and the difficulties he experienced in this period over the decision made in 1930 to close the school in Winnipeg and move it to Toronto. A letter of recommendation written late in 1931 at Purdie's request to I.O. Stringer (1866-1934), the Archbishop of Rupert's Land, by a friend Purdie knew from his Wycliffe days contains some pertinent comments concerning Purdie's high regard for the Anglican Church. G.S. Despard, rector of Saint Matthew's Anglican Church in Winnipeg, describes the extensive involvement of Mrs. Purdie in his church which she attended regularly with her son and daughter.<sup>124</sup> At this time, Purdie was principal of the new Bible college just opened in Toronto. His family had not been relocated in Toronto and still lived in Winnipeg. Despard continues:

I mention these facts just to indicate that although Mr. Purdie's present work has taken him outside of distinctively Anglican circles, nevertheless he and his family have always had the love of the church in their hearts and could never be happy apart from it. . . . I am hoping that should an opening occur in this Diocese in the near future that you would consider giving him an opportunity to return to his first love.<sup>125</sup>

About five years later, in a letter to his own former bishop, George E. Lloyd, retired bishop of Saskatchewan, Purdie supplies some facts about his

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid., 17.

<sup>124</sup> J.E. Purdie interview by Ronald Kydd, 18 May 1975.

<sup>125</sup> G.S. Despard to Archbishop I.O. Stringer, 31 December 1931, Central Pentecostal College Archives, Saskatoon [hereafter CPCAS].

achievements as an Anglican rector so the bishop could pass along the information and assist Purdie in obtaining a parish. He writes:

I would like to make it clear that in my heart I never left the Church for one moment in all these years but simply felt God moving me as He did Whitefield to go and tell the same teaching . . . to a larger number of people.<sup>126</sup>

Less than a year later, a discouraged Purdie wrote to William T. Hallam, the Bishop of Saskatoon:

With all the joy of the unique spiritual fellowship in the Bible College [Western Bible College] I can only say that I am so intensely "Church" in all my inward tastes, vision, outlook and beliefs that I am not wholly satisfied in outside work [i.e., outside the Church of England]. . . . Shall I give up all hope of taking up work in the Communion I love and think about, talk about and pray about every day, and remain outside, while in heart, love and tastes I am one hundred percent for her?<sup>127</sup>

This desire to move may reflect the very human response to the pressures and frustrations that any organization, ecclesiastical or otherwise, can impose, especially in a period of economic uncertainty. It is true that Purdie may well have been overstating his loyalty given the purpose of these letters. They do illustrate quite clearly, however, that he continued to hold the Anglican Church in high esteem years after he had joined the PAOC. By contrast, as we have seen in the last section, few Pentecostals retained this high regard for their spiritual roots.

### **Purdie's Uniqueness**

Although most recognize Purdie's major contribution to the PAOC as theological, Thomas Miller notes he "proved beyond a doubt that Pentecostal

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<sup>126</sup> J.E. Purdie to George E. Lloyd, 16 March 1936, CPCAS.

<sup>127</sup> J.E. Purdie to William T. Hallam, Bishop of Saskatoon, 21 January 1937, CPCAS.

piety and true scholarship are complementary, not mutually destructive."<sup>128</sup> The phrase "Pentecostal piety" is suggestive because as we examine Purdie's early development and ministry, we will discover that his understanding of the "evangelical" Christian life seems quite similar to what he later demonstrated after he entered Pentecostal ranks.

As previously mentioned, Purdie's experience of the Pentecostal baptism took place while he was rector of St. James Anglican Church in Saskatoon. He described the experience as "a fresh refilling of the Spirit of Life."<sup>129</sup> The word "refilling" is particularly interesting because it hints at Purdie's understanding of his Pentecostal experience. Unlike many early Pentecostals, he did not see it as a jarring and revolutionary event that catapulted him from a position of powerlessness and frustration into a new, supercharged life of blessing and effective service.<sup>130</sup> Purdie states that he had preached on the importance of experiencing Pentecost for years before he personally received the infilling:

After I got into the ministry, when we came to Pentecost Sunday or Whit Sunday as it's called in the Prayer Book, I always preached an out and out Pentecostal sermon . . . though up to that time I hadn't spoken in tongues. But I preached it and told them that this is what we needed . . . so I never had any difficulty or any hesitation about the infilling of the Holy Ghost.<sup>131</sup>

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<sup>128</sup> Miller, "James Eustace Purdie," 22; cf. Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee, eds., *Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, [hereafter DPCM] s.v. "Purdie, James Eustace," by R.A.N. Kydd.

<sup>129</sup> J.E. Purdie, "My Own Pentecost," *PT*, June 1970, 9.

<sup>130</sup> For example, Chambers wrote, "The baptism of the Holy Ghost . . . changed my whole life, and greatly increased the effectiveness of my ministry." "Early Days in the Pentecostal Fellowship," *PT*, June 1960, 6; A. G. Ward said: "What a wonderful experience 'Pentecost' is. I would not have missed it for all this world. It is glorious to have one's heart burning with the Divine Flame, sparkling and crackling with the hot love-tidings of God's interest in a lost world." "My Personal Pentecost," *PT*, May 1956, 7. Cf. also A.G. Ward, "Hitherto Hath the Lord Helped Us," *PT*, October 1956, 10, 11.

<sup>131</sup> Franklin, 70.

Although his Pentecostal experience did give him a greater sense of power and freedom, he understood it to be the next step in the progression of his spiritual growth:

But I believe that I, I lived up close to what I received [i.e., the baptism of the Holy Spirit] and I think that my preaching was *as close as anyone could get to it* when preaching on that subject without having the evidence [i.e., tongues].<sup>132</sup>

This understanding of the Pentecostal experience as a sort of spiritual icing on the cake helps to explain why Purdie did not feel the need to reject his Anglican roots in order to live and minister in the full blessings of Pentecost. The fact that Purdie was accepted among the early Pentecostals and made a lasting impact on the Pentecostal movement in Canada despite his sense of continuity with his spirituality as a Anglican suggests there may have been certain commonalities shared by the two traditions. Purdie's ability to function as an Anglican parish priest while he was a practicing Pentecostal suggests that there were models of ministry available to Anglican clergy at the time that were compatible with at least some elements of a typically Pentecostal approach to ministry. It may be possible to explain Purdie's integration into the PAOC on the grounds of his "Pentecostal piety" as demonstrated by his ways of articulating spiritual experiences, his priorities for the Christian life and the practices of ministry he employed. The next two chapters will lay the groundwork for the exploration of these commonalities.

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 71, emphasis added.

### CHAPTER 3

#### THE EVANGELICAL ANGLICAN CONTEXT

In order to consider the continuity of Purdie with his parent tradition, this chapter will examine the Anglican context, particularly its evangelical form, from which he emerged. A similar examination of the early Pentecostal context into which he integrated will follow in Chapter 4. Before attempting to define evangelical Anglicanism, the broader concepts of Anglicanism and evangelicalism will be delineated.

The Anglican church emerged in the sixteenth century from the religious and political turmoil of the Protestant Reformation. It is uniquely "Protestant" in that it has self-consciously attempted to preserve the best fruits of Catholicism (minus the accretions of the Medieval period) and Protestantism (minus the excesses of the leading Continental Reformers). Thus Anglicanism understands itself as a *via media* which demonstrates its catholicity by its adherence to the Christian tradition as enshrined in the Creeds (Apostles', Nicene and Athanasian), the councils (Nicea, 325; Constantinople, 381; Ephesus, 431 and Chalcedon, 451) and the three-fold order of ministry (bishops, priests and deacons) of the undivided Church.<sup>133</sup> Its Protestant character is shown by its adherence to Scripture as the "norm of faith and the norm by which other norms are judged."<sup>134</sup> These principles were enshrined for Anglicanism in the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion originally crafted by Thomas Cranmer (1489-1556) as a statement of faith aimed at finding a middle ground between Roman Catholicism and Anabaptism.

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<sup>133</sup> This position has sometimes been styled as Catholic without the Pope and Protestant without Luther, Calvin or Knox. Cf. Paul Avis, "What Is Anglicanism" in S. Sykes and J. Booty, eds., *The Study of Anglicanism* (London: SPCK, 1988), 416.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 417.

The *via media* concept has also been used to present Anglicanism as representing a balance in authority between Scripture, tradition and reason and in spirituality between the intellectual and the affective or head and the heart. The statement issued by the 1930 Lambeth Conference admirably summarizes the self-understanding of the Anglican Communion as combining

the traditional faith and order of the catholic church with that immediacy of approach to God through Christ to which the evangelical churches especially bear witness, and freedom of intellectual inquiry whereby the correlation of the Christian revelation and advancing knowledge is constantly effected.<sup>135</sup>

Another central feature of Anglicanism is its adherence to a particular style of liturgical worship as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP), first issued in 1549, once again primarily the work of Crammer. This work is not simply a liturgy to be followed in all the public rites of the Church, but is intended to function as a *regulum* or rule of life for the entire Anglican community, including the laity for whom it serves as a devotional guide as well.<sup>136</sup>

The use of the BCP serves an essential unifying function within Anglicanism which derives its sense of unity from an emphasis on the acts of worship rather than adherence to a finely articulated doctrinal statement. For this reason there have emerged at least three major groups within Anglicanism, usually identified as the High Church (or Anglo-Catholic), Low Church (or Evangelical) and Broad Church parties.<sup>137</sup> This is not viewed as a negative

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<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 412.

<sup>136</sup> Harvey H. Guthrie, "Anglican Spirituality: An Ethos and Some Issues," in William J Wolf, ed., *Anglican Spirituality* (Wilton, CN: Morehouse-Barlow, 1982), 6.

<sup>137</sup> Alister McGrath explains some of the social and political factors which led to this situation in "Evangelical Anglicanism: A Contradiction in Terms?" in R.T. France and Alister E. McGrath, eds., *Evangelical Anglicans: Their Role and Influence in the Church Today* (London: SPCK, 1993), 10-12.



state of affairs but is explained by means of the principle of "comprehensiveness":

Comprehensiveness demands agreement on fundamentals, while tolerating disagreement on matters in which Christians may differ without feeling the necessity of breaking communion.<sup>138</sup>

The High Church party came into prominence as a result of the Oxford Movement (1820-1845) associated with such leaders as John Henry Newman (1801-1890), John Keble (1792-1866), Richard Hurrell Froude (1803-1836) and Edward Bouverie Pusey (1800-1882). This movement attempted to reorient the Church of England towards Catholicism by emphasizing such dogmas as apostolic succession and the sacrificial nature of the priesthood. In an attempt to revive Anglican piety, it called for the enhancement of Anglican worship by the addition of Roman ritual and ornamentation (use of incense, bells, adoration of the sacrament, robed choirs, the restoration of auricular confession and so forth). From a political standpoint, it came to be viewed as a reaction to the Erastianism of the British government which, in the view of the Tractarians, acted as if it had the authority to interfere in the order of the Church. For the Tractarians, the Church had received an antecedent authority from Christ. Of the three customary sources of authority within Anglicanism, this party placed more emphasis on tradition.

The Broad Church party represents a more liberal viewpoint with an emphasis on reason and a commitment to dialogue. The term was applied in the middle of the nineteenth century to those whose views were influenced by individuals such as Frederick Denison Maurice (1805-1872) who called the Church to be open to the intellectual and social developments of the age.

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<sup>138</sup> William J. Wolf, ed., *The Spirit of Anglicanism* (Wilton, CN: Morehouse-Barlow, 1979), 179.

The Low Church or evangelical party emphasizes the Protestant character of Anglicanism by stressing its primary allegiance to Scripture as the source of authority in all matters of faith and practice. The designation "low" suggests the relatively low level of importance this party attaches to the historic episcopate, the uniqueness of the priesthood and the place of the sacraments in Christian worship. The term was originally used in the early eighteenth century of a more liberal group in the Church of England also known as the Latitudinarians, and then revived in the nineteenth century as a designation for the Evangelicals who resisted Tractarianism.

Since the rise of the ecumenical movement, some Anglicans have pointed to the peaceful co-existence of differing ecclesiastical parties in their midst as a "paradigm of Christian unity" suitable for other sections of the Christian Church which desire to display greater unity with one another.<sup>139</sup> Paul Avis claims that in fact the internal ecumenism of Anglicanism has been minimal since each of the three principal parties has gone their own way, taking care to reinforce their prejudices through party patronage of livings, partisan theological colleges, newspapers and journals.<sup>140</sup> The events leading up to the founding of Wycliffe College illustrate some of the more pronounced aspects of this partisanship within a particularly stressful period in the history of Canadian Anglicanism.

Setting out the broad contours of evangelicalism as a movement within modern Christianity is no less complicated. Timothy Webber has written, "Defining evangelicalism has become one of the biggest problems in American

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<sup>139</sup> Avis, 408.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 409.

religious historiography."<sup>141</sup> He describes it as a "large extended family" with Classical, Pietistic, Fundamentalist and Progressive branches.<sup>142</sup> Evangelicalism must be described not solely in doctrinal terms, but also with reference to its particular ethos. John Stackhouse sets forth the major concerns of evangelicalism as correct doctrine, warm-hearted and disciplined piety and energetic mission.<sup>143</sup> David Bebbington describes both British and American evangelicalism as biblicist, crucicentric, conversionist and activist.<sup>144</sup> David Parker lists the following spiritual disciplines as typical of evangelicalism: daily quiet time, family devotions, prayer meetings, Sunday observance, personal witnessing, holiness and surrender to God's will in vocation.<sup>145</sup>

Historically the rise of evangelicalism is connected with the revivals of the late 1730's and early 1740's known as the Great Awakening. In America these were the result of the ministries of Congregationalist Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) and Calvinist Methodist George Whitefield (1715-1770) and in England of Whitefield as well as the founders of Methodism, John Wesley (1703-1791) and his brother Charles (1707-1788).

Theologically, evangelicals have emphasized their commitment to the centrality of Scripture and the basic constellation of orthodox Christian beliefs associated with the early ecumenical creeds and the confessions of the

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<sup>141</sup> Timothy P. Webber, "Premillennialism and the Branches of Evangelicalism," in Donald W. Dayton and Robert K. Johnson, eds., *The Variety of American Evangelicalism* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991), 12.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>143</sup> John G. Stackhouse, "More Than a Hyphen," in George Rawlyk, ed., *Amazing Grace: Evangelicalism in Australia, Britain, Canada and the United States* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 380.

<sup>144</sup> David Bebbington, "Evangelicalism in Modern Britain and America," in Rawlyk, *Amazing Grace*, 185.

<sup>145</sup> David Parker, "Evangelical Spirituality Reviewed," *Evangelical Quarterly* 63 (1991): 123-148.

Reformation. These include the Trinity; the person of Christ as sinless, virgin-born, fully divine; His work of atonement as mediatorial; His bodily resurrection, ascension and personal return; justification by faith apart from works for sinful humanity; the indwelling of the Holy Spirit to sanctify and empower the believer; the unity of all true believers in the invisible Church; and the resurrection of the saved and the lost to eternal life or damnation.

Within this basic constellation, a number of issues such as the role of divine sovereignty and human free will in salvation, the precise nature of sanctification, the details of Christ's return and issues of church polity have produced a variety of patterns and flavours. These differences have determined the denominational affiliation of a given group of believers in the larger, trans-denominational grouping known as evangelicalism.

In the latter half of the nineteenth and continuing into the twentieth century, three issues have exercised considerable influence within both British and American evangelicalism. These are the prophetic stance known as premillennialism, a rigorous emphasis on personal holiness variously understood, and concerns over the nature of biblical inspiration.

With this very brief look at Anglicanism and evangelicalism, we are in a better place to understand the position of the evangelical party within the Anglican Church. The evangelical movement within the Church of England arose as a separate but parallel development to the Methodist revival. Many of its earliest leaders were not initially influenced by Whitefield or the Wesleys. It arose as a revival movement to counteract the disdain for religion among all classes in the early decades of the eighteenth century. As such, the key emphases were the need for personal conversion followed by holiness of life and the supporting doctrinal concerns for the authority of Scripture, the

sinful state of unredeemed humanity, and the need for justification by faith through grace.

The evangelicals in the Church of England were distinguished from the early Methodists by a clericalism which countered the growing involvement of lay persons in worship, their strict avoidance of co-operation with dissenters, the moderately Calvinistic tone of their theology, their rejection of the Methodist emphasis on emotion, their insistence on working within the structure provided by the Church which caused them to reject such Methodist innovations as itinerant preaching, and their particular concept of restorationism which looked much more to the Reformation than to the primitive church.<sup>146</sup>

The first generation of leaders included Samuel Wallar (1714-1761), William Grimshaw (1708-1763) and William Romaine (1714-1795). Somewhat later, leadership was provided by John Newton (1725-1807), Henry Venn (1725-1797), William Cowper (1731-1800) and John Fletcher (1729-1785). The key leaders of the nineteenth century included Charles Simeon (1759-1836), and the members of the Clapham sect: John Venn (1759-1813), Charles Grant (1746-1832), Zachary Macaulay (1768-1838), Lord Teignmouth (1751-1834), James Stephen (1758-1832), Henry Thornton (1760-1815), Granville Sharp (1735-1813) and William Wilberforce (1759-1833).

Despite a growing local influence which resulted, for example, in raising the standard of clerical devotion to duty, an alteration in the tone of preaching and a renewed commitment to personal devotion and philanthropy within the Church of England, the evangelicals nevertheless remained a despised minority until well into the nineteenth century. The first person of

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<sup>146</sup> Hugh Hylson-Smith, *Evangelicals in the Church of England* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1988), 11-12.

clear evangelical sympathies elevated to the bishopric was Henry Ryder who was consecrated Bishop of Gloucester in 1815.<sup>147</sup> Stephen Neill is probably overstating their influence when he suggests that they were the most powerful party in the Church of England from 1775 to 1870.<sup>148</sup>

By the 1850's, however, one observer estimated there were 5,000 evangelical clergy in the Church of England.<sup>149</sup> This represented one third of the total of all the clergy. D.C. Masters has suggested that in Canada, the period from 1850 to 1920 represented the height of evangelical influence in the Anglican Church.<sup>150</sup>

"Fightings without and fears within," a line from Charlotte Elliott's famous hymn, *Just as I Am*, describes well the challenges evangelical Anglicans were called upon to face in the latter half of the nineteenth century. All the clergy in this period, evangelicals included, were faced with the momentous societal changes brought on by the increasingly rapid pace of secularization and the growth of materialism. Even greater challenges arose in the intellectual realm with the publication of Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859 and a collection of papers by liberal churchmen entitled *Essays and Reviews* in 1860. The former represented the challenge of evolutionary theory to the doctrine of divine creation while the latter set forth some of the ideals of higher criticism.

Both works struck at the foundational evangelical doctrines of the inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, yet initially went largely unnoticed due to another fiercely contested internal battle that had been in

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<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 50.

<sup>148</sup> Stephen Neill, *Anglicanism* (London and Oxford: Mowbrays, 1977), 234.

<sup>149</sup> Ian S. Rennie, "Fundamentalism and the Varieties of North American Evangelicalism, 1900-1939," paper presented at the ISAE Conference on Evangelicalism in Trans-Atlantic Perspective, Wheaton, Illinois, April, 1992, 5.

<sup>150</sup> D.C. Masters, "The Anglican Evangelicals in Toronto, 1870-1900," *JCHS* 20 (1978): 51.

progress for over two decades. Due to its particular circumstances as a party within a larger church, evangelical Anglicanism, while being shaped fundamentally by the broad emphases that characterize all evangelicals, also defined itself in unique ways in response to particular issues and perceived threats arising from within its own house. In the nineteenth century, the principal internal threat took the form of the Oxford Movement.

The Oxford Movement began as a response to a government bill to restructure the Irish Church. Its supporters became known as the Tractarians because they issued a total of ninety-five *Tracts for the Times* which outlined their program, the first being published by Newman in 1833. The Tractarians were concerned to reassert the divine nature of the Church of England which they contended should be completely free from outside influence. In this regard they defended the apostolic succession of the Anglican episcopate. In addition, they sought to exalt the position of the priesthood in the Church, to emphasize the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist and to stress the supreme importance of holiness in the life of the individual and the Church. They were opposed to theological liberalism which they viewed as a denial of biblical authority since it subjected revealed doctrines to human judgment.

The first leaders were not initially concerned with enhancing the ceremonial life of the Church, although in time this emphasis came to predominate. The evangelicals were at first impressed with the zeal of the Tractarians, especially for holiness. This situation soon changed, however, as some attracted to the movement such as Richard Froude began to lean towards Rome and speak against various aspects of the Reformation. The defection of John Newman to Roman Catholicism in 1845 confirmed the worst fears of the evangelicals regarding the Tractarian threat to the Church.

After 1850, the yearning on the part of some of the younger Tractarians to incorporate aspects of Roman Catholic ceremonialism into the Church of England became the most visible and long-standing source of contention with the evangelicals. Although the evangelicals shared a number of basic convictions with the Tractarians, the two groups parted company over the authority to be given to tradition, the degree of emphasis to be placed upon justification by faith alone, and the nature of the Church, the ministry and the sacraments. In response to the Tractarians, the evangelicals began to emphasize the Protestant/Reformed character of their faith.

In order to place James E. Purdie into context, certain developments within evangelical Anglicanism in Canada in the period 1850-1900 are important to note. The Canadian situation in the last half of the nineteenth century reproduced some aspects of the English scene although in an altered context due to the disestablishment of the Anglican Church in Canada. The issues involved were not confined to evangelical rejection of new ceremonial elements introduced into local parish worship. As Alan Hayes has demonstrated, the High Church/Low Church struggle in the Diocese of Toronto can also be understood as an attempt by a group of powerful laymen to assert their right to a say in the governance of the Church.<sup>151</sup> This included concern over which party controlled the training of the clergy thus shaping the views of the future leaders of the diocese on the nature of the Church and the role of the clergy.

It was this concern over clerical education that led to the establishment in 1877 of the Protestant Episcopal Divinity School which later became Wycliffe College. Wycliffe was not the first college established in Canada to

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<sup>151</sup> Alan Hayes, "The Struggle for the Rights of the Laity in the Diocese of Toronto," *JCHS* 26:1 (1984): 5-17.



train evangelical Anglican clergy. In 1863 Benjamin Cronyn (1802-1871), the Bishop of Huron, had established Huron College because of his belief that Trinity College, which John Strachan (1778-1867), the Bishop of Toronto, had established in 1852, was teaching "Romish" views to its students. Specifically, he objected to an alleged catechism used by Provost George Whitaker (1811?-1882) to teach theology. Reports from students said it included the necessity of priestly absolution, baptismal regeneration, the legitimacy of the sacraments in addition to baptism and the Lord's Supper and the criticism that the Reformation had "lost key truths and usages from the early Church."<sup>152</sup> The nature of these concerns over Trinity and, more specifically, opposition to Provost Whitaker would play a key role in the founding of Wycliffe College.

In the Diocese of Toronto evangelical agitation over clergy education and other issues related to the High Church/Low Church conflict began with the election of Bishop Alexander Neil Bethune (1800-1879) in 1867 upon the death of Bishop Strachan. Unlike his predecessor, Bethune's style was described by a contemporary as a "rigid and authoritarian high Churchmanship steeled by Tractarianism."<sup>153</sup>

In 1869, the evangelicals began to organize their opposition to Bishop Bethune by founding the Evangelical Association. They urged congregations to send evangelical delegates to Synod. This strategy succeeded in electing evangelical lay delegates in 1871 and 1872. In the following year, however, the evangelicals were completely excluded from the Provincial Synod and its

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<sup>152</sup> John Stephenson, "Tensions in the Anglican Diocese of Toronto (1860-1879): Conflicting Visions of Home," Term Paper, Toronto School of Theology, n.d., 12 quoting "The Bishop of Huron's Objections to The Teaching of Trinity College With The Provost's Reply," (Toronto: Rowsell and Ellis, 1862), 12-16.

<sup>153</sup> Hayes, 6.

powerful Executive Committee. Immediately they re-organized the Evangelical Association into the more militant Church Association. It published materials which raised the alarm concerning a conspiracy to "undo the great work of the Protestant Reformation."<sup>154</sup> Although there was a clear anti-ritualist tone to the rhetoric of the Church Association, Alan Hayes believes it is best viewed as a re-assertion of the Protestant principle of justification by faith alone and the priesthood of all believers in response to the threat of complete clerical domination in the government of the Diocese.

The Association responded to this threat in 1874 by calling for the establishment of an evangelical theological college and an independent missions fund due to uneasiness regarding the handling of diocesan missions funds and the (High Church) theological views of some of the individuals it supported. Bishop Bethune countered by attempting to impeach eleven clergy who were members of the Church Association.

In 1876 the Association began publishing *The Evangelical Churchman* to disseminate its views. Its pages constantly reflected the anti-Tractarian ideals of the Toronto Evangelicals at least until the turn of the century, a period which saw the gradual introduction of ritual elements into certain parishes in the Diocese.<sup>155</sup> Earlier in the century other evangelical Anglicans had established their own papers to combat Tractarianism in Quebec City and Saint John, New Brunswick.<sup>156</sup>

A new crisis in the High Church/Low Church conflict in the Diocese of Toronto occurred over the election of a successor to Bishop Bethune who died

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 10 quoting "An Address to the Members of the Church of England in the Diocese of Toronto," (n.p., n.d.).

<sup>155</sup> Ruggle, "Saints in the Land, 1867-1937," in Alan L. Hayes ed. *By Grace Co-Workers: Building the Anglican Diocese of Toronto, 1780-1989* (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1989), 202-208.

<sup>156</sup> D.C. Masters, "The Rise of Evangelicalism," (n.p., 1960), 6.

in 1879. It concluded in a compromise between the two parties whereby the evangelicals agreed to disband the Church Association in return for the right to keep publishing *The Evangelical Churchman* and, more importantly, the right to continue operating Wycliffe College which had opened two years before. The new Bishop, Arthur Sweatman (1834-1909), who was understood to be a moderate, came out strongly in favour of the evangelical cause in his inaugural address to Synod. The evangelicals celebrated a double victory. By 1888 partisan bitterness in the diocese had subsided although party differences remained.

The emergence and survival of Wycliffe College is the most significant development in Canadian evangelical Anglicanism with reference to the theological and spiritual formation of James Eustace Purdie. The first two of the seven foundational principles upon which Wycliffe College was based indicate that it stood squarely within the evangelical tradition by emphasizing (1) the Bible as "the sole Rule of faith" and (2) "Justification by faith in Christ alone."<sup>157</sup> The remaining five principles indicate conflict with Tractarianism. They stress (3) Christ's ministers are not sacrificing or mediatorial priests; (4) the real presence of Christ can be found in the hearts of the worshippers and not in the communion elements; (5), (6) the Church of Christ has both visible and invisible dimensions and (7) the historic episcopate is conducive to the well being of the Church but not necessary to the being of the Church.<sup>158</sup>

The leading figure at Wycliffe from its founding in 1887 until his death in 1906 shortly before Purdie graduated was its first principal, James Pattison Sheraton (1841-1906). In 1877 the members of the Church Association had invited Sheraton to leave his parish in Pictou, Nova Scotia, in order to

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<sup>157</sup> *Jubilee Volume*, 19

<sup>158</sup> W.H. Howland, *The Protestant Episcopal Divinity School Prospectus* (n.p., n.d.), 2.

serve as the editor of *The Evangelical Churchman*, the magazine of the evangelical party and to open the College. Sheraton had earned a B.A. in Classics and Natural Science at the University of New Brunswick. He had also done studies at King's College in Windsor, Nova Scotia, with John Medley, the Bishop of Fredericton and a leading Tractarian. During his thirteen years of pastoral ministry, Sheraton became "a master of the voluminous literature of the Reformation period and of the wide fields of systematic Theology and New Testament interpretation," according to his younger colleague at Wycliffe, H.J. Cody (1868-1951).<sup>159</sup> Sheraton took a very personal interest in his students among whom he was affectionately known as "the little doctor" because of his diminutive stature.<sup>160</sup>

Sheraton lectured in Systematic Theology and New Testament and through wide reading he kept abreast of the burgeoning developments in these fields. While he was willing to accommodate his views to some of the new approaches to biblical studies and theology, he steadfastly maintained his allegiance to the uniqueness and authority of the Scriptures.<sup>161</sup> It would seem he was willing to adjust his biblical interpretation to accommodate some aspects of evolutionary theory, but was unwilling to believe that ultimately there could be a conflict between "Genesis and geology."<sup>162</sup>

Besides his teaching responsibilities, Sheraton was deeply involved in the administration of Wycliffe, as well as the University of Toronto, serving in its Senate and on various committees. He was also Wycliffe's most energetic promoter, championing the College "in Synod, in the press and before the

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<sup>159</sup> *Jubilee Volume*, 83.

<sup>160</sup> D.C. Masters, "The Anglican Evangelicals in Toronto, 1870-1900," *JCHS* 20:3, 4 (1978), 56.

<sup>161</sup> *Jubilee Volume*, 84; J.P. Sheraton, *History of the Principles of Wycliffe College, An Address to the Alumni* (Toronto: The J.E. Brant Co. Ltd., 1891), 29.

<sup>162</sup> Sheraton, 26, 27.

whole world."<sup>163</sup> "In a deep sense," writes Cody, "he was the College. His whole personality was wrought into it."<sup>164</sup>

Principal Sheraton combined his devotion to scholarship with a vital spirituality which emphasized "personal trust in Christ and that loyal subjection to Him" as "essential in a truly evangelical life."<sup>165</sup> In his first inaugural address, he exhorted his students to warm-hearted devotion and diligent service:

It is the heart that makes the theologian. If the heart be not filled with the love of Christ and zeal for the salvation of men, your labour will be in vain. Keep bright within you the flame of Christian love and purity. Engage in practical religious work. Assist in Sunday School work, cottage meetings, young people's associations.<sup>166</sup>

Such sentiments indicate the depth of Sheraton's evangelical piety. Not surprisingly, in connection with his influence at Wycliffe, Purdie gave thanks to God for "the privilege of taking his theology . . . from such a man of God."<sup>167</sup> A.C. Schindel, who studied under Purdie at Western Bible College and later joined the faculty, recalls that Purdie constantly praised the evangelical Anglicans and Wycliffe College.

Schindel reports that Purdie also spoke well of Dyson Hague (1857-1935), who became the first Dean of Wycliffe in 1887. Hague taught Apologetics, Liturgy and Pastoral Theology. It seems he continued teaching courses at the college after he left Toronto to take a parish in London, Ontario.<sup>168</sup> Purdie's library contained an underlined copy of Hague's booklet, *The Atonement*, given to him in March of 1912 and signed "with best regards" by the author. Dyson

<sup>163</sup> *Jubilee Volume*, 83.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 82.

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>167</sup> Purdie, "The Anglican Church in Canada", 19.

<sup>168</sup> A.C. Schindel, interview by author, 30 August 1990.

Hague represents a potential source of influence on Purdie in at least two areas that would later facilitate his acceptance into Pentecostal circles: the emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit and premillennialism, most likely of the dispensational variety. Hague made use of the "language of power" with reference to the Holy Spirit that was very widespread before the turn of the century. In a paper given at the Wycliffe Alumni meeting in October 1898 entitled "The Evangelical as a Churchman," Hague declared that the Anglican clergyman, "as he preaches the necessity of conversion and of heart religion, has with him the Spirit of God. . . as he preaches the Word of God *in the power of the Holy Ghost*, not in the impotence of a lifeless orthodoxy."<sup>169</sup> Such language could be found in most early Pentecostal periodicals. Hague's premillennial leanings are suggested by the language he uses in his highly laudatory biography of Bishop Maurice Baldwin (1863-1904), the Bishop of Huron. Hague wrote, "He was undoubtedly the foremost champion that Canada has had in its Episcopate of the premillennial doctrine of the Second Advent."<sup>170</sup>

Hague was by no means the only premillennialist associated with Wycliffe College. W.H. Griffith Thomas (1861-1924), one of the founders of Dallas Theological Seminary, a veritable bastion of dispensational premillennialism, taught at Wycliffe from 1910 to 1919. In addition, Ronald Sawatsky has shown that a number of prominent Canadian Anglicans who were closely associated with Wycliffe, among them Samuel H. Blake, W.H. Howland and T.C. Desbarres, assisted in organizing the Niagara Bible Conferences held at Niagara-on-the-Lake, Ontario, between 1883 and 1897. These conferences did much to promote dispensational premillennialism in North America.<sup>171</sup> Principal Sheraton, in

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<sup>169</sup> D.H. Hague, *The Evangelical Churchman*, 10 November 1898, emphasis added.

<sup>170</sup> Dyson Hague, *Bishop Baldwin* (Toronto: n. p., 1927), 60.

<sup>171</sup> Ronald G. Sawatsky, "Looking for that Blessed Hope, The Roots of Fundamentalism in Canada" (Ph.D. thesis, the University of Toronto, 1985), 319-337.

his role as editor of *The Evangelical Churchman*, had also promoted these "very important gatherings of Christian workers" in its pages.<sup>172</sup> He believed the "Primitive Church" held to the premillennial view which he considered to be the best and most correct position.<sup>173</sup>

This examination of some of the key figures associated with Wycliffe College and the ministry practices and priorities for the Christian life associated with it provides a background for the discussion of the commonalities Purdie shared with his Pentecostal associates. The next chapter will provide some background information on the three Pentecostals who will be compared with Purdie in Chapter 5.

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<sup>172</sup> "Conventions at Niagara," *The Evangelical Churchman*, 9 July 1885, cited by Sawatsky, 50.

<sup>173</sup> Sawatsky, "Looking," 44 cites "The Recent Prophetic Conference and the Advent of Our Lord," *The Evangelical Churchman*, 14 November 1878, 426, 427.

**CHAPTER 4**  
**THE EARLY PENTECOSTAL CONTEXT**

The purpose of this chapter is to delineate the backgrounds of the three early Pentecostal leaders who recognized Purdie as a kindred spirit worthy of their confidence. It will begin by sketching the religious milieu at the turn of the century and then look at the growth of Methodism in Canada and the rise of the holiness movement from which these three Pentecostals emerged.

The Pentecostal movement erupted upon the North American religious scene in the midst of a time of intense spiritual expectation. Grant Wacker has written:

The whole nineteenth-century evangelical movement--Wesleyan as well as Reformed, might well be defined as historic Protestant orthodoxy spiced with the tingling expectation that the power of the Holy Spirit, lost since the days of the apostles, was about to be restored.<sup>174</sup>

The focus upon the ministry of the Holy Spirit was particularly intense. A large number of well known evangelical leaders including R.A. Torrey, A.J. Gordon, C.I. Scofield, Andrew Murray, A.B. Simpson and Asa Mahan published books on the subject between 1870 and 1908.<sup>175</sup> Coupled with this interest in the ministry of the Holy Spirit as the end of the century approached was a yearning among evangelicals for revival that was both extensive and intensive.<sup>176</sup> Wacker has suggested that this desire for renewal was a

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<sup>174</sup> Grant Wacker, "The Holy Spirit and the Spirit of the Age," *Journal of American History* 72:1 (June, 1985): 54.

<sup>175</sup> Edith L. Blumhofer, "Restoration as Revival: Early American Pentecostalism, in Edith L. Blumhofer and Randall Balmer, eds., *Modern Christian Revivals* (Urbana, Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 1993), 157 n 3.

<sup>176</sup> Blumhofer, "Restoration," 154.



"widespread cultural impulse" not restricted even to religious circles.<sup>177</sup> He describes both the new theology that would become liberalism and the higher life theology that was emerging at this time as "languages of aspiration" which had an essentially optimistic view of the future in the light of the impending arrival of the kingdom of God despite their obvious differences as to the means of its realization.<sup>178</sup>

It was in this climate that reports of the Welsh Revival in 1904 and 1905 heightened the prevailing sense of expectation and caused many evangelical notables such as R.A. Torrey, William Booth, F.B. Meyer and G. Campbell Morgan to travel there to observe the outbreak firsthand. Their reports were generally favourable and encouraged many Christians to pray more earnestly for worldwide revival.<sup>179</sup>

This concern for revival found a ready audience among certain segments of the holiness movement that had developed during the last half of the nineteenth century in Ontario. This movement grew out of the revivalistic piety that had characterized the Methodist Church in the province from its inception. It was this segment of the Canadian church that proved to be the largest single source of the Pentecostal movement. This Methodist stream seems to have provided the leaders for a more significant proportion of the Pentecostal movement in Canada than in the United States. This is suggested by a random survey prepared by Claire Fuller of 54 Pentecostal leaders who played important roles in the movement in Canada.<sup>180</sup> An analysis of Fuller's list,

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<sup>177</sup> Wacker, "The Holy Spirit," 62. It is interesting to note in this regard that the composer Gustav Mahler chose as the libretto for the first part of his Eighth Symphony, completed in 1906, the liturgical text *Veni, Creator Spiritus*.

<sup>178</sup> Wacker, "The Holy Spirit," 62, 58.

<sup>179</sup> Blumhofer, "Restoration," 151.

<sup>180</sup> Claire Fuller, "The Effect of the Pentecostal Movement on Canadian Methodist and Holiness Churches, 1906-1930," Term paper, Ontario Theological Seminary (May, 1986), 63-65.

which records the religious backgrounds of these leaders, reveals that 55 percent of them came from a holiness group: 18% Mennonite Brethren in Christ; 15% Holiness Movement Church; 9% Christian and Missionary Alliance; 7% other holiness groups; 5% Salvation Army. Fully one fifth (22%) came from a Methodist background. This would place 78 percent of those on the list within the Wesleyan tradition. Only 22 percent, on the other hand, had a background in the Reformed tradition: 7% Anglican; 5.5% Baptist; 5.5% Presbyterian; 2% Brethren; 2% Congregationalist.

Edith Blumhofer has argued that those coming from the Reformed tradition have played a larger role in the emergence of American Pentecostalism than was originally supposed. Many of these were Baptists. The smaller number of Baptists in Canada, particularly in Ontario, the home of many of the Canadian movement's early leaders, provides a possible explanation for this preponderance of former Wesleyans in Canadian Pentecostalism.

This part of the chapter will focus primarily upon the province of Ontario for two reasons. Ontario was home to the most significant proportion of the holiness movement in this country. In addition, the three early leaders I will be comparing to Purdie all emerged from holiness groups whose influence was centered in the province: Ward from the Christian and Missionary Alliance, Chambers from the Mennonite Brethren in Christ and McAlister from the Holiness Movement Church. After a brief sketch of Canadian Methodism, I will provide a glimpse of the holiness movement in general before focusing upon the three groups which formed the spiritual context of Ward, Chambers and McAlister.

### **Methodism in Canada**

Methodism came to Canada in 1772 with immigrants from Yorkshire who settled in Nova Scotia. The arrival of Methodist Loyalists following the American Revolution increased the Methodist presence in that province. Ultimately this American connection resulted in the oversight of the Methodist churches in the province falling to the Methodist Episcopal Church of America, which was formed in 1784. By 1800, however, the majority of the Methodist clergy had aligned themselves with the English Wesleyan Conference.

Formally, the Methodist Church in Ontario remained under Methodist Episcopal supervision until 1828, although anti-American sentiment began to develop following the War of 1812. The first Methodists in Ontario were also Loyalists who settled near the Bay of Quinte and in Dundas County. By 1791 one circuit had been organized with one preacher and approximately sixty people.<sup>181</sup> As larger contingents of Loyalists arrived before the War of 1812, including Methodist Episcopal "saddlebag preachers," Methodism moved to an unrivaled position especially in the rural areas due to its flexible organization and use of itinerant preachers. Goldwin French described these pioneers as "preachers and administrators whose deficiencies in education were more than offset by their zeal and self-sacrifice."<sup>182</sup> He characterized their approach to ministry as follows:

They emphasized strongly that sanctification was to be gained by the "second blessing," another emotional conversion experience. Consequently their conduct of worship and their preaching were marked invariably by impassioned appeals to the emotions, the consciences and often the fears of their auditors. . . . These early preachers created a body of converts who genuinely sought perfection in a tense and dynamic spiritual atmosphere.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>181</sup> Phyllis D. Airhart, *Serving the Present Age, Revivalism, Progressivism, and the Methodist Tradition in Canada* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill Queen's University Press, 1992), 12.

<sup>182</sup> Goldwin French, "The People Called Methodists in Canada," in *The Churches and the Canadian Experience*, ed. John Webster Grant (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1963), 73.

<sup>183</sup> French, "The People Called Methodists," 74.

English Methodism had first entered the province in 1816 in response to fears of republican influence following the War of 1812 aroused by the strong Methodist Episcopal presence in Upper Canada. James Deming and Michael Hamilton note that the British Wesleyan mission to Upper Canada had two clear purposes:

The first was to wrest organizational control away from the Canadian connection. The second was to push Upper Canada's Methodism in the direction British Methodism had taken after John Wesley's death--toward more decorum, orderliness in worship, political conservatism, and deference to the state.<sup>184</sup>

Their style of Methodism was more reserved than their American counterparts. They were less given to the impassioned appeals and strong emphasis on entire sanctification as a separate experience similar to conversion. That the arrival of the Wesleyans was not necessarily celebrated by all Ontario Methodists is suggested by a comment of Nathan Bangs (1778-1862) who served on circuits from Niagara to Quebec from 1800 until 1812. He complained in 1818 that Methodism was being fractured by the "British spirit of division."<sup>185</sup> Shortly afterwards, with the growing tide of English immigration, three other Methodist groups entered the province: the Primitive Methodists (1829), the Bible Christian Church (1831) and the Methodist New Connection (1837).

In 1833 the English Methodists merged with the Methodist Episcopal group to form the Wesleyan Methodist Church, a union that disintegrated in 1840 and was reconstituted in 1847. Those Methodists who refused to join the merger founded the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1834. A final merger in 1884 joined

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<sup>184</sup> James Deming and Michael Hamilton, "Methodist Revivalism in France, Canada and the United States," in Rawlyk, ed., *Amazing Grace*, 135.

<sup>185</sup> 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*, ed. George Rawlyk (Burlington: Welsh Publishing, 1990), 42.

all the remaining Methodist groups in Canada to form the Methodist Church in Canada. The Methodist Church in Canada ceased to be a separate denomination when it joined with the Congregationalists and a portion of the Presbyterians to form the United Church of Canada in 1925.

Methodist growth, particularly in Ontario, was impressive. It reached its peak in the census figures in 1891 when 17.5 percent of Canadians were Methodists. Provincially this ranged from a low in Quebec of 2.6 percent to a high of 30.9 percent in Ontario. They remained the largest Protestant group in Canada from 1871 until 1911 when they were marginally surpassed by the Presbyterians.<sup>186</sup> At the time of Church Union in 1925, there were 418,352 official members as well as many adherents, an impressive gain in little over a century from the 2,550 Methodists in Ontario in 1812.

The approach to evangelism known as revivalism was highly instrumental in this century of rapid numerical expansion. As Phyllis Airhart has pointed out, however, Methodist revivalism was to become much more than an effective method of evangelism:

The impact of revivalism in shaping Methodism in Canada went far beyond expanding its membership rolls. It indelibly marked the religious identity of its adherents. In particular the conversion experience, associated with revivalism, characterized Methodist piety long after the pioneer days.<sup>187</sup>

The influence of revivalism as a way of living the Christian life extended beyond the boundaries of Methodism to the extent that some church historians have dubbed the period from the Second Great Awakening to the First World War as "The Methodist Age."<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>186</sup> Census figures in Rawlyk, *Canadian Protestant Experience*, 102-104.

<sup>187</sup> Airhart, 16.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.

The growth of Methodism in Upper Canada coupled with the increasingly rapid development of what had once been a sparsely populated wilderness brought significant changes. Its ability to continue rapid expansion was somewhat curtailed by the shift in immigration patterns following the War of 1812. Immigration from the United States declined sharply and was replaced by thousands of newcomers hailing from the British Isles. These often brought with them a definite denominational affiliation that made them less open to other groups, especially as Anglican, Roman Catholic and Presbyterian churches were increasingly able to provide for the religious needs of their own people. The increased prosperity that accompanied economic development favoured the growth of social elites, particularly in the cities. These individuals increasingly opted for a more decorous and respectable style of worship, preaching and church architecture.<sup>189</sup> This tended to distance many of Methodism's rising lay leaders and its college-trained ministers from the simple and enthusiastic revivalism of its rural roots. The level of Methodist prestige is suggested by the presence at the 1886 General Conference of the Prime Minister, the Premier of Ontario, the provincial Minister of Education as well as the Chancellor and Vice Chancellor of the University of Toronto.<sup>190</sup>

The concern for respectability is suggested by demands that prayer meetings be properly controlled "so that the most vociferous would not be mistaken for the most pious."<sup>191</sup> Nancy Christie suggests that by 1839, "the evangelical impulse was being gradually modified by its own success" with the result that the Methodists and the Baptists began to move into the cultural

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<sup>189</sup> Christie, "In These Times," 42.

<sup>190</sup> Marguerite Van Die, " 'The Double Vision': Evangelical Piety as Derivative and Indigenous in Victorian Canada," in Mark A. Noll, David W. Bebbington, George A. Rawlyk eds., *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies in Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles and Beyond, 1700-1900* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 254.

<sup>191</sup> Goldwin French, *Parsons and Politics* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1962), 258.

mainstream through the establishment of powerful and successful churches.<sup>192</sup> Deming and Hamilton suggest that by the middle of the nineteenth century, "Methodism had taken its place beside the Anglicans and the Presbyterians in what Mark Noll calls a 'confluence of opposites' where the different denominations took on rather similar characteristics."<sup>193</sup> In such a climate, the changing make-up of Canadian society made it increasingly more difficult for the Methodist Church to continue to satisfy the needs of its diversified constituency. As John Webster Grant puts it, Methodism found it was getting harder to work "both sides of the tracks in an increasingly stratified society."<sup>194</sup> Strains in the fabric were inevitable and, as might be expected, some occurred at the point where the Methodist cloth could claim its most characteristic uniqueness, the doctrine of Christian perfection.

### **The Holiness Movement**

The holiness movement that arose within Methodist circles and then extended into other denominations in the latter half of the nineteenth century was particularly interested in retaining or reviving the emphasis upon the experience of entire sanctification. This was often understood as a second crisis experience similar in its manifestations to conversion. John Wesley had made it clear from the beginning that concern for holy living was to be the cornerstone of Methodism. He and his followers understood the doctrine of

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<sup>192</sup> Christie, "In These Times," 61.

<sup>193</sup> Deming and Hamilton, "Methodist Revivalism," 136 quoting Mark Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1992), 205-210.

<sup>194</sup> John Webster Grant, *The Church in the Canadian Era* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd., 1972), 65.

entire sanctification as the "grand depositum of the people called Methodists."<sup>195</sup> Wesley wrote:

Our main doctrines . . . are three--that of repentance, of faith and of holiness. The first of these we account, as it were, the porch of religion; the next, the door, the third, religion itself.<sup>196</sup>

Theologically speaking, Wesley left a somewhat confused legacy with regards to this key doctrine, particularly concerning the position of the experience of entire sanctification in the life span of the believer. Charles White explains:

Wesley wrote of sanctification as a gift usually given shortly before death as a preparation for heaven. . . . Wesley asked his preachers not, 'Are you perfect?' but, 'Are you going on to perfection?'<sup>197</sup>

In America, this understanding of entire sanctification underwent a transformation through the work of Phoebe Palmer under the influence of the revivalism associated with the Second Great Awakening in the early decades of the nineteenth century. During this period, there was a general revival of concern for the doctrine of Christian perfection among American Methodists stimulated by the ministries of Charles G. Finney (1792-1875) and Asa Mahan (1799-1889) of Oberlin College in Ohio. Palmer's teaching was very similar to that of the "Oberlin Perfectionists" although it placed more emphasis upon the availability of sanctification as an *instantaneous* experience upon fulfilling the condition of complete submission to the divine will. She developed a system of three steps to receive the experience: entire consecration, faith

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<sup>195</sup> John Wesley to Rolen C. Brackenberry, 15 September 1790 cited in Charles E. Jones, "The Beulah Land and the Upper Room': Reclaiming the Text in Turn-of-the-century Holiness and Pentecostal Spirituality," *Drinking from Our Own Wells*, Papers of the Society for Pentecostal Studies 2 (12 November 1992): 4, 5.

<sup>196</sup> John Wesley, *Works*, 5:333 cited by Goldwin French, "The Evangelical Creed in Canada," in W.L. Morton, ed., *The Shield of Achilles: Aspects of Canada in the Victorian Age* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1968), 19.

<sup>197</sup> Charles E. White, "Phoebe Palmer and the Development of Pentecostal Pneumatology," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 22 (Spring/Fall, 1988): 202.



and testimony. This became known as her "altar theology."<sup>198</sup> For Palmer, as it had been with Wesley, the assurance that one had been entirely sanctified was the "witness of the Spirit." In her view, however, this was not a subjective experience but the objective word of Scripture accepted in faith. Jesus had said in Matthew 23:19 that the altar sanctifies the gift. All one needed to do, therefore, was to place one's "all on the altar" and then believe sanctification had taken place based on the promise of Jesus. Scholars like Melvin Dieter have pointed out that Palmer's theology demonstrated the optimism and impatience of the American culture in her day.<sup>199</sup> It also reflected the emphasis on individualism and crisis religious experience that characterized revivalism.

Following the Civil War, interest in holiness spread rapidly through camp meetings which became immensely popular. The formation of the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness (NCA) soon led to the creation of numerous regional, state and local organizations desiring to promote holiness. These were interdenominational in nature although Methodists were frequently in the majority. They functioned as a cooperative network that shared evangelists approved by the NCA despite the lack of formal association with the national body. The members of the NCA tended to have closer ties with the Methodist churches and attempted to influence these denominations to a renewed commitment to Christian perfection. Those in the smaller holiness organizations tended to show less concern for denominational loyalty and it was in these circles that the so-called "come-outers" developed in the 1870's. They advocated the formation of independent holiness churches, a trend that began in 1881 when Daniel S. Warner formed the Church of God (Anderson,

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<sup>198</sup> Ibid., "Development," 205, 206.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid., "Development," citing Melvin E. Dieter, *The Holiness Revival*, 18-21.

Indiana). By 1900, over twenty-three separate holiness groups had formed and the Methodist churches had lost an estimated 100,000 members out of a total of four million.<sup>200</sup> The Salvation Army, the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Free Methodist Church, the Brethren in Christ and other churches who emphasized holiness teachings came to be identified as part of the holiness movement.

When we turn our attention to the Canadian scene, we find that the history of the holiness movement in Canada has yet to be written. Specific studies have focused upon interesting individuals such as Ralph Cecil Horner (1853-1921) and Nelson Burns (1834-1904) or specific schisms such as the separation of the Reformed Baptists from the Free Will Baptists in the Maritimes, but little has been done to trace the overall shape of the movement and its effect upon Methodism in Canada.<sup>201</sup> Robert Burkinshaw's study of evangelicalism in British Columbia indicates that there were few holiness believers there when the Pentecostal movement emerged in 1920's.<sup>202</sup> If we are to examine the holiness roots of Canadian Pentecostalism, therefore, we must examine developments in Ontario, the traditional stronghold of the Methodist Church in Canada.

The renewal of interest in the experience of holiness among Ontario Methodists roughly spans the last half of the nineteenth century. The initial spark was ignited by the ministries of American evangelists James Caughey and Phoebe and Walter Palmer. Caughey held holiness camp meetings and revivals in

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<sup>200</sup> Vinson Synan, *The Old-Time Power* (Advocate Press, 1973), 51.

<sup>201</sup> On Horner see Brian R. Ross, "Ralph Cecil Horner: A Methodist Sectarian Deposed, 1817-1895," *JCHS* XIX: 1, 2 (March-June, 1977): 94-103; on Burns see Ronald Sawatsky, "Unholy Contentions About Holiness: The Canada Holiness Association of the Methodist Church," *Papers of the Canadian Society of Church History* (Ottawa, 1982); on the Reformed Baptists see George Rawlyk, "The Holiness Movement and Canadian Maritime Baptists," in Rawlyk, ed., *Amazing Grace*, 293-316; on the holiness movement see *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (Edmonton: Hurtig, 1985), s.v. "Holiness Movement," by R. Gerald and Helen Hobbs.

<sup>202</sup> Robert Burkinshaw, "Conservative Evangelicalism in Twentieth-Century 'West'," in Rawlyk, ed., *Amazing Grace*, 345.

eastern Canada in the 1840's and 1850's. The Palmers' revival tours included meetings at Victoria College in 1856 and a three-week campaign in Hamilton the next year that reportedly resulted in five hundred conversions.<sup>203</sup> Reports of the Hamilton meetings helped to touch off the so-called "Layman's Revival" in New York in what became known as the *annus mirabilis*, the year of miracles, between the fall of 1857 and the fall of 1858. J. Edwin Orr estimates that this revival ultimately resulted in one million conversions in the United States and a million and a half in Britain.<sup>204</sup>

Phoebe Palmer also made a significant impact on the Canadian religious scene through her magazine *The Guide to Holiness* to which she was a frequent contributor after its inception in 1839. She edited the magazine between 1864 and her death ten years later. In 1857, the year of her remarkable revival meetings in Canada, the circulation in Ontario alone was more than 12,000.<sup>205</sup> It was distributed in the summer by many of the students from Victoria College, and Nathanael Burwash believed it did much to raise the level of concern for holiness among Ontario's Methodists.<sup>206</sup> As an indication of the lack of prominence given to holiness teaching in Ontario Methodism at this time, witness Burwash's claim that despite being raised in an exemplary Methodist home, he was not aware when he experienced conversion in 1853 that there was a second, distinct experience he should seek.<sup>207</sup> Burwash provides an example of Palmer's impact upon an influential Methodist leader.<sup>208</sup> A second

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<sup>203</sup> White, *The Beauty of Holiness*, 46, 47.

<sup>204</sup> J. Edwin Orr, *The Second Great Evangelical Awakening in Britain* (London: Marshall, Morgan and Scott, 1949), 5, 14-15, 36 cited by White, *Beauty*, 47 n 103.

<sup>205</sup> White, *Beauty of Holiness*, 92.

<sup>206</sup> Airhart, 23.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, 22, 23.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

example was Nelson Burns, the founder of the Canada Holiness Association, who experienced entire sanctification after reading one of Palmer's books.<sup>209</sup>

Palmer's emphasis on a second crisis experience following conversion helped to pave the way for the Pentecostal understanding of the baptism of the Holy Spirit. She helped to popularize the use of terminology that related the second blessing to the events of the Day of Pentecost. In addition, she helped to forge the link between the experience of holiness and the idea of power.<sup>210</sup> Wesleyan holiness preachers following Wesley's lieutenant, John Fletcher, had begun to connect Pentecost and the baptism of the Holy Spirit with the second blessing in the 1840's.<sup>211</sup> Under the influence of individuals interested in holiness from the Reformed tradition such as Finney, Mahan, Moody and Torrey, the baptism of the Holy Spirit came to be viewed not as an experience of purification or perfect love but, rather, one of empowerment for Christian service.<sup>212</sup> Torrey emphasized that the gifts of the Holy Spirit would serve as evidence that one had experienced Spirit baptism.<sup>213</sup> This was the final development that set the stage for the Pentecostal understanding of the second blessing. All that remained was for Charles Fox Parham (1873-1929) to proclaim that speaking with other tongues was *the* scriptural gift that would always be manifested when someone was baptized in the Holy Spirit and the doctrinal distinctive that defined the modern Pentecostal movement was established.<sup>214</sup>

The renewed interest in entire sanctification stimulated by Caughey and the Palmers did not result in the formation of any separate holiness

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<sup>209</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>210</sup> White, "Development," 199-210.

<sup>211</sup> Roland Wessels, "The Spirit Baptism, Nineteenth Century Roots," *Pneuma* 14 (Fall, 1992): 131.

<sup>212</sup> Wessels, "Spirit Baptism," 134, 135.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid., 150, 151.

<sup>214</sup> See Dayton, *Theological Roots*; Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God*, 39-66.

associations or organizations in the 1850's although it deeply impacted individual Methodists. Their ministries did, however, represent an important trend that would ultimately stimulate the holiness movement in Canada. This was the trend towards the use of professional evangelists that began after 1850. Part of the rationale for this practice was the conversion of the circuits to permanent churches. This development arose following the completion of the evangelization of rural areas in the 1830's and the shift towards a settled and increasingly college-trained ministry in place of the itinerant circuit preachers of earlier days. In addition, the greater potential of urban settings with better access to large halls, more efficient organization and improved press coverage tended to focus the efforts of the professional evangelists upon city crusades. The trend can be illustrated by the campaigns of W.S. Rainford (Toronto, 1883), Dwight L. Moody (Toronto, 1884) and the team of Hugh T. Crossley and John E. Hunter who held urban revivals across Canada for twenty-five years starting in 1884. These urban revivals tended to be less emotional in tone as the evangelists adapted their style of presentation to their audiences of urbane, middle-class churchgoers. Increasingly the focus of their messages changed from individual conversion to Christian ethics, temperance and social reform, social transformations that would be accomplished through institutional means.<sup>215</sup> In 1877, arrangements were made to appoint conference evangelists so as to preserve the benefits of specialization while at the same time bringing the professional evangelists more under the control of the Church.

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<sup>215</sup> Neil Semple, "The Decline of Revival in 19th Century Central Canadian Methodism: The Extraordinary Means of Grace," *Papers of the Canadian Methodist Church Historical Society*, 2 (1977): 80.

A key factor contributing to these changes in evangelism was the nature of the audience. Rather than appealing to the masses of unevangelized individuals who needed to experience conversion, revivals were attended increasingly by second and third generation Methodists who had never strayed very far from religion. This shift could account for some of the renewed enthusiasm for the crisis experience of entire sanctification as more and more Methodists could not point to a definite, crisis conversion having been gradually and lovingly nurtured into their faith from a tender age in their Christian families and churches. The transformation of evangelism may also account in part for the rapid growth of the Salvation Army in Ontario towns and cities following its arrival from Britain in 1882, although the effects of Methodist church union in 1884 also seem to have played a role.

The 1850's also saw a subtle change in the nature of the camp meeting, one of the traditional contexts of the highly emotional religious experiences associated with Methodist conversion and entire sanctification. Although camp meetings reached the height of their success in the early part of the decade, during the same period there were calls to establish permanent camp sites in order to make them more "respectable." Preachers were asked to avoid "talk of damnation, and to content themselves with sober, sincere, revival preaching."<sup>216</sup> Within twenty years, permanent sites were developed and the nature of the camp meeting was subtly shifted in the direction of a vacation in the country where the benefits were more social and recreational than religious.<sup>217</sup>

The period of most intense activity regarding the issue of holiness among Ontario's Methodists was between 1880 and 1900. Ronald Sawatsky has noted that

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<sup>216</sup> French, *Parsons*, 258.

<sup>217</sup> Semple, "Decline," 10-12.

the most vigorous debates on the subject in the pages of the *Christian Guardian* occurred between 1880-1886 and 1890-1895. Throughout this period, the Methodist Church insisted it had not repudiated the "grand depositum" of Methodism and in fact the experience was enjoyed by thousands of Methodists.<sup>218</sup> Such a denial suggests criticism to the contrary was on the rise.

The single event that served to crystalize concern over the decline of spiritual fervour in the Methodist Church was the union in 1884 of the Wesleyan Methodist Church with the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Primitive Methodist Church and the Bible Christian Church to form the Methodist Church in Canada. In 1834 some of the Methodist Episcopal people, who represented the more enthusiastic American style of revivalism which had originally evangelized particularly the rural areas of the province, had rejected an earlier attempt at union and formed the Methodist Episcopal Church which was absorbed in this union. Possibly, the reaction on the part of some rural Methodists toward this union found expression in the renewed concern over holiness.<sup>219</sup> Albert Carman's article "Holiness Our Hope" published in 1884, which argues that only holiness can make the union successful, seems to be aimed at this element in the Church:

The Methodist Churches of this country kept separate and trusting God would be far better and would have far more power, notwithstanding their occasional collisions and oppositions, than united with their resources aggregated and their abilities accumulated, forgetting God, and trusting themselves and human policy.<sup>220</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Airhart, 53.

<sup>219</sup> French, "People Called Methodists," 78. John Webster Grant points out that Ralph Horner's converts were "overwhelmingly rural" and "even the Salvation Army adherents constituted as large a proportion of the whole of Ontario as of its cities." *Profusion*, 212.

<sup>220</sup> Albert Carman, "Holiness Our Hope," *Methodist Quarterly Review* 21 (July, 1884): 572.

He suggests that "this trusting ourselves and human policy is the danger apprehended by *many pious souls*."<sup>221</sup> The tone of the article illustrates the fear of union felt by those segments of the Church most concerned with issues of declining Methodist piety. Carman concludes that "A Church can have large resources and be humble and holy."<sup>222</sup> The action of some segments of the Church to be discussed below suggests some were not as convinced as Carman. That the union was a positive move for the Methodist Church is indicated by the more than 38 percent increase in membership it enjoyed between 1884 and 1890.<sup>223</sup> This figure is particularly impressive when we consider that the loss of members to the Salvation Army seems to have accelerated following church union.<sup>224</sup> Unlike the American situation during this period, where several new holiness churches emerged, Canadian Methodists concerned about holiness had few options other than Horner's Holiness Movement Church as far as joining a denomination specifically formed to combat its decline. By 1900, holiness agitation had become history in the Methodist Church. References to the subject in the *Christian Guardian* were infrequent and usually negative.<sup>225</sup> The Church was in the process of reorienting itself toward social Christianity, reinterpreting the legacy of Christian perfection in ways that would contribute to the rise of the social gospel movement.

How did interest in holiness find expression among Ontario Methodists in the last two decades of the nineteenth century? There were some channels available within the Church itself. Holiness-minded lay persons and clergy published periodicals such as the *Holiness Berean* started in 1890 by Rev. J.

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<sup>221</sup> Carman, "Holiness Our Hope," 572, emphasis added.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, 573.

<sup>223</sup> Grant, *Profusion*, 179.

<sup>224</sup> Lindsay Reynolds, *Rebirth* (Toronto: The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada, 1992), 32.

<sup>225</sup> Airhart, 109.



McDonald Kerr of Toronto, and the *Expositor of Holiness* begun in 1882 by Nelson Burns. Camp meetings were organized such as the one held at Wesley Park near Niagara in 1886 under the auspices of the (American) National Camp Meeting Association.<sup>226</sup> Individual churches held holiness conventions such as the 1879 meeting in Brussels, Ontario, called by Rev. James Harris which led to the formation of the Canada Holiness Association.<sup>227</sup> The Canada Holiness Association was one of the few voluntary organizations founded in Ontario to promote holiness. Although it claimed to work interdenominationally, most of its leaders were Methodists.<sup>228</sup>

The Canada Holiness Association does not seem to have belonged to that stratum of the holiness movement that provided Canadian Pentecostalism with its early leadership. In fact, it stood apart from the rest of the movement in two ways. By 1891, its founder Nelson Burns (1834-1904) had repudiated the entire American holiness movement, evidently because a number of its leaders had severely criticized his book, *Divine Guidance*, published two years before. This was the work which ultimately led to Burns' dismissal from the Methodist ministry in 1894 on charges of doctrinal error. It would seem that other segments of the holiness movement in Ontario remained in sympathy with the much larger American movement and that there was communication between the two, at the very least by means of periodicals like Palmer's *Guide to Holiness*. This connection with the American movement is further substantiated by the fact that Ward, Chambers and McAlister representing the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Mennonite Brethren in Christ and the Holiness Movement Church respectively all chose to attend an American holiness

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<sup>226</sup> Sawatsky, "Unholy Contentions," 31 n 29; Charles E. Jones, *Perfectionist Persuasion: The Holiness Movement in American Methodism* (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1974), 185.

<sup>227</sup> Sawatsky, "Unholy Contentions," 12.

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

institution, God's Bible School, within one or two years of its opening in 1900.

The second thing that removed Burns and the Canada Holiness Association from the movement that gave rise to Pentecostalism was his total rejection of the religious enthusiasm typically associated with holiness revivalism:

Burns took the position that shouting, hysterical laughing or ecstatic prostration. . . . were definitely not signs of superior piety nor were they to be encouraged as effective contributions to religious services.<sup>229</sup>

Other channels into which enthusiasm for holiness could flow came into the province from outside such as the Free Methodists (1876) and the Church of the Nazarene (1908) from the United States and the Salvation Army from Britain. The three segments of the holiness movement relevant to the present study are the Christian and Missionary Alliance, the Mennonite Brethren in Christ and the Holiness Movement Church, the groups from which Ward, Chambers and McAlister came before they were Pentecostals. Before they had joined these holiness groups, Ward and Chambers had been Methodists while McAlister had been raised Presbyterian.

The Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) in Canada was established largely through the efforts of John Salmon (1831-1918). Salmon's spiritual pilgrimage had passed through Presbyterian, Methodist, Adventist, Congregationalist and Baptist phases.<sup>230</sup> In 1882, Salmon became the pastor of the Hazelton Avenue Congregational Church in Toronto where he began to teach the "Fourfold Gospel" of "Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King."<sup>231</sup> Not all the members of his congregation were receptive to these

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<sup>229</sup> Ibid., 16 citing *Autobiography of the Late Rev. Nelson Burns, BA* (Toronto: Christian Association, n.d.), 114.

<sup>230</sup> Lindsay Reynolds, *Footprints, : The Beginnings of the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada* (Toronto: Christian and Missionary Alliance, 1981), 1-60.

<sup>231</sup> Reynolds, *Footprints*, 32.

themes, particularly the emphasis Salmon placed upon healing by faith after he was healed of terminal kidney disease in 1885 at a convention in Buffalo held by Albert Benjamin Simpson (1843-1919), the CMA's founder. Salmon remained a strong supporter and colleague of Simpson for the rest of his life. Rather than provoke division in the church by continuing to stress these themes in the regular services, in the same year that he was healed, Salmon decided to start a Friday evening meeting in his home where healing and sanctification could be emphasized. Reynolds records, "These meetings were attended particularly by Methodists, who spread the word of his teachings to their spiritually hungry brethren still in the churches."<sup>232</sup>

When a controversy arose over Salmon's leadership, he resigned in 1887 to avoid a split in the church and began working as an independent among the poor in St. John's Ward. The independent church he started in 1887 became Bethany Chapel, the mother church of the CMA in Canada. Two years later, the Dominion Auxiliary Branch of the Christian Alliance was formed in Toronto as a "fraternity of faith in the Fourfold Gospel that transcended all denominational boundaries."<sup>233</sup> The fraternity's strength lay in its local branches of believers from a variety of denominations who desired fellowship around the fourfold gospel, although it would seem that healing received the greatest attention. Many of the members appear to have been Methodists living in Ontario's small towns.<sup>234</sup> Salmon's Pentecostal experience at a camp meeting in Ohio in 1907 did not cause him to leave the CMA unlike many others, particularly in the United States, where the issue of tongues proved more

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<sup>232</sup> Ibid., 32.

<sup>233</sup> Ibid., 33.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid., 33, 40.

divisive.<sup>235</sup> Between 1907 and 1908 many of the Christian and Missionary Alliance's leaders received the Pentecostal experience and began to propagate it enthusiastically in Alliance camp meetings and branches.

The Pentecostal emphasis on tongues as the uniform initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit became the key point of contention with Simpson and the Alliance. He did not discount the gift but reacted to what he perceived as an overemphasis upon it as well as to certain fanaticisms that developed in some Pentecostal circles. As a result, he evaluated Pentecostalism as "a mixed blessing, possessing both the supernatural signs of authentic revival and destructive extremist elements."<sup>236</sup> Simpson attempted to pursue a moderate course in the dispute adopting a policy of "seek not, forbid not" regarding tongues. Yet the number of Canadians associated with the CMA who joined the Pentecostals seems to have been quite small. We learn only of four individuals: George Murray and his wife, former CMA missionaries to Palestine; Ivan Kauffman, a CMA missionary who received the Pentecostal experience while home on furlough from China in 1917; and A.G. Ward.

Ward's family background included Irish Loyalists brought into the Methodist Church by Barbara Heck, who with Philip Embury founded what was probably the second Methodist society in America in New York city in 1766. Subsequently, the Hecks settled in Upper Canada in the region along the St. Lawrence between Brockville and Prescott where Ward's ancestors had migrated from Virginia.<sup>237</sup> Ward made a profession of faith at age sixteen in a Methodist revival meeting and become very active in Christian work. Following

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid., 38; Charles Nienkirchen, *A.B. Simpson and the Pentecostal Movement* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1992), 81-88, 107-122. Reynolds estimated that in the United States, the CMA lost one third of its members to Pentecostalism; Cf. Fuller, 48 n 27.

<sup>236</sup> Nienkirchen, 96.

<sup>237</sup> Don Kauffman to Douglas Rudd, June 1989, PACAT.

graduation from high school, he accepted a Methodist circuit first near Lacombe, Alberta, and then on the Fisher River Reservation in Manitoba. Two significant events occurred during this period (probably 1901). First Ward preached himself under conviction and had a genuine conversion experience. The second event brought Ward into contact with some holiness people from Kansas who taught him about divine healing. This, as well as a healing he experienced while studying in the United States, made Ward receptive to the message of the Christian and Missionary Alliance.<sup>238</sup> It is difficult to ascertain exactly when Ward met A.B. Simpson, but it was possibly in 1906 when he held meetings in Winnipeg.<sup>239</sup> Although we are unclear as to the exact circumstances of his affiliation with the Christian and Missionary Alliance, by 1906 Ward had been appointed the superintendent of the CMA Home and Foreign Mission in Winnipeg. Here he received his Pentecostal experience and met his future wife, Mary Markle, a Mennonite Brethren in Christ city mission worker. They were married in her home town of Elmont, Ontario, in October, 1907.

It was probably this stay in southern Ontario that brought Ward to the attention of the Mennonite Brethren in Christ leadership who licensed him with their conference that year and invited him to preach at a New Year's convention in the Berlin assembly, their largest church in the province. This gathering was pivotal in the influx of Mennonite Brethren leaders into the Pentecostal movement. While still a Methodist circuit preacher, Ward had determined to obtain a ministerial education. On the advice of one Bishop Buchannon, he decided to attend God's Bible School in Cincinnati, Ohio, in 1902 and 1903. The school was founded by the American holiness leader, Martin Wells Knapp (1853-1901). There he met G.A. Chambers who attended the school

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<sup>238</sup> C.M. Ward, "Victory in the Valley," 4.

<sup>239</sup> Miller, *Canadian*, 73.

with his wife during the same two years. R.E. McAlister also attended the school during this period. At God's Bible School Ward, Chambers and McAlister would have received the standard holiness doctrine of entire sanctification as a "definite work of grace . . . identical with the baptism of the Holy Spirit."<sup>240</sup>

This reference to God's Bible School provides a convenient juncture to shift our attention to George Chambers. He was born in 1879 in Victoria county near Lindsay, Ontario to English parents who had emigrated from the Isle of Wright. They had both been converted in a Bible Christian Church, an offshoot of the Wesleyan Methodist Church that had entered the province in 1831. Chambers was raised in the Methodist Church in Lindsay. He was converted in his late teens in Toronto but soon moved to Manitoba to find work. There he received a call to ministry through a startling experience. One night he was awakened by a voice calling: "George Chambers! Will you be willing to preach my gospel?"<sup>241</sup> After a time of resistance, he decided to enter the ministry. In 1902 Chambers married and enrolled in God's Bible School in Cincinnati, Ohio, with his bride. Following his studies in Cincinnati, Chambers began his ministry with the Mennonite Brethren in Christ taking a small charge in Guelph and then a mission on Parliament Street in Toronto's East end.

The Mennonite Brethren in Christ had been formed in 1883 from two groups, the Brethren in Christ from Ohio and the Evangelical United Mennonites, who represented a series of unions involving small groups of Mennonites from Indiana, Pennsylvania and Ontario. These groups came under the influence of revivalism and began to stress aggressive evangelism, zeal for missions and an emotional piety with an emphasis on holiness that included entire

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<sup>240</sup> God's Bible School and College, 1987-1989 Catalogue, "Doctrinal Statement," 6.

<sup>241</sup> Chambers, *Fifty Years*, 3.

sanctification as a second work of grace. They also believed in premillennialism and healing. The group adopted a Methodist polity with conferences and district superintendents. Over time, the Mennonite Brethren in Christ would move completely out of the Mennonite denominational family and change their name to the Missionary Church.<sup>242</sup>

The account of Chambers' expulsion from the Mennonite Brethren in Christ was related in chapter 2. It is estimated the group lost 25 percent of its leaders to the Pentecostal movement by 1912, including Solomon Eby, one of the founders of the group, and John T. Ball, pastor of a five-point charge in Markham who began a Pentecostal work in that town which attracted many of his former parishioners. A Pentecostal congregation composed of former Mennonite Brethren in Christ people also arose in Vineland and called A.G. Ward to be its pastor in 1908. Chambers returned to Toronto and started a Pentecostal church a few blocks away from the Mennonite Brethren in Christ mission on Parliament street.

Although Ward and Chambers could claim spiritual roots deep in the soil of Ontario Methodism, it was R.E. McAlister who was connected to the most notorious expression of the holiness movement in the province, the Holiness Movement Church founded by Ralph C. Horner. McAlister was born in 1880 on a farm near Cobden, Ontario. He was raised along with his twelve brothers and sisters in the local Presbyterian church where his father was an elder. Robert was most likely converted in the Holiness Movement church in Cobden.

He attended God's Bible School between 1900 and 1902, although he failed to complete his second year due to illness. In 1906, while travelling as an

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<sup>242</sup> Frank Epp, *Mennonites in Canada 1786-1920: The History of a Separate People* (Toronto: Macmillan of Canada, 1974), 149-154; *The Mennonite Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Mennonite Brethren in Christ."

evangelist for the Holiness Movement Church, he learned of the events taking place at Azusa Street. He travelled there and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. He then returned to Ottawa and began holding Pentecostal meetings, presumably in towns such as Kinburn and Fitzroy Harbour where he was already known because of his ministry with the Holiness Movement Church.

The Holiness Movement Church had come into being primarily through the efforts of one dynamic individual, Ralph Cecil Horner. Born in 1854 near Shawville, Quebec, Horner was converted at a Methodist camp meeting in 1872 and experienced entire sanctification later the same year. Sensing a call to evangelism, he studied at Victoria College (1883-1885) and spent a year at the National School of Oratory and Elocution in Philadelphia. He was ordained in May, 1887 in the Methodist Church and appointed as one of the two Conference evangelists.

Following his appointment, Horner began a whirlwind of evangelistic activity up and down the Ottawa Valley in small towns like Renfrew, Arnprior, Pembroke and Carleton Place. The region had been the scene of a number of awakenings over successive decades beginning with a major "outpouring of the Holy Spirit" among the Baptists in 1834-1836.<sup>243</sup> He soon acquired a reputation for holding meetings characterized by high levels of noise and excitement. There were prostrations, simultaneous praying, ecstasy and uncontrollable laughter. Some in the Conference began to question his methods. Horner wrote: "Opposition to noise and physical manifestation was rising very rapidly. . . . Some concluded I unconsciously exercised much mesmeric power."<sup>244</sup> He revelled in the shock effect of his revivals upon the more staid of his brethren: "It

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<sup>243</sup> Van Die, "Double Vision," 257.

<sup>244</sup> Ralph C. Horner, *Ralph C. Horner, Evangelist - Reminiscences from His Own Pen* (Brockville: Mrs. A. E. Horner, n.d.), 87.



was somewhat amusing to see the look of the city preacher when the people would fall to the floor under the power of God."<sup>245</sup> He rationalized his methods by arguing that those who resisted them were ignorant of the "manifestations of divine" power that had attended the rise of Methodism.<sup>246</sup> There were also accusations of doctrinal irregularity although, unlike the case of Nelson Burns, it was Horner's attitude towards the authority of his church, not his teaching, that ultimately resulted in his expulsion. His teaching had in fact been praised by some of Methodism's leading lights. Albert Carman, a supporter of holiness and the General Superintendent, had written the introduction to Horner's *From the Altar to the Upper Room*. Nathanael Burwash had praised Horner's *Notes on Boland; or, Mr. Wesley and the Second work of Grace* in the pages of the *Christian Guardian*.<sup>247</sup>

In 1890, after three years of conducting evangelistic meetings virtually wherever he pleased with or without the approval of the local Methodist clergy, the Montreal Conference decided to rein in their enthusiastic evangelist by assigning Horner to the Portage du Fort circuit in Quebec just across the Ottawa River from his home in Renfrew. Horner managed to secure the approval of his district superintendent to send a supply preacher in his place and continue with his evangelism. In 1891 he was appointed Conference evangelist again but this time his activities were to be closely monitored. Things came to a head in 1893 when Horner was accused of "serious irregularities" in his meetings and of making public remarks critical of the Church and its ministers.<sup>248</sup> The Conference's Evangelism Committee was also concerned when Horner encouraged some of his young followers to hold their

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<sup>245</sup> Horner, *Reminiscences*, 87.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>247</sup> Airhart, 50.

<sup>248</sup> Ross, "Ralph Cecil Horner," 99.

own evangelistic meetings despite their lack of proper training or theological education. Perhaps realizing a parting of the ways was inevitable, Horner requested he be left without a conference appointment. He then proceeded to act more independently than before, purchasing the Concession Street Baptist Church in Ottawa with the help of a group of his followers. A disciplinary hearing was called in May of 1894, followed by a trial in July the same year. Horner did not even bother to present himself. He was suspended and then formally deposed at the conference the following year.

Horner formed the Holiness Movement Church in Ottawa in 1895 although it did not obtain a federal charter until 1900. During his previous eight years of ministry in eastern Ontario, he seems to have built up a considerable following. By 1900 there were 5,653 members in the Holiness Movement Church in 118 churches served by ninety preachers.<sup>249</sup> A school to train students for the ministry was established in Ottawa in 1895 followed by a publishing operation. By 1910, there were Holiness Movement Church conferences in Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. Holiness Movement Church congregations were established as far away as Ireland and China. Following a schism in 1916, Horner organized the Standard Church of America which he led until his death in 1921.

Horner would seem to have been the ideal mentor for a future Pentecostal like McAlister. He was passionately devoted to evangelism, his meetings were characterized by obvious manifestations of the power of the Holy Spirit including speaking in other tongues and his theology was very similar to some of the early American Holiness-Pentecostals such as Joseph Hillery King (1869-

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<sup>249</sup> Donald Klan, "PAOC Church Growth in British Columbia from Origins Until 1953," (Master of Christian Studies thesis Vancouver: Regent College, 1979), 23.

1946), the founder of the Pentecostal Holiness Church.<sup>250</sup> Horner believed in three works of grace: conversion, entire sanctification and the "baptism of the holy Ghost and fire" specifically to empower the believer for evangelism.<sup>251</sup> He believed that entire sanctification prepared the believer to receive "the anointing that abideth."<sup>252</sup> He also understood the gift to include the ability to perform signs and wonders:

Regeneration was my salvation from all my actual transgressions of God's law, and it brought me into the covenant of grace, the adopted child of God. Entire sanctification destroyed all the depravity that I inherited from Adam, and restored my whole soul to the image of God. The anointing that abideth is not salvation from any sin, but a qualification to do wonders and miracles in the name of the Lord.<sup>253</sup>

Horner felt he had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit and fire in his private devotions on various occasions but could not retain it because he did not know how to use it. It only remained with him after he testified to it in public.

Although he often witnessed demonstrative behaviour in his meetings and made no attempt to inhibit such phenomena, by 1907 Horner seems to have taken the stand that speaking in tongues was only an optional, not a necessary, manifestation of the third blessing.<sup>254</sup> The date of this stance coincides with R.E. McAlister's first year of ministry in the Ottawa area following his Pentecostal experience. The Holiness Movement Church's rejection of Pentecostalism's distinctive doctrine is suggested by one of McAlister's sermons published in 1911 entitled "Have Ye Received the Holy Ghost Since Ye Believed?"<sup>255</sup> He began by explaining various ways the question in his title

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<sup>250</sup> DCFM, s.v., "King, Joseph Hillery."

<sup>251</sup> Horner, *Reminiscences*, 13, 14.

<sup>252</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>253</sup> *Ibid.*, 14, 15.

<sup>254</sup> Klan, "PAOC Church Growth," 41.

<sup>255</sup> McAlister, *The Good Report*, May 1911, 2.

was answered: some identified it with confirmation, some with conversion, and some with "the great blessing of sanctification." He continued:

Then there are others who claim a third blessing which they generally term 'fire.' They say, 'When you have it you know it, when you use it you have it, when you don't use it, its gone.'<sup>256</sup>

He declared that none of these views had any basis in Scripture. They were all the products of "dead men's brains." The key to knowing you have received the baptism of fire is the scriptural evidence of tongues. McAlister explained that if his hearers took a trip to the Upper Room, they should wait not only for the wind and the fire, but for the tongues as well. He continued:

Well, I see I have all the Holiness people shouting when I talk about the wind and the fire. But now I read the fourth verse which says, 'And they were ALL filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues. . . . What's the matter now? You have all dropped your heads and not an amen in the crowd.'<sup>257</sup>

#### He then spoke of the fact that occasionally

one of our number would break through the restraint and receive the fulness, speaking in other tongues according to the Scriptures. But as soon as it was known the ecclesiastical whip was introduced and the gag law enforced, which is: 'Say nothing about it.' This 'Say nothing about it' rule is an effectual, soul-murdering weapon.<sup>258</sup>

It is clear that McAlister had moved beyond Horner's understanding of the third blessing and was prepared to oppose it publicly. He would also abandon the holiness view of entire sanctification shortly after. These two changes, the insistence that tongues are the initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the shift to a more Reformed view of sanctification as a process rather than a distinct and instantaneous experience, enable us to distinguish the early Pentecostals from the holiness context from which they emerged.

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<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

The single context which most clearly represented the principal doctrinal emphases of early Pentecostalism and which influenced all three of the leaders we have been examining was God's Bible School in Cincinnati, Ohio. A brief glance at the pages of *The Revivalist*, the magazine edited by the school's founder, Martin Wells Knapp, reveals a clear commitment to the themes of the fourfold gospel: "I praise God to-day for the fourfold gospel: Jesus my Savior, my Sanctifier, my Healer and my Coming Lord."<sup>259</sup> The issues published around 1900 when McAlister attended the school are virtually identical to the *Good Report* or the *Pentecostal Testimony* which McAlister published after he became a Pentecostal with the exception of references to speaking in other tongues. One finds there the restorationist idealization of the early church which was said to have "shone resplendently with the graces of the Spirit, and denied none of the Spirit's gifts but possessed and exercised them."<sup>260</sup> There are reports of revivals, testimonies of salvation and healing as well as articles on the imminent return of Christ. It is evident that the teaching in the school as well as its spiritual atmosphere helped to bring these three Canadians to the threshold of Pentecostalism. The news that the Latter Rain had begun to fall in Los Angeles was the event that brought them through the door.

Ward, Chambers and McAlister, through their involvements with the holiness movement, were heirs to a number of influences that, with some modification, would guide them for the remainder of their lives. These included a revivalistic style of ministry which stressed heartfelt religion and demonstrative expression, a Methodist piety which longed passionately for a second blessing beyond conversion, an activist approach to ministry that

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<sup>259</sup> Martin Wells Knapp, *The Revivalist*, 26 January, 1989, 10.

<sup>260</sup> *The Revivalist*, 29 March, 1900, 1.

employed camp meetings, conventions and revival services, and a primitivist theology which understood the person of Christ in terms of his fourfold role as Saviour, Healer, originally Sanctifier and then Baptizer in the Holy Ghost and Coming King.

**CHAPTER 5**  
**THE PENTECOSTAL PIETY OF JAMES EUSTACE PURDIE**

The purpose of this chapter is to focus upon three aspects of Purdie's understanding and practice of Christian spirituality and to demonstrate similarities with those of Pentecostals in general and early Canadian Pentecostals in particular. Specifically, comparisons will be made with R.E. McAlister, George A. Chambers and Alfred G. Ward, three of the most influential leaders of Pentecostalism in Canada. McAlister and Chambers participated in the decision to call Purdie as the president of Canada's first Pentecostal college, signaling their recognition of him as an "insider" worthy of being entrusted with such an influential position in the fledgling movement. Ward had an extensive ministry in Eastern Canada in the early years of the Pentecostal movement.<sup>261</sup> He also served as the General Secretary of the PAOC during some of the Winnipeg college's most difficult years in the early 1930's.

These three men also provide a cross-section of the three major streams of Pentecostal influence in Canada. McAlister, along with thousands of others from around the globe, received the baptism of the Holy Spirit at the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles, the birthplace of the modern Pentecostal movement. Ward received his Pentecostal experience in Winnipeg among those influenced by American Pentecostal leader William H. Durham (1873-1912), whose North Avenue Mission in Chicago became a centre of Pentecostal activity after 1907. Although Chambers received his baptism in the Spirit while pastoring in

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<sup>261</sup> Miller, *Canadian*, 46.

Pennsylvania, he was greatly influenced by the Hebden Mission in Toronto, a place that has aptly been called "the Canadian Azusa."<sup>262</sup>

The purpose of this argument is not to claim that these ways of understanding and practicing the Christian faith are unique to Purdie or the early Pentecostals, for they are not. Many of the individual ways of articulating spiritual experiences, stated or implied priorities of the Christian life and practices of ministry to be discussed have been shared by a wide variety of Christians over the centuries. The discussion is intended rather to delineate some of the commonalities in an area considered non-negotiable to the early Pentecostals, that of practical Christian living. These commonalities enabled the Pentecostals to recognize and accept Purdie as one of their own despite differences in other matters. This will prepare the way for my conclusions concerning the connections between Pentecostalism and the larger Canadian religious scene.

### **Articulating Spiritual Experiences**

The language of faith in which persons are nurtured plays a profound role both in how they understand and articulate their faith and in determining the religious contexts in which they will see themselves and be seen by others as "insiders" or "outsiders."

To illustrate, imagine a Fundamentalist discussing the Christian faith with a Roman Catholic. The Fundamentalist asks his friend, "Are you saved?" The response, which could vary from a quizzical look to the answer, "I don't know," or "I have been baptized," will immediately set off alarm bells in the mind of the Fundamentalist. In his view the person before him obviously lacks the "assurance of salvation" and cannot, therefore, be a genuine Christian.

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<sup>262</sup> Thomas William Miller, "The Canadian 'Azusa.'"



Having thus diagnosed the spiritual condition of his Catholic friend, the Fundamentalist will conclude she is an "outsider" with regard to the true, "invisible Church." The way we articulate our spiritual experiences plays a role in determining where we will receive understanding and acceptance on the one hand, or questioning and rejection on the other.

J.E. Purdie used a variety of expressions that bear striking resemblance to the terminology of the early Pentecostals. In some cases, it can be conclusively demonstrated that he spoke this way about his faith before he had any extended contact with the Pentecostalism. In other cases, the demonstration comes from a period much later in life after he had moved in Pentecostal circles for many years.

A paucity of pre-Pentecostal Purdie sources is more of a problem with the articulation of spiritual experiences than with his priorities for the Christian life or practices of ministry discussed below. In arguing for Purdie's Pentecostal commonalities on the evidence of the way he *articulated* his spiritual experiences, I must by the nature of the argument restrict my parallels to demonstrated examples of Purdie's actual words and not merely his concepts. As well, this problem of precise documentation from Purdie's pre-Pentecostal days is exacerbated by the nature of the surviving materials themselves. They consist primarily of jottings in a personal notebook and sermon notes, mostly in outline form. As a result, these sources contain little autobiographical material when compared to the later materials, primarily Purdie's extensive interviews on his life with Gordon Franklin taped in 1973. These are almost exclusively a narrative of Purdie's life and spiritual experiences given in the first person. Although this is an ideal source of Purdie's modes of expression concerning spiritual experiences, it

could be argued that the Franklin interviews do not necessarily reflect how Purdie spoke of his experiences as an Anglican, since at the time of the interviews, he had been a Pentecostal for over half a century.

This does not, however, pose an insurmountable problem. It is evident from the interviews that in Purdie's thinking, the spiritual experiences of his pre-Pentecostal days fit very well with his present Pentecostal categories and modes of expression. He was obviously quite comfortable using Pentecostal language to describe his spirituality during the period that he was still an Anglican. This observation accords well with the fact that in Purdie's mind, becoming a Pentecostal was not a revolutionary event. As indicated in Chapter 2, he did not emphasize any strong sense of "before" and "after" in regard to the effects of his Pentecostal baptism upon his life as a Christian or as a minister of the gospel. When we add to this his use of Pentecostal terminology in cases where it can be documented from his Anglican period, it suggests that his ways of articulating spiritual experiences may not have changed that much when he made the transition from the Anglican milieu to the Pentecostal.

The two principal areas where we can observe common ways of speaking about spiritual experiences between Purdie and the early Pentecostals are Christian conversion and the events related to it and the believer's experience of the Holy Spirit. As regards the experience of Christian conversion, Purdie believed that a person would hear the gospel, come "under conviction" for a period of time and then receive Christ as their Saviour. Purdie told a story with such a sequence of events concerning a mother's companion named Hilda who lived with him and his wife in Saint John, New Brunswick. She had heard the gospel at the R.A. Torrey campaign held in that city in November 1910. Purdie had dealt with her in a fairly aggressive manner

because she would not "yield" to God. One night, after hearing Purdie preach on the text "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation," she stayed up all night pacing in the garden, "under conviction."<sup>263</sup>

This sequence of events--hearing the gospel, spending a period of time "under conviction" and then "yielding" to God by receiving Christ--is described by Walter (1897-1991) and Hugh (1902-1955) McAlister, two of R.E. McAlister's nephews who were also early leaders in the PAOC. Reporting on a series of evangelistic meetings they were holding in the community of Parkside, Saskatchewan, they wrote,

the *convicting* power of the Holy Ghost has got the county in its grip. Already over fifty sinners and backslidders have definitely *yielded* themselves to God. . . . Scores are still *under conviction*.<sup>264</sup>

The last sentence suggests that numbers of individuals had evidently been touched by the message but had not yet "yielded themselves to God" and thus were in the stage preceding conversion which they described, like Purdie, as being "under conviction." George Chambers gave a similar account of a revival in Mille Roches, Ontario, in which he participated in 1918.<sup>265</sup> A.G. Ward, who served as a circuit rider for the Methodist Church in Alberta following his graduation from High School, also described a series of revival meetings he held before he had experienced conversion himself. He says, "I preached myself *under conviction*."<sup>266</sup>

In Purdie's terminology, once the person who had been under conviction yielded to God, they were "saved" or "born again."<sup>267</sup> Purdie describes some special meetings he held in Newcastle, New Brunswick, while he was the Curate

<sup>263</sup> Franklin, 42.

<sup>264</sup> McAlister, Walter and Hugh, *PT*, March 1922, 4, emphasis added.

<sup>265</sup> Chambers, *PT*, 1 June 1943, 9.

<sup>266</sup> C.M. Ward, Elder A.G. Ward, *Trintate Glimpses of My Father's Life* (Springfield, MO: Assemblies of God, 1955), 11, emphasis added.

<sup>267</sup> J.E. Purdie, Personal notebook, [hereafter, Notebook] 29 January 1916.

at St. Luke's in Saint John. He says, "I had a most wonderful time--night after night *souls were saved*."<sup>268</sup> If a person had previously accepted Christ but was not living the Christian life for a time and then decided to renew that commitment, according to Purdie, such a "backslider" was said to have been "restored."<sup>269</sup>

This cluster of terminology is repeated throughout the writings of the early Pentecostals. For example, R.E. McAlister, writing in 1912, described the Pentecostal movement as a "soul-saving agency in the hands of God."<sup>270</sup> In the same paper, his brother Harvey wrote, "I praise God for reality, a real experience on Bible lines, *born again*, cleansed by the precious blood of Jesus."<sup>271</sup> A.G. Ward records that he had responded to an altar call in a Methodist revival as a young teenager but he "did not get a real *born again* experience of salvation" because he had not been shown the need for repentance.<sup>272</sup> In a report of a revival in Kinburn, Ontario, in 1912, R.E. McAlister said the convention was a "glorious success throughout, good attendance, perfect unity, definite results in the salvation of sinners and *restoring backsliders*."<sup>273</sup>

When we come to examine Purdie's language concerning the believer's experience of the Holy Spirit, it is possible to document a number of parallels from his pre-Pentecostal days as an Anglican minister, particularly in his sermon notes. One theme that is very prominent in the language of the early Pentecostals is the idea of intense spiritual "hunger" with reference to

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<sup>268</sup> Franklin, 53, *emphasis added*.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*, 57, 58.

<sup>270</sup> McAlister, *The Good Report*, May 1911, 4.

<sup>271</sup> *Ibid.*, 8, *emphasis added*.

<sup>272</sup> C.M. Ward, *Elder A.G. Ward*, 10, *emphasis added*.

<sup>273</sup> McAlister, *The Good Report*, 1:3 (1912), 1, *emphasis added*. George Chambers seems to have preferred the phrase "backslider reclaimed." Chambers, *Fifty Years*, 6, 19.

a deeper experience of God's Spirit. In Purdie's case, this language can be documented from the period just prior to his receiving the Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Spirit in August 1919. In a sermon Purdie preached in April 1918 entitled "The Gift of Power," he appealed to his listeners to "hunger and thirst for the Holy Ghost" since nothing else could "satisfy."<sup>274</sup> Following his Pentecostal baptism, the same idea appears in a message that concluded with a call for believers to take their place as "hungry Christians" seeking after the baptism of the Holy Ghost.<sup>275</sup>

A.G. Ward writes that after he heard of the outpouring of God's Spirit taking place in Los Angeles, "My heart became very *hungry* for God's best in my life."<sup>276</sup> In a similar vein, George Chambers recorded his reaction to the news of the events at Azusa Street: "After some debating with myself, I decided it was a move of God and my heart became extremely *hungry*."<sup>277</sup> Chambers and his wife were invited to attend a convention in Kitchener, Ontario, where A.G. Ward, who had recently received the Pentecostal experience, was to be the speaker. Chambers wrote: "Desperately *hungry* for God, my wife and I accepted the invitation. We went to Kitchener hoping to receive that which would *satisfy* our hearts."<sup>278</sup>

A number of testimonies in the first issue of R.E. McAlister's paper, *The Good Report*, used similar phrases.<sup>279</sup> Similar accounts are found in the early issues of *The Pentecostal Testimony* including one by Charles E. Baker (1872-1947), a prominent early leader of the PAOC, of a crusade held in his church

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<sup>274</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 30 April 1918.

<sup>275</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 26 October 1919.

<sup>276</sup> A.G. Ward, "My Personal Experience of Pentecost," *PT*, May 1956, 67, emphasis added.

<sup>277</sup> Chambers, "Fifty Years Ago," *PT*, May 1956, 6, emphasis added.

<sup>278</sup> Chambers, *Fifty Years*, 12, emphasis added.

<sup>279</sup> *The Good Report*, May 1911, 3, 4, 5.

in Montreal by Aimee Semple McPherson (1890-1944), the popular and controversial Pentecostal evangelist who founded the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel. Baker wrote: "The evening meeting revealed an altar filled with sinners seeking salvation with a prayer room below filled with *hungry* children of God seeking the Baptism of the Holy Spirit."<sup>280</sup>

The central theme of early Pentecostal language concerning the work of the Holy Spirit was the theme of "power" and the central image associated with this theme was that of "fire."<sup>281</sup> Peter Althouse, in his study entitled "The Ideological Development of Power in Early Pentecostalism" writes,

Descriptions of revivalistic campaigns in terms of God's manifestation of power were typical of the language used in early Pentecostalism. . . . Within these writings, power emerged as a significant component of the Pentecostal's personal charismatic experiences.<sup>282</sup>

In Purdie's preaching there were many references to "power" connected to the work of the Holy Spirit in the believer. In a message entitled "The Holy Spirit," he declared that the Church "received power from on high" on the Day of Pentecost "which enabled her to carry out the Great Commission."<sup>283</sup> In January 1912 he said that the power of the Holy Spirit was "the great need of the moment."<sup>284</sup> The following year, in answering the question "Why Am I a Protestant?" he proclaimed that Protestantism stands for the "Evangelical Truths of the Gospel" including the "Holy Spirit's power in [the] Church [and the] believer."<sup>285</sup> In a message on "The Power of the Holy Spirit," Purdie, referring to the Day of Pentecost, explained that after the Church "tarried,"

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<sup>280</sup> *PT*, January, 1921, 2, emphasis added, see also *PT*, December 1920, 2; April 1921, 1.

<sup>281</sup> Cf. Acts 1:8; Mt. 3:11; Acts 2:3 for some of the biblical sources of this theme and imagery.

<sup>282</sup> Peter F. Althouse, "The Ideological Development of Power in Early Pentecostalism," (M. Rel. thesis, Wycliffe College, 1993), 72.

<sup>283</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 4 June 1911.

<sup>284</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 9 January 1912.

<sup>285</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 13 July 1913.

she was "filled with power" and made her "first appearance in [the] world . . . in the power of the Holy Ghost." According to Purdie, it was the "Holy Ghost that made the Apostles what they were," the "Holy Ghost [who] makes true ministers of the Word" and that even the "Hottentot can be filled" so that "natives preach in [the] power of the Holy Ghost."<sup>286</sup>

In regard to the biblical imagery of fire to describe the activity of the Holy Spirit, Purdie seems to have used this imagery in the more generic sense of zealousness. In this way he described the Methodists as "on fire for God."<sup>287</sup> He also used the words "red hot" to describe a prayer meeting, an evangelistic message and a publication, the *Evangelical Churchman*.<sup>288</sup> He approached the Pentecostal use of the image in a sermon on "The Deity and Work of the Holy Spirit" where he listed the three-fold work of the Spirit as awakening souls, giving assurance and "baptizing believers with power." He declared if Christians will put their all on the altar, "the fire of God will fall."<sup>289</sup> In reference to the Day of Pentecost itself, Purdie used the phrase, "the fire of God fell" to describe what occurred that day when the disciples "were all filled with the Holy Spirit."<sup>290</sup>

The early Pentecostal literature is full of descriptions of the power of the Holy Spirit coming upon people and the fire of God falling. The February 1921 edition of the *Pentecostal Testimony* describes a "red hot" revival in progress in Vancouver.<sup>291</sup> Expressions like, "I have greater power and liberty"; "the power fell"; "the consuming fire is burning within"; and "I

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<sup>286</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 12 March 1916.

<sup>287</sup> Franklin, 30.

<sup>288</sup> Franklin, 72, 42, 22-23.

<sup>289</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 19 May 1918.

<sup>290</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 11 February 1923.

<sup>291</sup> Bentham, Pastor C.O., *PT*, February 1921, 1.

never had such liberty, power or faith" found in the first issue of R.E. McAlister's *The Good Report* are typical.<sup>292</sup> In the April, 1921 issue of the *Pentecostal Testimony* McAlister reported concerning the church in Lethbridge, Alberta, "The power of the Holy Ghost falls in the Sunday morning services."<sup>293</sup>

Other early PAOC leaders like Robert's brother John McAlister (1872-1943), spoke in similar terms. Alluding to the Pentecostal concept of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as the promised "latter rain" of Joel 2:23, John McAlister reported, "In our Sunday morning meetings the power has been falling like rain." He concluded the report with an invitation to his readers to "join with us in praying for an outpouring of the Latter Rain."<sup>294</sup> George Chambers used this language of power with reference not only to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but also in speaking of people's experiencing salvation and physical healing.<sup>295</sup>

The outcome of the significant working of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer was described by both Purdie and the early Pentecostals with an allusion to the experience of Moses in Exodus 34:29 where his face shone after being in God's presence on the mountain. Purdie used it to describe the outstanding Christian character and commitment of the Bishop of MacKenzie River, William Day Reeve (1844-1925), who ordained him a priest in 1907.<sup>296</sup> He also used this expression of Rev. Robert P. McKim (1870-1936), the Rector of

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<sup>292</sup> McAlister, *The Good Report*, 1 May 1911, 2, 3, 5; cf. also *The Good Report*, 1:3 (1912): 1, 5; *The Apostolic Messenger*, March 1908, 2; *PT*, December 1920, 2; November 1921, 3; December 1921, 1.

<sup>293</sup> McAlister, *PT*, April 1921, 1.

<sup>294</sup> John McAlister, John, *PT*, December 1920, 2.

<sup>295</sup> Chambers, "The Baptism of the Holy Ghost," Tract (n.p., n.d.); *Fifty Years*, 29.

<sup>296</sup> Franklin, 31.



St. Luke's church in Saint John, New Brunswick, where Purdie served for three years as Curate:

Rev. R.P. McKim was a marvellous man. I suppose the most out and out Evangelical of any denomination in the Maritime provinces. . . . He was out for souls. . . . He had a *shining face*, you know. The glory shone there.<sup>297</sup>

The early Pentecostals used this phrase to describe the evident joy that radiated from the countenance of those transformed by the gospel: "Strong, able men cried like children, and would bear testimony the fact that Jesus had saved them, and how their *faces* would *shine*."<sup>298</sup>

Another type of experience described by both Purdie and the early Pentecostals was of being spoken to by God or led to do something in particular by God. From the start of his Christian life, Purdie looked to God for help and direction. At age nineteen, shortly after his conversion, Purdie was asked to preach on very short notice at a Presbyterian church near Charlottetown. Despite his lack of training or experience, Purdie recounted that during the song service, he "looked up to the Lord" and "was directed to the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians." He read the passage indicated, led the congregation in prayer and then preached "rather good for about thirty minutes with great liberty."<sup>299</sup> In his biographical interview, he used such phrases as "I felt led to," "the Lord just spoke to me" and "He talked to me and told me what to do."<sup>300</sup>

This sort of language shows up frequently in early Pentecostal literature where we read, for example, of a Sister Mooman feeling "led to go" home from

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<sup>297</sup> Ibid., 38, emphasis added.

<sup>298</sup> *PT*, December 1920, 2, emphasis added; See also the report entitled "Vancouver, B.C." on the same page and *PT*, August 1922, 4.

<sup>299</sup> Franklin, 7.

<sup>300</sup> Ibid., 39, 65, 62.

the mission field, a Sister Beck who started a church on her farm because "God spoke to her heart . . . and asked her to build a church there" and of George Chambers "feeling led" to place his hand on a man's shoulder as he led the Methodist congregation in Mille Roches, Ontario, in prayer.<sup>301</sup>

These ways of articulating spiritual experiences which Purdie used in common with the early leaders of the Pentecostal movement are a reflection of the central priorities of the Christian life that he held dear.

### **Priorities for the Christian Life**

As a Christian and a minister of the gospel, James Eustace Purdie vigorously pursued five principal priorities each of which would have been fully acceptable to most Pentecostals in the first decades of this century.

Purdie's first priority in life was a the heartfelt experience of God. He wrote in his personal notebook,

No man is a true Evangelical historically or spiritually till he has been delivered himself and can testify or relate to its [the gospel's] power. . . . High, low, broad or flat cannot make a man a real Evangelical--neither can the most ultra-protestant liturgical position in ritual or even the holding intellectually or in theory the most pronounced ideas of Protestant theology ever make a man a real Evangelical preacher of the Everlasting Gospel if he had [sic] not been born again.<sup>302</sup>

In a training session for teachers, Purdie emphasized that "religion is of the heart" and that no amount of study could substitute spiritual preparation before God.<sup>303</sup> Two years before, he had preached that although we must have both heart religion and external service, heart religion was superior.<sup>304</sup> Perhaps Purdie's logic behind this statement can be found in an article he

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<sup>301</sup> *The Good Report*, May 1911, 3; *PT*, October 1921, 1; 1 June 1943, 9.

<sup>302</sup> Purdie, Notebook, 12 February 1916.

<sup>303</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 15 December 1915.

<sup>304</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 4 June 1914.

wrote many years later in which he declared, "A man can believe with his head without believing in his heart, but he cannot believe in his heart without believing with his head."<sup>305</sup>

This emphasis on a vibrant, direct experience of God is one of the reasons why the Pentecostal literature is filled with accounts of church services and why so many of these accounts describe a wide variety of what were understood to be divine manifestations. In the first article of the first issue of the *Pentecostal Testimony*, R.E. McAlister wrote, "This *glorious experience*, now enjoyed by so many of God's children, is pre-eminently scriptural."<sup>306</sup> The same issue provided accounts of Pentecostal meetings in Vancouver where "under the power of the Holy Ghost some fall prostrate, others dance, some sing, march around the Hall, shout the praises of Jesus, etc."<sup>307</sup> On the same page another article described a meeting in Edmonton where "wonderful conversions of hardened sinners are taking place continually, also marvellous healing and precious baptisms." The writer concluded with an invitation: "Oh Hallelujah! Why shouldn't we praise the name of Jesus? Visiting saints or hungry souls in search of God can be assured of a hearty welcome."<sup>308</sup>

A.G. Ward and George Chambers both gave witness to the importance of experiencing God in a deeply personal way. Concerning his conversion, Ward wrote:

One evening the light of heaven broke in on my preacher heart and a revelation of Jesus came to me. The power of sin in my life was broken. The longing of years was realized. I was converted. I had contacted God. Eternal things had suddenly become real. I was born again of the Holy

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<sup>305</sup> J.E. Purdie, "The Bible and Theology in the Pulpit," (n.p., 1933?), 5.

<sup>306</sup> *PT*, 1 December 1920, 1, emphasis added.

<sup>307</sup> *PT*, 1 December 1920, 2.

<sup>308</sup> *Ibid.*

Spirit. . . . Now a holy fire burned within my soul. . . . God had given me a sky-blue experience of the old-time religion.<sup>309</sup>

George Chambers was reared in the Methodist Church where he recorded that "tears sometimes flooded my eyes" as he listened to his mother and father stand and give testimony to God's saving power in their lives.<sup>310</sup> Of his own conversion as a teenager Chambers wrote,

The Spirit of God took hold of my heart. I tried to leave the meeting without the pastor contacting me. However, as I started to open the door, I heard him say, 'There may be someone here, tonight, who should get right with God.' At that, I broke, and said, 'I am that person.' I made my way to the front. . . . But before I reached the altar, . . . my sins were washed away in the blood of Jesus, the Lamb of God.<sup>311</sup>

The second priority for the Christian according to Purdie was a life of sustained and fervent prayer. Many of his sermons preached between 1911 and 1924, especially his more practical messages, dealt with prayer. They have titles like, "Fervent Prayer," "The Habit of Prayer" and "The Fact of Answered Prayer."<sup>312</sup> Purdie held many prayer meetings as a pastor, some of which lasted three to four hours. He obviously enjoyed taking part in them. He described the closed, "sacred meeting" held on Tuesday evenings while he pastored Christ's Church in Campbellton, New Brunswick:

We never announced it to anybody but there was a little group that were willing to pray for hours. . . . We began at 8:00. . . . We got down on our knees as quickly as possible. The preliminaries wouldn't be more than 12 or 15 minutes because we were there to pray and we'd remain on our knees possibly till 11:00 praying.<sup>313</sup>

Purdie urged his fellow ministers to give prayer a prominent place in their ministry in an address he gave at the Saskatoon Ministerial Association:

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<sup>309</sup> C.M. Ward, *Elder A. G. Ward*, 11, 13.

<sup>310</sup> Chambers, *Fifty Years*, 2.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid.

<sup>312</sup> Purdie, *Sermons*, 4 October 1916; 25 March 1917; 3 September 1913.

<sup>313</sup> Franklin, 58.

I believe the secret of having conversions in our ministry is to be found in obeying the example of the early church, that is, 'we will give ourselves to prayer and the ministry of the word.' . . . The very history of the Church proves that when ministers and people gave themselves to continuous and overcoming intercessory prayer for the souls and needs of others, real results followed.<sup>314</sup>

In this address, Purdie suggested to his colleagues that they co-operate in launching a city-wide prayer meeting.

The early Pentecostals in Canada were people who believed in prayer. Reporting on a revival meeting held in his church in Ottawa, R.E. McAlister wrote, "For some months there has been a spirit of prayer and intercession upon the people, such as always precedes a true revival."<sup>315</sup> The congregation spent Thanksgiving Day in prayer and fasting from 9 a.m. until 10 p.m. In a radio sermon many years later, McAlister insisted on the priority of prayer:

It's prayer that people need--nothing else will meet the need--nothing else will bring them in to a personal contact with God, but prayer. . . . any church that fails to make prayer the outstanding feature is suffering a tremendous loss.<sup>316</sup>

In the third issue of the *Pentecostal Testimony*, Harvey McAlister (1892-1978), Robert's brother and possibly the first Pentecostal Purdie met, wrote of the work in Calgary, Alberta:

We attribute the healthy state of the work to the volumes of intercessory prayer that preceded the special effort [i.e., a revival crusade] in private and in special prayer meetings appointed for that purpose.<sup>317</sup>

A.G. Ward made his convictions on the importance of prayer clear in a booklet entitled *The Minister and His Work*. He wrote,

A faithful minister is one who exalts prayer, practices the prayer habit, and who lives the prayer life. The preacher's greatest business is prayer. The biggest thing he can do at any time for either God or man

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<sup>314</sup> J.E. Purdie, "The Supreme Authority of the Holy Scriptures," TMs (n.p., 1920), 13.

<sup>315</sup> McAlister, *PT*, December 1920, 3.

<sup>316</sup> McAlister, Radio sermon, 31 January 1936.

<sup>317</sup> Harvey McAlister, *PT*, February 1921, 4.

is to pray. The preachers of all ages who have blest the world and left a lasting imprint upon their generation have been men of prayer.<sup>318</sup>

For George Chambers, the practice of lengthy prayer meetings seems to have been a normal part of his ministry. He recorded that while pioneering in Amprior, Ontario, "We spent Saturday afternoon and evening in prayer regarding both the finances and the order of service."<sup>319</sup> Similarly, he wrote of an all-night prayer meeting and several definite answers to prayer which cleared the way for him and William L. Draffin (?-1936), another signatory of the PAOC charter, to hold revival meetings in Mille Roches, Ontario.<sup>320</sup> Among such early Pentecostals Purdie, with his evident interest in prayer, would have felt at home.

Personal holiness was the third priority for the Christian life which Purdie shared with the Pentecostals. The holiness movement in both its Wesleyan and Reformed (Keswick) streams touched the lives of many believers in a wide variety of traditions from the closing decades of the nineteenth century and into the opening years of the twentieth. Purdie came under its influence at the very start of his Christian life through his Methodist aunt, whom he credits as an influence in his conversion. She introduced him to *A Guide to Holiness*, Phoebe Palmer's magazine discussed above.<sup>321</sup>

In a biographical article written in 1938, Purdie declared:

Following my conversion, I felt a very strong conviction regarding the separated life and from that moment I was enabled to take a very decided stand against compromising with the things of the world.<sup>322</sup>

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<sup>318</sup> A.G. Ward, *The Minister and His Work* (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1945), 21.

<sup>319</sup> Chambers, *Fifty Years*, 31.

<sup>320</sup> *PT*, June 1 1943, 9.

<sup>321</sup> Franklin, 4; On Palmer's influence see Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1987), 87-89; White, "Phoebe Palmer," 198-212.

<sup>322</sup> *PT*, May 1938, 17.

He continued, "I began my ministry with a burning determination to preach the gospel of salvation to a lost world *and to teach scriptural sanctification as a real thing in the life of the believer.*"<sup>323</sup> A notation in his personal notebook made while he was still at Wycliffe indicated his conviction that a holy life gives one power for ministry.<sup>324</sup> Purdie approved of Wycliffe College because it was "strong on separation from the world."<sup>325</sup> In his preaching, he was not afraid to put some teeth into this conviction regarding the importance of personal holiness by providing specific guidelines. On Ash Wednesday in 1910, he advocated giving up dancing, cards, parties and socials. The following year he argued that a real Christian would not want to attend the theatre or the dance hall lest Jesus return at that moment and find him in one of these places.<sup>326</sup>

Each of the three early Canadian Pentecostal leaders we have been comparing with Purdie had roots in the holiness movement. R.E. McAlister's continuing interest in holiness themes after he became a Pentecostal is signaled by some of the language in his earliest writings. In the first issue of *The Good Report*, published five years after he first spoke in tongues at Azusa Street, he reported on a revival campaign held in Ottawa where "upwards of 70 souls have been saved, many *sanctified*, and some baptized in the Holy Ghost."<sup>327</sup> The separate mention of "many sanctified" reveals McAlister's holiness roots. Although he shifted his theological position regarding sanctification to a more Reformed view (probably around 1912), he continued to

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<sup>323</sup> Ibid., emphasis added.

<sup>324</sup> Purdie, Notebook, 6 November 1906.

<sup>325</sup> Franklin, 23.

<sup>326</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 20 March 1911.

<sup>327</sup> McAlister, *The Good Report* May 1911, 1, emphasis added.

display a concern for practical holiness in the life of the believer.<sup>328</sup> He wrote: "We need teaching on practical holiness if people will have a holy walk and a consistent life, notwithstanding the fact that they are baptized in the holy Spirit and the Holy Spirit indwelling them [sic]."<sup>329</sup>

A.G. Ward's convictions on holy living are exemplified by an address published in the *Pentecostal Testimony* which he gave to young preachers graduating from the Central Bible Institute, the Assemblies of God Bible school in Springfield, Missouri, where Ward served on the faculty in 1928 and 1929:

A holier life, a more pronounced separation from the world, a stainless integrity in business pursuits, a Christly devotion to the interests of others, a more thorough knowledge of the Word--these are the true signs of success which the preacher must justly seek.<sup>330</sup>

George Chambers, who described himself as a "Holiness preacher,"<sup>331</sup> preached a message in 1923 on the "Pentecostal movement" at a camp meeting near Walkerton, Ontario, in which he described the Pentecostals as a "separated people." He compared them to the children of Israel whom God had delivered from Egypt concluding, "That is what God wants to do today, to bring you out of sin, and to bring you into a land of promise, flowing with milk and honey."<sup>332</sup> Other writers in the early issues of the *Pentecostal Testimony* reflected views on personal holiness similar to those of McAlister, Ward and Chambers.<sup>333</sup>

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<sup>328</sup> See McAlister, *The Good Report* 3:1 (1912) especially page 14 for McAlister's change of position as well as "The Finished Work of Calvary, Supplement to *The Good Report*," which he wrote around this time.

<sup>329</sup> R.E. McAlister, "Helps to Ministers and Others," (n.p., n.d.), 7, PACAT.

<sup>330</sup> A.G. Ward, "Preach, Watch, Endure, Prove," *PT*, July 1927, 8-10. See also, A.G. Ward, "Concerning Dress," *PT*, August 1923, 1.

<sup>331</sup> Chambers, "In Retrospect," *PT*, November 1934, 7.

<sup>332</sup> Chambers, "Pentecostal Movement," *PT*, December 1923, 2-4.

<sup>333</sup> See C.E. Baker, "Canada's Largest City is Visited with Floods of the 'Latter Rain,' " *PT*, January 1921, 2 and John McAlister, "To the Pastors and Saints of the District Council of Western Canada," *PT*, April 1921, 4.



Personal holiness, though important to Purdie, was not sufficient to guarantee a successful life or ministry without the anointing of the Holy Spirit. This concern for a personal anointing of the Holy Spirit represents Purdie's fourth priority for the Christian life. As early as 1911, he preached that "the Holy Spirit is the only power by which a church can live and grow today." The Spirit was the apostles' "great source of victory" and the "same Spirit must be in the ministry of today if there is to be true and lasting success." Purdie linked this theme to the Day of Pentecost declaring "the events of the Day of Pentecost exhibit the grand means of advancing the cause of Christ and saving sinners."<sup>334</sup> In April 1912 he called for a "second Pentecost" to enable the Church to fulfil its "world-wide task."<sup>335</sup> In a later message he spoke of the Holy Spirit as the one who makes a "true minister of the word" and he connected receiving the Holy Spirit with the desire to evangelize.<sup>336</sup> In a message entitled "The Gift of Power," he commented that the Church needed "more members with power" since "the Holy Ghost is the only power that can save the Church and the country."<sup>337</sup>

The attitude of the early Pentecostals toward the importance of being anointed or baptized with the power of the Holy Spirit is one of the themes most emphasized in their writings although often implicitly. McAlister believed that the coming of the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost was "the crowning fact in [the] history of God's revelation to man." In the same article he noted, "Believers thus filled with the Spirit were at once qualified witnesses from the New Testament standpoint, Acts 1:8."<sup>338</sup> Years

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<sup>334</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 4 June 1911.

<sup>335</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 14 April 1912, a.m.

<sup>336</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 12 March 1916.

<sup>337</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 30 April 1918.

<sup>338</sup> McAlister, *PT*, November 1921, 1.

later he alluded to the absolute necessity of this anointing of the Holy Spirit:

The failures throughout the history of the Christian Church are due largely to the fact that the Holy Spirit's Baptism has not been given its rightful place in the Church. To reject it is to reject *the greatest asset for labor, service and ministry that is the privilege of men to enjoy.*<sup>339</sup>

A.G. Ward certainly believed this to be the case. He was convinced the baptism of the Holy Spirit had revolutionized his ministry. Before he received the Pentecostal experience, he described his ministry as unfruitful: "By 'foot power' we had tried to 'irrigate the land,' but most of our efforts ended either in seeming failure or in bitter disappointment because the returns were so scanty."<sup>340</sup> The story was quite different after he was baptized in the Holy Spirit:

What a change almost overnight. There was no more struggling to make our meetings 'go'--no more burning of midnight oil to discover something to say to the people. No more wondering if strangers would be in the service. The crowds were coming. Sinners were awestruck as they listened to the fiery, God-inspired message . . . from the lips of His freshly-anointed ministers.<sup>341</sup>

For George Chambers, the story was the same. In his words, "the baptism of the Holy Ghost. . . . changed my whole life and greatly increased the effectiveness of my ministry."<sup>342</sup> It provided him with "liberty, freeness, and unction in the utterance of the gospel."<sup>343</sup>

Intimately connected with the anointing of the Holy Spirit for both Purdie and the early Pentecostals was his final priority, the passion for aggressive evangelism. The day after his conversion, Purdie began telling

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<sup>339</sup> McAlister, "The Holy Spirit Baptism," *PT*, March 1930, 4,5, emphasis added.

<sup>340</sup> A.G. Ward, "Hitherto Hath the Lord Helped Us," *PT*, October 1956, 10, 11.

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>342</sup> Chambers, *Fifty Years*, 18.

<sup>343</sup> George A. Chambers, "Retrospection of Outstanding Features of Pentecost Fifty Years Ago," (Kitchener: n.d.), 2.

people he had found Christ.<sup>344</sup> While at Wycliffe, he heard R.A. Torrey, the widely-travelled evangelist and influential proto-fundamentalist leader, preach a message on how to promote revival throughout Canada. Purdie took down almost every word in his notebook, including the exhortation "study how to save souls."<sup>345</sup> As he started out in the ministry in 1908, Purdie wrote, "God has given a work to man to do, when defined is nothing short of the world's evangelization."<sup>346</sup> Two years later he wrote, "The true and best policy [for the Church] can only spring from the deep, lasting vision . . . [a] passion for souls."<sup>347</sup> Purdie believed that it is the minister's job to show his people the need of the new birth.<sup>348</sup>

To this end he preached many evangelistic sermons, including his first message in St. James, Saskatoon.<sup>349</sup> He regularly gave evangelistic appeals at funerals.<sup>350</sup> He characterized his ministry in Campbellton, New Brunswick, with a single sentence: "We just worked day and night for souls."<sup>351</sup> Purdie also preached messages with titles such as "The Soul Winner" and "The Power of the Personal Touch" designed to encourage his congregation, even the children, to evangelize.<sup>352</sup> His concern for evangelism also extended to the foreign field. Some of his Sunday sermons consisted entirely of detailed missions reports.<sup>353</sup>

Writing in the Western Pentecostal College student magazine in 1947, after describing his many evangelistic activities as an Anglican minister,

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<sup>344</sup> Franklin, 5.

<sup>345</sup> Purdie, Notebook, 31 January 1906.

<sup>346</sup> Ibid., 14 January 1908.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid., 21 April 1910.

<sup>348</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 26 January 1911.

<sup>349</sup> See for example Purdie, Sermons 5 June 1910; 15 June 1913; 26 September 1917; Franklin, 62.

<sup>350</sup> See Purdie, Sermons 17 April 1913; 6 June 1913; 24 August 1913; 5 April 1914.

<sup>351</sup> Franklin, 58.

<sup>352</sup> Purdie, Sermons, 8 December 1912; 15 September 1912; re children see 16 April 1911.

<sup>353</sup> Purdie, Sermons, 31 January 1909; 12 January 1912; 26 February 1916.

Purdie connected the Pentecostal experience with the strong desire to do evangelism that he exhibited before he became a Pentecostal:

With this evangelistic ministry [i.e., as a Anglican], it was comparatively easy to enter into the experience of the Infilling of the Holy Spirit which has meant much added power and liberty in proclaiming the gospel.<sup>354</sup>

Evangelization was woven into the very fabric of Pentecostalism's reason for being. R.E. McAlister wrote of the Pentecostal movement in 1911:

THIS MOVEMENT is a soul-saving agency in the hands of God, Thousands have been saved, sanctified, healed and baptized in the HOLY GHOST. It has been the means of great revivals both in the home and foreign fields.<sup>355</sup>

His own commitment to evangelism is illustrated by a story recounted by his nephew, Walter McAlister:

In London [Ontario], somebody invited him out. They had a friend of theirs who was a man, you know, quite a businessman, sort of a man of the world. And they thought they'd have the pastor meet him, so they arranged for uncle R.E. to come and meet him in their home. . . . So uncle was sitting there, and this man said, "Mr. McAlister, what is your favorite pastime?" No answer. My uncle was thinking . . . his concentration . . . his mind was a thousand miles away. "Mr. McAlister, What is your favorite pastime?" No answer. Finally, "Mr. McAlister, I'm speaking to you. What is your favorite pastime?" Uncle said, "Saving souls."<sup>356</sup>

George Chambers' account of his ministry continually demonstrated his concern for evangelism with frequent references to evangelistic outreaches and revival meetings.<sup>357</sup> In a published camp meeting sermon entitled "Pentecostal Movement" which appeared in the *Pentecostal Testimony* in 1923, some 17 years after the movement had come to Canada, Chambers declared, "We are sure we have the sanction of the Holy Spirit upon us, that God has chosen us as a

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<sup>354</sup> Purdie, *The Portal* (1947): 6.

<sup>355</sup> McAlister, *The Good Report*, May 1911, 1.

<sup>356</sup> James D. Craig, "R.E. McAlister: Canadian Pentecostal Pioneer," 39, quoting Walter E. McAlister, interview by Ronald Kydd, 23 February 1974.

<sup>357</sup> Chambers, *Fifty Years*.

distinctive people, with a distinctive ministry, for a God-appointed time." He goes on to define this distinctiveness in terms of God's call upon the Pentecostal movement to evangelize:

I want to say God has called us and given us a distinctive mission. What is this mission? . . . God has sent us out to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.<sup>358</sup>

A.G. Ward found that his experience of the Pentecostal baptism heightened his awareness of the needs of a lost world and the urgency of evangelism:

The vision for a lost world and of millions sitting in darkness waiting for the life-giving gospel became so real. We must go--the urge of the Holy Spirit was upon us. We discovered that the 'Go ye' of the risen Lord meant us--that the whole business of the whole Church was to give the whole gospel to the whole world, no matter what the cost or sacrifice might be.<sup>359</sup>

For Ward as for the other early Canadian Pentecostal leaders, overseas missions was also very high on their agenda.<sup>360</sup>

In his commitment to the heartfelt experience of God, fervent prayer, personal holiness, the need for the anointing of the Holy Spirit and constant evangelization, J. Eustace Purdie was pursuing essentially the same priorities in his life and ministry as the Pentecostals who would become his colleagues after 1925.

### **Practices of Ministry**

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<sup>358</sup> Chambers, "Pentecostal Movement," *PT*, December 1923, 2-4.

<sup>359</sup> A.G. Ward, "Hitherto," 10.

<sup>360</sup> R.E. McAlister was the PAOC's first Missionary Secretary and wrote numerous editorials on the importance of home and overseas mission in the *Pentecostal Testimony*. See for example his articles in the May, 1922; April, 1923; January, 1924; April, 1927 issues of *PT*. For Chambers, the next sentence in the passage on the distinctive calling of the Pentecostal Movement quoted above reads, "He [God] has called us especially to be a foreign missionary people," *PT*, December 1923, 3. A.G. Ward also served as the Missionary Secretary for the PAOC (1932-1938). His commitment to missions is reflected in an article entitled "Foreign Missions" *PT*, January 1934, 10.

From the outset some of J.E. Purdie's practices of ministry corresponded to those of the early Canadian Pentecostals and thus served to smooth his transition from Anglicanism to Pentecostalism. These practices fall into two broad categories: evangelistic methods and approaches to pastoral ministry.

Purdie did itinerant evangelistic work from time to time during most of his ministerial career. While pastoring in Saint John, New Brunswick, he held a "crusade" in Newcastle where "night after night, souls were saved."<sup>361</sup> The practice continued in Saskatoon.<sup>362</sup> In 1925, after he had left his church in Philadelphia and was supplying at two churches near Charlottetown, Purdie requested permission from the Bishop of Saskatchewan to travel to conduct evangelistic meetings.<sup>363</sup> House to house visitation was another method of evangelism Purdie consistently employed. In 1905 while doing summer ministry between semesters at Wycliffe, he could be found in Brookdale, Manitoba, "going from house to house. . . irrespective of denomination telling out the story of the gospel."<sup>364</sup> He did the same as a young Curate in Saint John as well as in Saskatoon where Purdie noted, "I had most of my conversions going from house to house visiting."<sup>365</sup> Even at age ninety-two during a trip to Prince Edward Island for the ninetieth birthday of his brother, Victor, he managed to visit twenty-five homes.<sup>366</sup> Purdie also held open-air evangelistic meetings in Saint John and Saskatoon. He termed this aspect of his ministry "aggressive outdoor work."<sup>367</sup>

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<sup>361</sup> Franklin, 53.

<sup>362</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>363</sup> Ibid., 92, 93.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid., 19, 35.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid., 43, 76, 81.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid., 64.

His indoor services were characterized by evangelistic appeals as well. At the conclusion of an evangelistic sermon, he would call the people to make a decision at that moment.<sup>368</sup> He even developed a method for giving what was essentially an evangelistic "altar call" suited to his Anglican parishioners. Following the evangelistic message, he would invite those who would like prayer or direction to remain behind kneeling in their pew. Purdie could then go and counsel each one individually.<sup>369</sup>

The early Pentecostals would have been quite at home with these evangelistic methods. During the early years of his ministry, R.E. McAlister travelled extensively in itinerant evangelism as did George Chambers and A.G. Ward.<sup>370</sup> Evangelistic visitation was practiced by George Chambers among many others<sup>371</sup>. Street meetings were used by Chambers and William L. Draffin to open a church in Arnprior, Ontario, and by John McAlister in Lethbridge, Alberta.<sup>372</sup>

With reference to other pastoral practices, Purdie demonstrates common ground with the early Pentecostals in the use of so-called cottage meetings. These were mid-week services held in people's homes as occasions for evangelism or united prayer. They seem to have been a regular feature of his ministry.<sup>373</sup>

Purdie also employed closed prayer meetings on a regular basis where those in his church who were given to "tarrying" for prolonged intercession would meet with their pastor to pray for the needs of the church. The

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<sup>368</sup> Purdie, *Sermon*, 25 January 1912.

<sup>369</sup> Franklin, 87.

<sup>370</sup> For McAlister see *PT*, September 1921, 1; for Chambers see *Fifty Years*, 35; for Ward see *PT*, October 1958, 9, C. M. Ward, "Elder A. G. Ward," 34-37.

<sup>371</sup> Chambers, *Fifty Years*, 27, 31.

<sup>372</sup> *Ibid.*, 30; *PT*, July 1921, 1.

<sup>373</sup> J.E. Purdie, "Principal of the Western Bible College for Thirteen Years," *PT*, May 1938, 17; *The Portal* 1947, 6; Franklin, 57, 58.

atmosphere was informal, and on occasion the volume would be loud enough to disturb the neighbours.<sup>374</sup> In Campbellton, New Brunswick, these prayer meetings were held in the rectory on Tuesday evenings. They started at 8 o'clock and often went until 11. In Saskatoon, Purdie held Sunday night prayer meetings in the rectory after the evening service, some of which he recalled as being "red-hot."<sup>375</sup> He also held a "Pentecostal" prayer meeting on a week night in the Parish Hall at Saskatoon after he had received the baptism of the Holy Spirit.<sup>376</sup>

The early Pentecostals often held meetings in people's homes either as a regular part of the church's ministry or when they had no church facilities available to them in the area. R.E. McAlister did this in the Ottawa area as did George Chambers at Arnprior and other Pentecostals in the vicinity of Hamilton and London, Ontario.<sup>377</sup> Pentecostals frequently held extended prayer meetings although these were usually open to all since there was no concern over various manifestations of the Holy Spirit offending members of a Pentecostal congregation as might have been the case with Purdie's Anglican congregations.<sup>378</sup>

Like many evangelicals at the turn of the century, J. Eustace Purdie developed an interest in divine healing and as a result he offered prayer for the sick. Looking back on the Anglican Church in his early days in the ministry, Purdie could say "there was a wonderful Evangelical background and all the aggressiveness of out and out Evangelical Bible teaching and *praying for the*

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<sup>374</sup> Franklin, 72.

<sup>375</sup> Ibid., 72.

<sup>376</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>377</sup> McAlister, *The Good Report*, May 1911, 6; Chambers, *Fifty Years*, 31.; *The Promise* February 1909, 3; Chambers, *Fifty Years*, 20.

<sup>378</sup> Chambers, *PT*, June 1960, 6; Andrew Urshan, *The Good Report*, 1 June 1913, 2.



sick and everything else."<sup>379</sup> He had reported on his application to Wycliffe College that he had been engaged in ministry in his community, "visiting, reading and *praying with the sick* and dying."<sup>380</sup> In the class notes he prepared on the subject of Divine Healing for the students at Western Bible College, Purdie provided three examples of notable miracles of physical healing in his ministry, two in Saskatoon in 1919 and one in Charlottetown in 1925.<sup>381</sup>

The early Pentecostals constantly preached and taught about healing. R.E. McAlister wrote a number of articles and preached several radio sermons on the topic.<sup>382</sup> He also prayed for the sick and witnessed definitive examples of healing in his ministry.<sup>383</sup> George Chambers describes some notable healings that took place during the revival he conducted at Mille Roches in 1918.<sup>384</sup> Concerning the flu epidemic of that same year he wrote: "Although I was praying for the sick and dying from early morning until late at night, neither I nor any member of my family contracted the flu during those terrifying days."<sup>385</sup> A.G. Ward wrote concerning healing:

Down through the years it has been my delightful opportunity *to preach and to practice* this clearly taught Bible doctrine. It has been my joy to see many people wonderfully healed by the mighty power of God as we have laid hands on them and in Jesus' Name claimed deliverance for them.<sup>386</sup>

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<sup>379</sup> Franklin, 65, emphasis added.

<sup>380</sup> J.E. Purdie, Admission application, Wycliffe College Archives, emphasis added.

<sup>381</sup> J.E. Purdie, Lecture notes on Divine Healing, Western Bible College, 28.

<sup>382</sup> McAlister, "God's Sovereignty in Healing," *PT*, June 1929, 8-12; "The Jew, the Gentile and the Church of God," *PT*, October 1932, 9; "They That Observe Lying Vanities Forsake Their Own Mercy," *PT*, March 1935, 5; Radio sermons, 2 January 1935; 10 March 1936; 1 June 1937.

<sup>383</sup> McAlister, "Great Visitation in Ottawa," *PT*, December 1920, 3

<sup>384</sup> Chambers, "The Mille Roches Revival," *PT*, 1 June 1943, 9.

<sup>385</sup> Chambers, *Fifty Years*, 25.

<sup>386</sup> C.M.Ward, "Elder A. G. Ward," 17, emphasis added.

The final practice of ministry that Purdie held in common with the early Pentecostals was the insistence that all church funds be raised by the voluntary giving of believers rather than through church bazaars or pledges.<sup>387</sup> He made it clear to the Vestry of the church in Campbellton he would have it no other way: "I told them straight . . . I wouldn't stay here a week if they tried to raise money in any other way than voluntary giving [sic]."<sup>388</sup>

R.E. McAlister could not have been in fuller agreement. He wrote in an article that was published around Christmas of 1925 in a London newspaper:

We are coming to a time in the year when churches will resort to all kinds of disgraceful . . . methods of raising money. . . . concerts, bazaars, socials and rummage sales will be pulled off in the name of religion. . . . God has ordained but one way of financing the affairs of the church . . . the tithes and voluntary, free-will offerings of his people.<sup>389</sup>

This chapter has attempted to demonstrate some of the common factors that helped James Eustace Purdie to make a smooth transition into Pentecostal ranks despite his appreciative attitude toward his Anglican background. The final chapter will attempt to draw some conclusions from these commonalities as regards the relationship of early Pentecostalism to other Christian groups in Canada at the turn of the century.

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<sup>387</sup> Purdie, Sermon, 18 January 1914; Franklin, 55, 56, 63.

<sup>388</sup> Franklin, 55.

<sup>389</sup> From the London Advertiser as reported in *PT*, December 1925, 14.

## CONCLUSION

This thesis has attempted to understand some of the dynamics of how and why James Eustace Purdie gained acceptance and respect among early Canadian Pentecostals. It has shown that despite his doctrinal affinities with the Pentecostals, not only in the core beliefs of evangelicalism, but also in more peripheral convictions such as divine healing, Christian holiness and dispensational premillennialism, Purdie's vision of Pentecostalism differed from that of his colleagues in that it was non-sectarian. Unlike many who became Pentecostals in the first decades of this century, Purdie did not feel the need to pull up his roots in an established denomination. Nor did he understand his experience of the Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Spirit as a transformational upheaval in his spiritual development, but as the next small step in his pilgrimage as an "out and outer," a fully committed follower of Christ. I contend that it is reasonable to conclude that he viewed his Pentecostal experience as a natural outcome of believing and practicing the things he had learned at Wycliffe College. In this sense, Purdie was something of an Anglican charismatic fifty years before his time.

I have described Purdie's vision of Pentecostalism as 'non-sectarian' because he was able to integrate his Pentecostal experience into his previous self-understanding as a Christian seemingly with little effort. There was no sense of "strangeness" that convinced Purdie he must become a "come-outer" in order to remain an "out-and-outer for the Lord." By contrast, many early Pentecostals felt that they were different from most other Christians of their day. They believed they were a spiritual elite, set apart by God to perform a crucial task in the closing days of the age of grace. The Latter Rain theology

provides a clear example of this type of thinking. Such Pentecostals emphasized a sense of discontinuity with their previous Christian experience, believing that only after they had been baptized in the Holy Spirit were they truly 'on fire' for the Lord. It is in this sense that their vision of Pentecostalism can be described as "sectarian."

This study has also attempted to demonstrate that the basis of Purdie's acceptance among the Pentecostals, despite their differing visions of Pentecostalism, can be explained in part by the similarities he shared with them in three aspects of spirituality: his articulation of spiritual experiences, his priorities for the Christian life and his practices of ministry as a pastor. His acceptance among them on the basis of these similarities, therefore, suggests that some continuities existed between the early Pentecostals and the more established churches.

These factors take on added significance in the effort to understand the relationship of Pentecostalism to Canadian Protestantism at the turn of the century when we realize that Purdie had been able to continue functioning effectively as an Anglican priest for five years after becoming a Pentecostal in experience. This suggests that despite their actions to the contrary, the early Pentecostals continued to have a good deal in common with Christians in other churches. Indeed it is fair to say that the Protestant evangelical spirituality represented by Wycliffe College in the decades around the turn of the twentieth century had much in common with early Pentecostalism. This being the case, it is perhaps possible to understand the emergence of Pentecostalism as a conservative movement that attempted to preserve elements of the 'old-time religion' known to many Protestant Christians in the nineteenth century. The fact that Purdie was an Anglican suggests that Pentecostalism stands in

continuity not only with the holiness movement to which it is connected historically, but also with a much larger segment of Canadian Protestantism, including the churches of the Reformed tradition.

This is not to say that the Pentecostals were merely reactionaries. They did indeed look backwards, but not simply to the evangelical heritage of the immediate past. Their vision focused upon the primitive church of the first century, disdainfully leaping over almost two millennia of Christian tradition. This restorationist impulse, this longing to recapture the vitality and particularly the power of the early church was shared by many others both inside and outside the evangelical camp, particularly in America. The manner in which the Pentecostals expressed this desire, rejecting creeds and even at first church organization, coupled with the boisterous nature of Pentecostal worship, no doubt served to alienate them from the mainstream of respectable evangelicalism from which they emerged. The fact remains, however, that the Pentecostals stood in significant continuity to important segments of Canadian Protestantism. The fact that the larger Protestant churches were in the midst of a massive re-orientation toward a more immanent understanding of God and consequently a more social understanding of Christianity and its role in society should not obscure this continuity. The Pentecostals found a different way through the maze that modernity was forming at the turn of the century. It was a path increasingly rejected by more and more Christians as the twentieth century progressed, but a path, nonetheless, that was not entirely new.

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PACAT Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Archives, Toronto

*PT* The Pentecostal Testimony

CPCAS Central Pentecostal College Archives, Saskatoon

WCAT Wycliffe College Archives, Toronto

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