PRIMITIVE METHODISTS, PAULISTS, AND PENTECOSTALS:
TOWARD A HISTORICAL TYPOLOGY OF “DECLINES” AND “DECLINE” OF
MOVEMENTS OF “REVIVAL”

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF WYCLIFFE COLLEGE
AND THE
HISTORICAL DEPARTMENT OF THE TORONTO SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
DOCTOR OF THEOLOGY AWARDED BY WYCLIFFE COLLEGE AND THE
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

JOHN WILLIAM STEPHENSON

PETERBOROUGH, ONTARIO
JUNE 2000

Copyright © 2000 by John W. Stephenson
All rights reserved
The author has granted a non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of this thesis in microform, paper or electronic formats.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in this thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author’s permission.

L’auteur a accordé une licence non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de cette thèse sous la forme de microfiche/film, de reproduction sur papier ou sur format électronique.

L’auteur conserve la propriété du droit d’auteur qui protège cette thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

0-612-57925-5
Toward a Historical Typology of "Declines" and "Decline" of Movements of Religious "Revival"
By John W. Stephenson, Wycliffe College

Abstract
This dissertation is an attempt to articulate a historical typology relating to the
historical phenomena often called revivals. The specific focus of this study is the
processes of such movements that could be characterised by the language of decline.
Since the study of such movements is complicated by virtue of the metaphorical nature of
the terms used to describe them, attention is paid first to identifying and explaining the
nomenclature that has been used in the study of these movements.

In order to root the search for a typology in historical reality, this study discusses
three documented revival movements. These movements were separated by time,
geography, culture, theology, and spirituality. From these movements, three local
congregations were selected for analysis. The aim was not to do local history per se but
to use local history as a trajectory by which to understand historical process.

Through an examination of the histories of the representative expressions of the
three movements, this study affirms the notion that the nature of historical process is
characterised by profound complexity. At the same time, this study asserts that
recognisable themes or patterns in history are present and identifiable, and that
explanation of these patterns is best begun through examination of a group’s most basic
subsystems. Among the patterns that are recognisable is that of decline. Not only is this
pattern recognisable, the sources of declines are also distinguishable. Most importantly,

enough commonalty can be found in the identity, nature, strength, and conjuncture of the
sources of declines to postulate a tentative typology both of periodic declines in a group’s
history and of final decline, the termination of its history.
CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ................................................................. xi

LIST OF TABLES ........................................................................... xiv

LIST OF GRAPHS ......................................................................... xviii

LIST OF CHARTS ........................................................................... xix

LIST OF DIAGRAMS ..................................................................... xx

ABBREVIATIONS ........................................................................... xxi

Chapter

1. UNDERSTANDING THE LEXICON ............................................ 1

   Crucial Terms ........................................................................... 1

   “Revival,” “Renewal,” and “Awakening” in North American and British Evangelicalism ........................................... 6

   The Efficacy of “Revival” as a Tool for the Interpretation of Historical Process ....................................................... 6

   Revivals” Understood as Cyclical Phenomena ........................... 7

   “Oscillation” as an Interpretative Tool ......................................... 10

   The Difference between “Revival” and “Awakening” ............. 14

   Linear Development: A Denial of “Revivals” and “Awakenings” .. 16

   Semantic Problems in the Lexicon ........................................... 16

   The Nature of Metaphor ........................................................... 18

   Toward a New Paradigm .......................................................... 31

   The Use of Linear and Cyclical Models ..................................... 31

   Historical Process as “Coming-to-be, Being, and Ceasing-to-be” . . 34

   Distinctions among “Revival,” “Renewal” and “Awakening” .... 36
### Defining Marks of “Revival,” and “Renewal” .................................. 37

### The Defining Marks of “Declines” and “Decline” .......................... 42

#### 2. THE METAPHORS: SHIFTS OF MEANING .......................... 46

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primitive Methodist Understandings of “Revival”</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Distinctive Practice of Camp Meetings</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Primitive Methodist Constituency: “The Commonalty”</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Revival” as Significant, Measurable Growth</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Relationship of Emotional Fervour to Revival</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revival as “Primitive”</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primitive Methodist Understandings of “Declines”</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Absence of “Decline” in Early, Primitive Methodist Histories</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Twentieth Century Increase in the Use of the Idea of “Decline”</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Typological Theories of Decline</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline as Loss of Prayer</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline as Loss of the “Primitive”</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline as Numerical Loss</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline as Loss of Growth Rate</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline as Loss of MPR</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ecumenism as Decline</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline as the Result of War</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numerical Declines: A Caveat</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decline as Loss of Emotional Fervour</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Relationship between Decline and Social Issues</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Architecture of St. Paul the Apostle Church as Interpretative Key . . . . 251

“Perpetual Mission”; Parish Missions ........................................... 254

Catholic Missions ............................................................................ 254

Non-Catholic Missions .................................................................. 264

“Perpetual Mission”; Parish Ministry ........................................... 266

Declines at St. Paul the Apostle Church ......................................... 266

The Paulist Definition of Revival .................................................... 267

Definitions and Sources of “Declines” ........................................... 271

Decline as Attendance Loss .......................................................... 271

Decline as the Result of the Pressures of the World ....................... 271

Decline as Loss of Commitment and Fervour ............................... 275

The Relationship of “MPR” to Decline ........................................... 277

Decline as Constituency Loss ......................................................... 277

The Relationship of Parish Decline to Institutional Decline ........... 283

Decline as Loss of Distinctive Characteristics ............................... 289

Arresting Decline .......................................................................... 301

Conclusions .................................................................................. 304

5. LONDON GOSPEL TEMPLE, LONDON, ONTARIO ......................... 309

The Origins of Pentecostalism in London ...................................... 311

Early Social Development in London ............................................ 317

The Relationship of Early Pentecostal Development to the Social Context 326

The Importance of Ministerial Leadership to Growth .................... 328

“Coming-to-be” ............................................................................. 328
The Relationship between Microscopic Growth and Macroscopic Growth 342

Short-Term Leadership 348

Ralph Hornby 350

Donald Emmons 357

Howard Honsinger 359

Virgil Gingrich and Jack McLoughlin 360

Robert Smith 361

Declines in the History of London Gospel Temple 363

Decline as Loss of Fervour Due to Lack of Prayer 363

Numerical Decline as the Result of Competition 364

Decline as the Result of Linkage to the Larger Religious Context 367

The Influence of the Social Context 379

Demographic Factors as Sources of Decline 384

Idiosyncratic Factors as Sources of Decline 388

Conclusions 389

6 A TYPOLOGY OF "DECLINES" AND "DECLINE": BUILDING THE FOUNDATIONS 394

The Contribution of "Complexity Theory" 394

Five Characteristics of Complexity Theory 395

Interaction 396

"Spontaneous Self-organisation" 397

Adaptation 398
“Dynamism” ................................................................. 400
Balance ................................................................. 401
Implications of Complexity for Historiography ..................... 402
Complexity and a Historical Typology of “Declines” and “Decline” .... 404
“Settling Down”: Conflict between “Internal Logics” .................. 409
Organisational Process: From “Hunters” to “Herders” ............... 414
The Role of Constraints .................................................. 420
Conclusions ............................................................... 424

7. TOWARD A TYPOLOGY OF “DECLINES” AND “DECLINE” .......... 427
The Logics of Mission and Maintenance ............................... 427
“Declines”: Multifactoral and Bidimensional ......................... 429
Factors: Endogenous and Exogenous .................................. 430
Economic Distress ....................................................... 434
Social Stress ............................................................ 436
Demographic Issues ..................................................... 438
Financial Stringency .................................................... 440
Linkage with Denominational Decline .................................. 442
Loss of Distinctives ...................................................... 445
Competition ............................................................. 447
Idiosyncratic Local Conditions ....................................... 448
Clerical Leadership ...................................................... 450
Lack of Cultural Adaptation .......................................... 452
The Role of Human Agency ............................................ 454
ix
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The task of acknowledging the assistance of those who provided advice, support, and guidance in the preparation of a work such as this is a difficult one. All too easily, expressions of thanks can take on the character of the maudlin. Also, invariably, someone is left out.

However, I would be remiss if I did not attempt to express my heartfelt appreciation to at least some of the many who provided invaluable aid to me both in the research for this study and in its writing.

I conducted research in seven cities in three countries. Accordingly, I will organise the following comments on a geographical basis. First, to England: I am grateful to Dr. W. R. Ward who inaugurated my research by guiding me to John Anderson, the curator of the Wesleyan Methodist Museum on Mow Cop. It was John who then directed my attention to Congleton. I will not forget the two delightful afternoons I spent high atop the Cop as John regaled me with stories of Methodist relations in the area.

Without the support of the staff at the Cheshire County Records Office in Chester, I could not have written this study. They answered all my questions graciously, including the not-so-erudite ones (“And just how many shillings were there in a pound?”), and kept a constant stream of documents coming. The same unfailing assistance came from Dr. Peter Nockles and the staff at the John Rylands University Library of Manchester.
I am also indebted to Mr. Jeremy Condliffe, the editor of the *Congleton Chronicle*, who opened the vault of the *Chronicle* to me and, together with his father, provided me with much needed background on the lives and customs of the people of the town and borough.

In the United States, Dr. Michael Connolly, the archivist of St. Paul's College in Washington, DC, not only provided me with all the documents I could desire, but also regularly provided me with a commentary of the Paulist fathers that showed both his love for Paulist history and his great knowledge of it. Also, I am grateful for the support given me by Dr. Bruce Lescher from the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, who became a valued research partner in Washington as well as a most interesting dinner companion. Through Bruce, I came to understand more of the richness of the Roman Catholic tradition.

In New York City, Father Charles Kullmann kindly entertained my many questions about the history of St. Paul the Apostle Church and welcomed me to worship at the parish.

In Canada, Rev. Douglas Rudd, the archivist of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada in Mississauga, Ontario, always welcomed me warmly and did all he could to find documents to assist me. In London Ontario, Rev. Robert Smith, the senior pastor, and Rev. Ken Raymer, the executive pastor of London Gospel Temple, encouraged me regularly and in a most transparent fashion allowed me to probe the history of the assembly. Finally, in Peterborough, Ontario, I must thank first, Ms. Terry Kennedy, the librarian of Eastern Pentecostal Bible College for her unflagging support and assistance seen best perhaps in her entrepreneurial approach to interlibrary loans. In addition, I wish
to thank all my colleagues at Eastern, especially those in my department, Dr. Scott Bullerwell, Dr. Randy Holm, Rev. Douglas James, and Rev. Gordon Bjorgan, for their interest and support during the years in which this study was prepared.

Throughout my years of graduate study at the Toronto School of Theology, Dr. Thomas McIntire has been an invaluable help to me. His influence on my life and work has extended far beyond the impartation of cognitive data and his assistance with the preparation of this study. His insightful and incisive comments throughout this project were consistent with his treatment of all my work. Also, I am indebted to Dr. Phyllis Airhart of Emmanuel College, and the Rev. Dr. Alan Hayes of Wycliffe College, for their encouragement throughout my doctoral studies.

Finally, I must express my deepest thanks to my wife Carolyn and to my children John, Ben, and Alexandra who released me to pursue this study and tolerated my absence on research trips along with many nights working late at the office typing and retyping. I hope that, in some small way, this study might help give sense to our spiritual journey as a family.
TABLES

Table 1. Alternate Metaphors as Clues to Meaning ............................................. 29
Table 2. The Complexity of the Interaction of Metaphors .................................... 30
Table 3. Occupations of Methodists: 1800 – 1837 .................................................. 58
Table 4. Primitive Methodist Growth Rate: 1821 – 1932 ....................................... 76
Table 5. The Methodist Church: Membership Losses during the Second World War 80
Table 6. The Methodist Church: Clergy Losses during the Second World War ........ 80
Table 7. “Revival”: Shifts in the “Gestalt Switch” Occasioned by Changes of Subject ................................................................. 129
Table 8. “Decline”: Shifts in the “Gestalt Switch” Occasioned by Changes of Subject ............................................................................ 130
Table 9. The Populations of Congleton and Astbury ............................................. 156
Table 10. A Comparison: Lawton Street and Wagg Street Chapels: 1851 ............. 157
Table 11. Congleton Primitive Methodist (Kinsey Street) Chapel Attendance ........ 162
Table 12. Kinsey Street Chapel Membership ....................................................... 163
Table 13. Congleton Primitive Methodist Circuit Membership ............................ 165
Table 15. Kinsey Street Circuit Membership in Five-Year Intervals: 1845-1969 ... 168
Table 16. Kinsey Street Sunday School Membership: 1845-1959 ....................... 172
Table 17. Kinsey Street Chapel Fraternal Organisations Prior to Union ............... 178
Table 18. Congleton Occupations in a “Register of Christenings” ....................... 184
Table 19. Kinsey Street Chapel Membership 1881 and 1891 ............................. 186
Table 20. Class Members ................................................................. 212
Table 21. References to Open-Air "Revival" Activities in Circuit Returns ...... 217
Table 22. Manhattan Enumeration District 504 ........................................ 228
Table 23. Enumeration District 504: Ethnic Composition ............................. 231
Table 24. Foreign Born White Stock (Native White: Foreign or Mixed Parentage + Foreign Born White) .......................................................... 233
Table 25. Race/Ethnicity: 1930 ................................................................. 234
Table 26. 1970 Population Survey ............................................................. 234
Table 27. Tract 151: 1960 ...................................................................... 235
Table 28. Samples of Native and Foreign Born Population, By Color:
1890-1930: Manhattan ........................................................................ 235
Table 29. Manhattan Community District 7: 1990 Population ...................... 236
Table 30. Population Decline in CTA 151 ................................................... 237
Table 31. Distribution By Boroughs of Roman Catholic, Protestant, 
Eastern Orthodox, and Jewish Populations 1900-1930 (Manhattan) .......... 238
Table 32. Occupations: CTA 131: 1889 ....................................................... 241
Table 33. Occupations: CTA 131: 1889 – Bureau of Census Classifications. 242
Table 34. Employment in CTA 151: 1960 .................................................... 243
Table 35. Housing 1960 ........................................................................... 244
Table 36. Tenement Construction Until 1960 ............................................... 245
Table 37. Parish Mission Sermon Topics: Parish Mission 1: Dec. 18-Dec. 25 1858 . 256
Table 38. Sermons and Preachers: Parish Mission 14: 23 Nov.-21 Dec. 1913 .... 256
Table 39. Parish Missions at St. Paul the Apostle Church .............................. 258
Table 40. Renewal Morning Instructions ...................................................... 259
Table 41. Renewal Sermons ................................................. 260
Table 42. Parish Mission Confessions at St. Paul the Apostle Church ............ 262
Table 43. Society Growth in Parish Mission Reports ................................ 263
Table 44. Non-Catholic Missions at St. Paul the Apostle Church ................. 265
Table 45. Members Received .................................................. 285
Table 46. Total Number of Members .......................................... 287
Table 47. “Decline”: The “Gestalt Switch” Occasioned by Using “Paulists” as the Subject .......................................................... 305
Table 48. Ethnicity in London .................................................... 323
Table 49. Ethnicity in London and in the Pentecostal Community ............... 327
Table 50. Percentage of London’s Population and the Pentecostal Population from the United Kingdom ........................................... 328
Table 51. “Missions Giving” (later “Financial Report - Home and Foreign”) .... 344
Table 53. Growth Pattern of the Largest Religious Denominations in London and Pentecostals: 1911-1991 ........................................ 368
Table 54. Growth Pattern of Churches in London as Percentages of Total Population ................................................................. 369
Table 55. Protestantism, Roman Catholicism and Pentecostalism: Percentages of the Total Population of London .......................... 369
Table 56. London Gospel Temple: Members, Adherents, and Staff: November 1998 ................................................................. 370
Table 57. PAOC Churches in London, Ontario as of 9 February 1999 ............ 371
Table 58. Non-PAOC Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in London Ontario as of 9 February 1999 .................................................. 372
Table 59. 1961 Census: Population By Religious Denomination, 1901-1961 .... 374

xvi
Table 78. All Factors Leading to a "Decline" Found in at Least One of the Subjects

459
GRAPHS

Graph 1. Growth Pattern of the Primitive Methodist Connexion .................. 159

Graph 2. “Kinsey Street” Chapel Attendance ........................................ 160


Graph 6. Kinsey Street Circuit and Chapel Membership ............................ 169

Graph 7. Sunday School Attendance ..................................................... 172

Graph 8. Kinsey Street Circuit Chapel and Preaching Points ....................... 175

Graph 9. Kinsey Street Circuit Local Preachers ....................................... 176

xix
CHARTS

Chart 1. Endogenous Factors Leading to Decline in All Three Subjects 460
Chart 2. Endogenous Factors Leading to Decline in at Least Two Subjects 461
Chart 3. Exogenous Factors Leading to Decline in All Three Subjects 462
Chart 4. Exogenous Factors Leading to Decline in at Least Two Subjects 463
Chart 5. Endogenous Factors Leading to Decline in at Least One Subject 464
Chart 6. Exogenous Factors Leading to Decline in at Least One Subject 465
Diagram 1. Boundaries of CTA 151

232
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>APF</td>
<td>Archives of the Paulist Fathers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CCRO</td>
<td>Chester County Records Office</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LFP</td>
<td>London Free Press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPL</td>
<td>London Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NARA</td>
<td>National Archives and Records Administration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NYCPL</td>
<td>New York City Public Library</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAOC</td>
<td>Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PMM</td>
<td>Primitive Methodist Magazine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PAOCAR</td>
<td>Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Archives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WODARC</td>
<td>Western Ontario District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Archives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 1
UNDERSTANDING THE LEXICON

The history of Christianity is replete with religious movements of great vitality that have appeared unexpectedly. At first glance, the historical process of many of these movements may appear to be straightforward: after rapid growth they reach a state of stasis and then either decline until their history terminates, or develop into institutions that have long-term influence on the larger religious landscape. Historical reality, however, is far more complex than this simple typology would suggest. The historical processes of all these movements are composed of a rich mix of factors that have contributed to their sudden appearance and to their patterns of growth and decline. In the modern era, Great Britain and especially North America have proved to be particularly fertile hosts for such movements. In the 1990s, a variety of new, exotic forms of Christian piety that have been broadly labelled “revivals,” have appeared in North America and, by way of export, throughout the industrialised world. These new forms have served as a catalyst for rekindling the discussion of the entire lexicon of religious language that has been traditionally used to characterise such movements.

Crucial Terms

The core nomenclature of this lexicon, the language of “revival,” “renewal,” and “awakening,” has a long history in North American and British Christianity both in

---

1 The phenomenon that received, perhaps, the most attention in the press was the “Toronto Blessing” that began in January 1994 and had an international impact of some magnitude. In the late 1990s, events in Pensacola, Florida took the spotlight away from Toronto.
colloquial usage and in formal study. Recent discussion of these terms has been complicated, however, since commentators of, and participants in, movements that have been characterised by these terms have used them not only in diverse ways but have also coined numerous additions to the lexicon such as “refreshing,” “blessing,” “anointing,” “outpouring,” and “river.” The result has been that a general imprecision of language has developed that hampers study of these movements. Many of these new terms have not been clearly defined and may turn out to have only an ephemeral life in popular expression. On the other hand, the surge of what could be called “revivals” along with the language associated with it has created a context conducive to renewed serious reflection concerning these and related phenomena.

The purpose of this study is to probe the phenomena known as “revivals,” “awakenings,” or “renews” in an effort to understand more fully their historical process. More specifically, this study will seek both to understand the factors contributing to “declines” that occur during the course of the history of “revival” movements and to ascertain the sources that lead to ultimate “decline,” the termination of their history. My goal will be to see if enough commonalties appear in the lives of such movements to posit a historical typology of “declines” and “decline.”

The notion of “typology” is one that has been used in a variety of settings as a technical term. Many writers in the realm of comparative linguistics, for example, have used the idea for classification purposes in cross-linguistic analysis.² William Croft has stated that of the different uses that can be found in scholarly work, the most common comes from the natural sciences: a typology is “a classification of the phenomena under

---
study into types, particularly structural types.” In this definition, typology is synonymous with “classification” or “taxonomy.”

The word “type” comes from the Greek τύπος, which means “the visible impression of a stroke or pressure.” In some contexts, it can refer to an image that is formed, or even to a pattern or model. Ursula Brumm has observed that while there are many nuances given to the idea, there are two basic meanings. Brumm, quoting “Grimm’s Worterbuch,” stated that in the natural sciences, typology refers to the study of “types,” and a “type” refers to a basic form “the characteristics of which are present to a greater or lesser degree in all members of the group to which it belongs.” In contrast to the use of “types” in the natural sciences, Brumm stated that in the arts, “type” refers to “the most characteristic specimen of any given kind” as in a “prototype.”

Brumm’s use of the term in the context of the natural sciences is consistent with Croft’s. It is in this sense that the term is most helpful for this study. Accordingly, in this study I will endeavour to discover if there is a basic pattern in history whose characteristics can be found in all the phenomena under examination.

In order to explore the possibility of articulating a typology that might illuminate the history of such movements regardless of place and time, I have studied three local examples drawn from three separate movements of religious “revival.” These studies of


specific local expressions were undertaken in diverse settings, settings separated by geography, theology, spirituality, culture, and time. The criteria for selection were several: the local group’s ability to trace its origins to the earliest moments of the movement of which it is a part; continuation of the group in some form in history since its beginning; and the availability of sufficient records to facilitate analysis. Based on these criteria, I selected a Primitive Methodist Chapel in north-west England that originated in the first decade of the nineteenth century; a Roman Catholic parish in New York City that experienced revival activity beginning in the middle of the nineteenth century; and a Pentecostal assembly in Ontario that is able to trace its beginnings to the first decade of the twentieth century. My intent in the study of these local settings was not to provide local histories per se but rather to use the genre of local history as the means to view historical process.

The first task, however, is to explain the meaning of the central terms in the lexicon. Perhaps the best example of the richness of the lexicon of “revival” can be seen in the language used by Protestant historian Kenneth Scott Latourette to describe growth patterns in Christianity. For example, in the preface to volume one of A History of Christianity, and in his comprehensive History of the Expansion of Christianity, he refers to “progress,” “pulsation,” “upsurging . . . impulse,” “advance,” “retreat,” “revival,” “decline,” “loss,” “decay,” “pause,” “recession,” “conflict,” “awakening,” “reawakening,” “augmented devotion,” “new life,” “springs of life,” “forward movement,”

---

6 This use of “typology” is very different from the use of the term in Biblical studies in which “types” are used as a mechanism of interpretation to identify persons, things, actions, or events that prefigure future ones.
“vigour,” “vitality,” “new age,” and “rising tide.” The terms that form the core of this lexicon are metaphors that come in two sets, one that refers to growth and one that refers to loss: “revival,” “renewal,” and “awakening,” and “declines” and “decline.” Since figurative language presents unique semantic difficulties, the complexity of explanation is heightened due to the metaphorical nature of these terms.

In this study, emphasis will be placed on questions that relate to the metaphor of “decline.” For example, what constitutes a “decline?” What markers can be found to determine when and how “revival,” “renewal,” or “awakening” ceases? When and how do “declines” begin? When does “decline” begin to characterise the history of movements that have experienced “revival,” “awakening,” or “renewal”? Although the semantic field of these terms can be traced to the Biblical language of “rebirth,” “renewal,” and “regeneration,” much of the study related to these terms has been done in the context of North American and, by extension, British Protestant evangelicaism. Accordingly, the way in which writers in this tradition have defined these terms will be considered first. On the explanatory framework established by the evangelical Protestant tradition, I will build a more comprehensive set of explanations.

---


"Revival," "Renewal," and "Awakening" in North American and British Evangelicalism

Most would locate Pentecostalism and Primitive Methodism in the lineage of the evangelical Protestant revival tradition, and Roman Catholic revivalists defined themselves in opposition to it. That all three subjects in this study are related to this tradition underscores the foundational role it has played in the definition of terms.

The Efficacy of "Revival" as a Tool for the Interpretation of Historical Process

Any attempt to understand the meaning of "revival" as used in the North American evangelical tradition, must first grapple with the very validity of speaking of "revivals." A significant number of scholars have denied that religious "revivals" occur. R. C. Gordon-McCutchan, for example, has stated that even Timothy Smith has cast doubt on the validity of using any of the core metaphors to describe and to explain the historical process of North American religion. Smith, in what appears to be a reversal of a position held previously, argued in the 1980s for a developmental approach in which the process of change within North American religion is characterised not by patterns of "revival" and "decline" but by steady growth or "development."9

Smith was not alone in his doubts about these patterns. By the 1980s, criticisms of the "revival" construct extended far beyond those of the developmentalists. Gordon-McCutchan refined a typology originally developed by William McLoughlin that identified four approaches, all of which argue against the revival/awakening idea: "developmentalists," led by Smith and others; "minimalists," who argue that "fixity, not change, is the rule in social groupings"; "precision-pluralists," who affirm that American

social reality “is so heterogeneous that no single theory of social change could possibly encompass the whole”; and “microcosmicists” who argue that detailed analysis of local communities does not support the revival/awakening construct.  

“Revivals” Understood as Cyclical Phenomena

Those who have argued in support of the assertion that recognisable recurrent “revivals,” “awakenings,” or “renewals” have taken place throughout history, have generally expressed their belief in terms of identifiable cyclical patterns. The essence of these cyclical interpretations is that a conjunction of certain factors that occur in a given context will serve as sources for a “revival,” and this conjunction will be similar to prior conjunctions that also led to a “revival.”

Historiographically, such cyclical interpretations of historical process have advantages. John F. Wilson, for example, has stated that “those concerned with cyclical views of history tend to be deeply influenced by the perception of context and a field of causation conceived as interactive.” Consequently, those in favour of cyclical interpretations correctly recognise the multifactoral nature of historical explanation, a recognition that affirms the complexity that is characteristic of historical reality.

Among those who hold to cyclical interpretations of “revival,” a diversity of opinion can be found regarding the dominant sources. Many, such as Gordon-McCutchan and William Mapes Anderson, have understood the primary source of

---


“revival” in terms of response to angst caused by social stress and dislocation. Anderson, for example, stated that Pentecostalism emerged primarily due to “the psychic consequences of cultural or economic deprivation.”

Other writers, while not emphasising social distress, nonetheless accentuate psychological factors related to social conditions as major factors. George Rawlyk, for example, used Anthony Wallace, Victor Turner, and George Marsden in his explanation of sources. From Wallace and Marsden, he took the assertion that a revival “occurs” when

a society finds its day-to-day behaviour has deviated so far from the accepted (traditional) norms that neither individuals nor large groups can honestly (consistently) maintain the common set of religious understandings by which they believe (have been taught) they should act.

Interpretation of “revival” or “awakening” in a cyclical manner can lead straightforwardly into a typological understanding of historical process. Rawlyk’s view, for example, in a manner reminiscent of McLoughlin’s approach to awakenings, is explicitly typological: first, individual stress is caused stemming from a perceived “loss of identity” and this in turn leads to cultural disorientation. Then, a charismatic leader arises who has had a traumatic religious experience and he begins to attract the “more flexible” members of society. Conservatives retreat, seeking to entrench themselves and their commitments, and then a “sudden leap forward” occurs. Lastly, an “awakening” is realised as the converted convince the “more passive” of their society to accept their beliefs and practices and a new revitalised culture comes to be.

---


Later in the same article, Rawlyk asserted explicitly that revivals owe their origin to psychological sources. He referred to revivals as a means by which sublimated desires and urges can be met. Borrowing from Turner, he stated that revivals are a way in which people can “break away from their ‘innumerable restraints and boundaries’ and capture what Turner called the ‘floating world’ of self-discovery, inner freedom and actualization.” In this paradigm, “revival” functioned as the “social means whereby all sorts of complex and hitherto internalized and sublimated desires, dreams, hopes, and aspirations became legitimized.”

Richard Carwardine and others in the tradition of Charles Finney have suggested an interpretation of “revival” based on human action. Carwardine suggested that “revivals” grew out of “a high expectancy cultivated by persistent preachers and an optimistic congregation” together with “an appropriate agent.” Carwardine constructed a cycle in which expectancy leads to intense revival excitement which cannot be maintained in the long term and which inevitably gives way to emotional exhaustion and then decline, leading finally to a renewed sense of expectancy as the cycle begins again.

Robert Currie, Alan Gilbert, and Lee Horsley have developed a sophisticated cyclical interpretation based on the earlier work of William B. Sprague. Their cycle has five “phases”: “depression, activation, revival, deactivation, and declension.” They argued that in the period characterised as “depression,” growth would be almost totally

---

14 Rawlyk, 212-214.

15 Richard J. Carwardine, Transatlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America, 1790-1865 (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1978), 49-50. This is consistent with Douglas Franklin’s emphasis on technique that is noted below. See note 27.

autogenous which, while resulting in a low loss rate, nonetheless meant that external recruitment would be minimal.

An “activation period” would begin when change occurred as some agent produced an expectation of high growth in the membership and such growth would be seen to be possible and “felt to be necessary.” Suitable agents could include historical realities of a variety of sorts: “some political event, some crisis such as an epidemic, an economic upturn or, at the local level, some vicissitude in the lives of an individual or individuals within the congregation . . . .”

A “revival period,” characterised by “effort and excitement,” would soon follow: “Leaders, members, and adherents are all highly activated; recruitment rate rises rapidly; and expectations of high growth may rise even faster.” Concomitant with a higher recruitment rate is a higher loss rate: with no history in the movement, loyalty has not been fully developed among members. Accordingly, new members have fewer psychological, emotional, and social constraints preventing them from leaving.

A “deactivation period” follows, during which potential recruits become “less responsive to recruitment.” Coupled with a high, loss rate, this insensitivity to the need for recruitment leads to a decline of expectation for growth among the members. In time, the high losses, together with falling recruitment patterns, lead not only to a loss of expectation for high growth and but also to a loss of confidence in its validity.17

“Oscillation” as an Interpretative Tool

Many writers who understand the historical process of religious groups in terms of cycles use the metaphor of “oscillation” as a historiographical tool. E. P. Thompson,
for example, in his study *The Making of the English Working Class*, explicitly used the metaphor of “oscillation” to express his well-known view of revivals as “the chiliasm of despair.” Thompson argued that Methodist conversion patterns represented an “oscillation” or “pulsation” between “periods of hope and periods of despair and spiritual anguish.” This oscillation had “religious revivalism at the negative, and radical politics . . . at the positive pole” so that religious revivalism flourished whenever political hopes were dashed. Conversely, “whenever hope revived, religious revivalism was set aside . . . .” Thompson’s view suggests that “oscillation” should be understood not as a pulsation between periods of revival and periods of decline, but of oscillation between two different kinds of revival, religious and social or political.

Currie, Gilbert, and Horsley have also used the “oscillation” metaphor. In their study of church growth patterns in the United Kingdom, they frame the idea of “oscillation” in the language of physics. Their expression of this idea, whether by design or by accident, stresses the determinative aspect that appears to be inherent in the idea of cycles. In reference to changes in the ongoing existence of a religious “system,” they state that if

endogenous changes are cyclical in nature, they presuppose a point or path of equilibrium about which the system tends to oscillate, just as a pendulum, constrained by gravity, swings either side of the vertical in such a way that the amplitude of each movement determines that of the counter-movement.

A number of scholars have used insights from other disciplines to construct a philosophy of history, or, in some cases, a theology of history, based on the “oscillation”

---


19 Currie, Gilbert, and Horsley, 39.
paradigm. Bruce Reed, for example, developed his theory of “oscillation” through extrapolation from a general theory of human behaviour. Reed argued that, under pressure of perceived threat, an individual will respond to a felt need for assurance and protection by regression to a state of “extra-dependence.” In this process, the person moves from a “mode where he is self-sufficient to a mode where he is dependent on something or someone who is external to himself.” Reed asserted that this principle is expressed in religion through the invention of religious rituals that “formalize the process of regression to extra-dependency.”

David Reed has added a nuance to Bruce Reed’s model: “oscillation” is a healthy process that the church as an institution should manage. David Reed stated, however, that when the church fails to guide and direct the process properly, “the environment is created for a reaction and eventual formation of new forms of spirituality that meet the person’s needs for extra-dependence.” According to this interpretation, “revivals” can be understood as functions of “oscillation” back to extra-dependence. Consistent with this model would be the assertion that “revivals” occur at moments when a number of people who are experiencing oscillation towards extra-dependence, to which their religious group does not respond in a manner that is perceived to be appropriate, create a new outlet for their perceived need for extra-dependence. Used in this way, the idea of “oscillation” has a double signification, referring first to the change from self-dependence to extra-dependence, and second to “revivals” that occur as a means of meeting the

---

20 Bruce Reed, The Task of the Church and the Role of its Members (Washington, DC: Alban Institute, 1984), 2.

perceived need for extra-dependence. In turn, these “revivals” may decline in response to an “oscillation” back to self-dependence or in response to the perception that the revival group no longer meets its constituency’s needs.

From the realm of theology, Jacques Ellul developed another variant on the “oscillation” paradigm. Ellul argued that that both Judaism and Christianity were radically opposed to pagan ideas of the sacred that sought to sacralise all nature. Instead, both of these religions emphasised a world-view that was radically dualistic: God was understood to be transcendent, totally separate from all created things.\textsuperscript{22} According to Ellul, Jews and Christians have been unable to maintain this essential dualism and, as a result, characteristic of the history of both Judaism and Christianity has been “a constant struggle between the desire to desacralize in the interests of the one and completely different God and a revival of the sacred by a kind of spontaneous impulsion.”\textsuperscript{23} However, when this dualism has been lost and “resacralization” has occurred, there have always been moments of hope in which groups have come into existence to call the church back to its essential nature.\textsuperscript{24} Using Ellul’s paradigm, the history of Christianity could be described in terms of “oscillation” between “desacralization” and “resacralization.” By applying Ellul’s nomenclature, it could be said that episodes of “desacralization” are, at base, moments of “revival.”


\textsuperscript{23} Ellul, 59.

\textsuperscript{24} Ellul, 198. Significantly, Ellul’s statement alludes to the idea that the meaning and value of a “revival” are matters of hermeneutics. Depending on an observer’s perspective and commitments, a “revival” could be considered in either positive or negative terms.
The Difference between "Revival" and "Awakening"

In the North American context, the metaphor of "awakening" has long been an important historiographical tool. Much attention has been given to the perceived increase in religious fervour in North America that began in the mid-eighteenth century that, together with its subsequent social impact, became widely referred to as the "Great Awakening." Ensuing North American episodes of religious resurgence have also been called "awakenings."

In scholarly reflection, one of the most influential contributors to an elaboration of a theory of "awakening" has been William McLoughlin. At the beginning of his important study, *Revivals, Awakenings, and Reform*, McLoughlin made a crucial distinction between "revivals" and "awakenings." He defined revivalism as "the Protestant ritual . . . in which charismatic evangelists convey 'the Word' of God to large masses of people who, under this influence, experience what Protestants call conversion, salvation, regeneration, or spiritual rebirth." On the other hand, McLoughlin understood "awakenings" to be phenomena that have wider social significance: they "are periods of cultural revitalization that begin in a general crisis of beliefs and values and extend over a period of a generation or so, during which time a profound reorientation in beliefs and values takes place." This understanding of "revivals" and "awakenings" portrays them as being different in kind: revivals are event oriented, referring to discreet episodes found in the ongoing course of the history of identifiable religious groups, while "awakenings"

---


26 McLoughlin, xiii.
refer to complex multi-dimensional changes that occur over time and that influence entire societies.

Douglas W. Frank has developed McLoughlin's approach. He argued that "awakening" is the result produced by the means of "revival." Frank stated, for example, that the "most common and successful means of 'awakening'" in America was "the revival," a "means of recruiting new church members, revitalizing old ones, and raising the moral tone of society." Consistent with the revivalist tradition of Finney, Frank placed great emphasis on the technique of a human agent as a source of a revival. Revival was that which was brought about through the dynamism and technique of the preacher/evangelist. For Frank, as for Finney, the "sure marks" of "revival" were "certain dramatic emotional exhibits on the part of the conscience stricken and a new dedication to upright behaviour and energetic personal evangelism on the part of the newly converted."28

Gerald Moran's interpretation is consistent with Frank's. He argued that the key to revivals among New England Puritans, for example, was "pastoral innovation and adaptation." The success of "experimentation" by pastors was assisted by a congregational context that featured "an active local tradition of popular participation in the church and its rituals."29


28 See Frank's discussion of Finney, 21-25. Both Frank and McLoughlin quote Finney's well-known statement "The connection between the right use of means for a revival and a revival is as philosophically sure as between the right use of means to raise grain and a crop of wheat." Frank, 22 and McLoughlin, 125.

Linear Development: A Denial of “Revivals” and “Awakenings”

In contrast to the cyclical paradigm, John F. Wilson has stated that linear, developmental interpretations tend to isolate a movement from its social context and to emphasise that the movement has “a life of its own.” This approach takes seriously the development of a movement in terms of itself and raises the possibility that development may, in part, be explained by inner dynamics unrelated to, or that can even function in spite of, factors active in the social context. Arguing from this point of view, Smith explicitly rejected the cyclical approach in general and the “Great Awakening” construct in particular. He argued that apparent cycles of “revival” and “awakening” are only illusory, rooted in the perceptions of observers. The advantage of the developmentalist perspective is that it takes seriously the ongoing historical process of the group itself, recognising the complexity inherent in its own ongoing existence.

Semantic Problems in the Lexicon

Although the term “revival” has had a long history of usage in North American and English historiography, apart from McLoughlin and a few others it has often been used in a non-technical nebulous manner. Some have used it as synonymous for “awakening.” Others have used it only to refer to a perception of an increase in religious fervour, however that might be defined. Others have taken the approach of associating

30 Wilson, 119. While Wilson affirms on one hand that neither a linear nor a cyclical view of history is complete on its own, on the other hand he nonetheless concludes that, of necessity, historical explanation must be developed according to one model or the other.

31 Smith, 97-101.

32 There have been few attempts to craft a clear and concise definition of “revival.” One of the most helpful is found in Russell E. Richey, “Revivalism: In Search of a Definition,” Wesleyan Theological Journal 28 (Spring-Fall, 1993): 168-175.
“revival” with periods of high, often rapid numerical growth that is measurable through a variety of statistical methods.\(^{33}\)

Often lacking in the discussion have been genuine attempts to take seriously the semantic differences among the crucial terms. R. C. Gordon-McCutchan’s comments regarding the work of Smith capture the ambiguity of the core terms: “He (Smith) denies the very assumption on which the Awakening-construct is based: that revivalism in the United States has passed through periods of stagnation and renewal.” Here, Gordon-McCutchan uses all three core terms together without any attempt to differentiate them let alone understand the nuances of meaning conveyed by each.\(^{34}\) Exceptions to this general lack of precision are difficult to find.\(^{35}\)

If the semantic weight of these three terms is taken into account, they can be seen to have differences in meaning that are clearly distinguishable. At face value, these three metaphors refer to different realities: “revival” speaks of making alive again that which was dead; “awakening” refers to the coming to consciousness and so to action of that which was not dead but asleep; and “renewal” connotes the making new of that which has become old. If each of these terms has genuine semantic weight, effort should be made to distinguish them carefully. However, if they all refer to the same cluster of


\(^{34}\) Gordon-McCutchan: 83.

\(^{35}\) One of the few I have found who articulates explicitly the need for consideration of these differences when crafting definitions is Frederick Hale in his brief article concerning Norwegian revivals. Frederick Hale, “Insights from Norwegian Revivalism: 1875-1914”, in *Modern Christian Revivals*, 102.
religious phenomena, then one term should be chosen as the best metaphor to describe it and the others abandoned.

The meaning of the metaphor of “decline” is more difficult to understand. The semantic field with which it should be associated is not immediately clear. Should it, for example, be matched with the idea of “incline,” or should it be understood in terms of “loss” as opposed to “gain,” or perhaps in terms of “fall” as opposed to “rise”?

The Nature of Metaphor

The use of the crucial terms is complicated by virtue of their nature as metaphors. The idea of metaphor is one that has prompted serious debate regarding both its meaning and its worth as a tool of communication. C. S. Lewis, for example, wrestled with the nature of speech by probing the manner in which “dead metaphors,” itself an ambiguous term, influence meaning.36 By “dead metaphor,” Lewis was referring to language that once was clearly figurative but has long since become understood literally. The process through which an expression changes in meaning from figurative to literal becoming a “dead metaphor” poses considerable hermeneutical problems. Lewis stated that

on the one hand it seems odd to suppose that what we mean is conditioned by a dead metaphor of which we may be quite ignorant. On the other hand, we see from day to day, that when a man uses a current and admitted metaphor without knowing it he usually gets led into nonsense; and when, we are tempted to ask, does a metaphor become so old that we can ignore it with impunity?37

In the historical study of religious movements, for example, the use of these metaphors has developed over centuries and, in contemporary parlance, they are used in a myriad of non-technical, almost colloquial ways. Often, they appear to be “dead metaphors” as


37 Lewis, 37.
conscious awareness of the metaphorical weight of these terms seems to have been lost. The question must be asked if, among Primitive Methodists, Roman Catholics, and Pentecostals, “revival,” “renewal,” and “awakening” have become “dead metaphors,” devoid of the semantic weight that was once resident in them? Should they be understood as literal expressions that must be exegeted without reference to their original metaphorical intent?

A second problem related to the idea of metaphor that the process of language change brings is that the process of linguistic development is not always strictly linear or universal. Rather, changes may occur in very different ways according to geographic, temporal, and cultural contexts and, in the case of this study, according to theological and spiritual contexts. Analysis becomes confused further because participants and observers who routinely use these terms appear never to have considered that they might be metaphorical expressions. The result is that those who use these metaphors do so in ways that express a rich diversity of connotation.

At the same time, however, there does appear to be a core of meaning that is constant regardless of changes in context. This seems to indicate that there is both a common foundation of meaning shared by all while, at the same time, a wide variance in nuance. Such variances appear to be related to the lack of precision in usage, the metaphorical character of the terms, and the diversity of contexts in which these terms are used. Significantly, the core of meaning found consistently in a variety of contexts appears to have a metaphorical aspect. Those who use these terms, while not always consciously aware that they are using metaphors, are nonetheless still using them in a
metaphorical sense, albeit a metaphorical sense that can vary in degree from one setting to another.

If these terms are still “living” metaphors, a further problem must be faced: what is the nature of “metaphor” itself? This question has been the focus of lively, scholarly debate only since the 1960s. Mark Johnson has remarked that in the debate the discussion of metaphor has moved “from the status of a subsidiary concern to the status of a central problem,” and that in this movement “the material explodes after 1960.”

A brief survey of the history of the notion of “metaphor” can put the discussion in context. Johnson argued that the study of metaphor prior to the middle of the twentieth century was dominated by a “traditional” view that built on a foundation established by Aristotle. The Aristotelian foundation, according to Johnson, featured three principles:

1. The study of metaphor assumes that the basic semantic unit is words not sentences.
2. Metaphor is “a deviance from literal usage.”
3. Metaphor is based on “similarities” between two things and as such is a species of simile.

According to Johnson, the dominance of the idea of metaphor as elliptical simile can be traced throughout Western history. The Classical poets introduced only one innovation to Aristotle’s approach: they regarded metaphor as a “shorter, less important, form of simile.” Since metaphor served merely as “a brief form of comparison,” it had no function in argumentation but was of value only as a form of ornamentation.

---


39 Johnson, 5-6.

40 Johnson, 8-9.
The Middle Ages saw the treatment of metaphors diverge into two streams. In this period, one stream understood metaphor as a tool to deceive through its ability to mask untruths. Thomas Aquinas provided another stream, however, one that departed at least in some measure from the dominant Aristotelian model. Aquinas argued that metaphors are necessary for humans to grasp spiritual truths since humans “grasp many intellectual truths through sensible likenesses.” Even Aquinas’ defence of metaphor is weakened, however, by his assumption that metaphors teach truth in a manner that is not as clear as presentations of the same truths found elsewhere in Scripture.

For Johnson, the thought of Thomas Hobbes established the foundation of the modern treatment of metaphor. Hobbes’ theory of language affirmed three principles:

1. The human conceptual system is essentially literal with “literal” understood as “words proper.” Literal language is the only system adequate for expressing meaning precisely and for making truth claims.
2. Metaphor is a deviant use of words in other than their normal manner.
3. The truth claims of metaphors are identical to their literal paraphrases.

Johnson also emphasised that Hobbes’ theory is consistent with the empiricist association of metaphor with rhetoric, an association that reduced metaphor either to a rhetorical tool or an ornamentation used for purely stylistic reasons. The result of Hobbes’ theory was that the dominant view that understood metaphor as the use of words in other than their proper senses for the purpose of deception, was maintained.

Through the work of the logical positivists, the twentieth century continued the rejection of metaphor as a focus of serious language analysis. Johnson argued that the

41 Johnson, 9-10.
42 Johnson, 11-12.
43 Johnson, 13.
positivists distrusted metaphor for two reasons: it served only emotive functions and consequently had no philosophical or scientific use since "scientific knowledge can be reduced to a system of literal and verifiable sentences."^{44}

The process that ended the hegemony of the Aristotelian model and its heirs was begun, according to Johnson, by I. A. Richards and accelerated by the work of Max Black. In the 1970s, Johnson stated that Black’s essay, “Metaphor,” was still the “landmark” by which one could be oriented to thought concerning the nature of metaphor. Black’s contribution consisted in two major propositions: he argued that some metaphors were “not reducible to cognitively equivalent literal expressions” and that metaphors may create similarities between entities rather than simply expressing pre-existent ones.^{45}

Although the study of metaphor since 1960 represents an “explosion” of interest, to use Johnson’s metaphor, by the end of the twentieth century, theories of the nature of metaphor could be reduced to only three kinds. Black, in his seminal article, and later in his book Models and Metaphors, summarised these theories.

The most common understanding of metaphor, that of “substitution,” is consistent with the Aristotelian model in that a metaphorical expression is substituted for a literal expression. This substitution is possible because of some likeness or analogy between the two expressions.^{46} The task of the hermeneut is first to discover the literal meaning of the metaphor and then to use that as a clue to understanding the literal expression for

---

^{44} Johnson, 17.
^{46} Black, Models and Metaphors, 31.
which the metaphor serves as a substitute. Occasionally, Black asserted, the substitute fills temporary gaps in vocabulary by giving an idea that could not be articulated succinctly in any literal sense. With this exception, the function of metaphor, according to the substitution view, is purely stylistic, intended to give pleasure to the reader by the surprise of a metaphor when a more prosaic literal expression of the idea would have been possible. According to this theory, the point of a metaphor is either similarity or analogy: the metaphorical language is either similar to or analogous to its literal equivalent. The statement, “Primitive Methodism was a revival,” for example, could be interpreted to mean that Primitive Methodists were those who experienced a spiritual rebirth of life and vigour in their religious piety. Here, the metaphor of “revival” can be seen to have been only a stylistic substitution for the literal meaning.

A second approach to metaphors is that of comparison. In this understanding of metaphor, the metaphorical expression functions as “a condensed or elliptical simile” in that the metaphor could “be replaced by an equivalent literal comparison” without damaging meaning. To say that “Primitive Methodism was a revival” could be articulated as “Primitive Methodism was like a revival” since both “revival” and “Primitive Methodism” connote ideas of a rebirth of life, vigour, and health. Again, the Aristotelian foundations are obvious: the difference between metaphor and simile is only one of form; the comparison stated explicitly in the simile is only implied by the metaphor. Since the idea of comparison still maintains that the metaphor could be

---

47 Black, Models and Metaphors, 32-33.

48 Black, Models and Metaphors, 35.
replaced by an equivalent literal comparison, the comparison approach can be seen to be only a variation of the theory of substitution.

Black argued for a third theory of “metaphor,” a paradigm that could be called “interaction.” According to this theory, metaphors have meaning in a way that is dialectic in nature. Black’s debt to Richards is evident: quoting Richards, Black asserted that “when we use a metaphor we have two thoughts of different things active together and supported by a single word or phrase, whose meaning is a resultant of their interaction.”

According to this paradigm, to say that “Primitive Methodists were a revival” would be to say that the ideas of “Primitive Methodists” and “revival” are brought into an active relationship in which the two subjects interact together to produce a meaning that is the result of their interaction.

To apply “revival” as a metaphor to “Primitive Methodists” is to provide an extension of meaning both to “Primitive Methodists” and to “revival” to produce a meaning that is not reducible to any literal expression.

Black asserted that the metaphor acts as sort of “filter” for the principal subject. The idea of “revival,” for example, freely evokes a system of “commonplaces” that are “the common possession of some speech community.”

Johnson explained Black’s theory stating that metaphor uses one complete system of these commonplaces to organise our understanding of a completely different system. The interaction established by this screening of one set of “commonplaces” by another generates “a new conceptual

---


50 Black, Models and Metaphors, 38.

51 Black, Models and Metaphors, 39-41.
organisation of, a new perspective in, some object.”

When Primitive Methodists, for example, heard the term “revival,” a matrix of shared connotations about new life were elicited. The “commonplaces” shared by Primitive Methodists about their group enabled them to organise their understanding of the “commonplaces” associated with the idea of “revival.”

In the process of “filtering,” whereas some characteristics that can be attributed to the two subjects are emphasised by their association together, other characteristics are obscured from view. The point of the metaphor is that it “organizes our view” of the subjects. To say that “Pentecostalism was a revival” means that Pentecostalism cannot be thought of as a movement that is dead or dying. On the other hand, it means that because Pentecostalism refers to a religious movement, this revival is not speaking of a physical or economic rebirth.

Much of the work since the 1960s builds on and attempts to develop Black’s notion of “interaction.” Perhaps the most fruitful of recent trajectories in the study of metaphor are those that understand the aesthetic dimensions of metaphor. In this regard, Julius Wittgenstein’s notion of “seeing-as” or “perspectival seeing” is seminal: Wittgenstein suggested that perceiving aspects of a thing that were previously unnoticed can only be accomplished by the use of the imagination in a manner that, while subject to the will, is not reducible to simple perception. Virgil Aldrich suggested that such perception can be guided by the artist who, by the utilisation of metaphor, introduces imagistic language to reveal objects of things that had been unseen.

---

52 Johnson, 28.
53 Johnson, 29.
Marcus Hester developed the relationship between “seeing-as” and metaphor in terms of a “gestalt switch” or “flash of insight.” George Lakoff and Johnson developed this idea of a “gestalt switch” by arguing for an epistemology articulated in terms of gestalts. They asserted that “actions, events and objects are understood by us in terms of ‘experiential gestalts,’ i.e., structured meaningful wholes within experience. Each gestalt consists of various recurring sub-patterns of the whole structure and can be analysed according to these patterns.” Specification of the constituent sub-patterns is articulated in a manner appropriate for the entire gestalt. The gestalt of “revival,” for example, could be divided into sub-patterns of participants (Christians); constituent entities (those being revived; those experiencing death); stages (beginning; existence; ending); patterning (oscillations, cycles, linearity); and sources (social malaise; oppression; war; plagues). In the complex relationship of these sub-patterns, meaning is found. The point of metaphor is that its introduction juxtaposes two gestalts. The interaction of the first gestalt with the second leads to the emergence of a new gestalt that restructures our understanding of reality.

If Johnson and Lakoff’s understanding of metaphor is true, then Black was essentially correct: metaphor creates meaning as a powerful tool for restructuring our understanding of reality. Most significantly, these new approaches to metaphor smash the traditional rejection of metaphor as a fit vehicle for expressing truth. The cognitive insight provided by the metaphor is reducible neither to a literal paraphrase nor to a simile.

---

54 Johnson, 30-31.
Johnson reported that a further step had been taken in the late twentieth century as many began to turn the traditional assumption concerning the nature of language on its head: literal statements may not necessarily be better carriers of truth than metaphors. Metaphor, stated Johnson, is neither "cognitively inferior" to, nor essentially different from literal statements. Lakoff and Johnson have developed this notion by attempting to show that all human language is, in essence, metaphorically structured i.e., many seemingly literal expressions involve the use of "unnoticed" metaphors. Lewis' idea of "dead metaphors" may have prefigured this assertion. Awareness of the ubiquity of metaphor in language breaks down the dichotomy upon which the traditional rejection of metaphor is based. Johnson argued that supporters of metaphor as a vehicle to convey truth do not need to prove that metaphors convey truth in an obvious uncomplicated manner. Rather, all that is necessary is to show that the way in which so-called "literal" expressions convey truth is equally as problematic.

If metaphor is neither "cognitively inferior" nor essentially different from literal statements, then metaphor can be used to convey truth not reducible to a literal paraphrase. Further, if metaphor is understood according to a "gestalt switch," then the truth conveyed by the metaphor goes beyond cognitive propositional truth to an intuitive grasping of meaning that seems to be both highly individualised as well as socially conditioned. The Primitive Methodist who proclaimed that "Primitive Methodism was a revival," made that proclamation based on understandings of Methodism, Primitive

55 Johnson, 37.


57 Johnson, 37.
Methodism, that which is “primitive,” and “revival,” all of which were governed by a complex set of cognitive and affective factors related to the group, and to the individual’s personal unique experiences as a member of that group.

Attempts to use metaphor as a means to convey truth take on added significance in the context of this study since, as David Tracy has observed, all major religions are “grounded” in root metaphors. These “root metaphors” form “clusters” or “networks” in which primary metaphors “both organize subsidiary metaphors and diffuse new ones.”

The key to understanding these networks of metaphors is found in the change in the study of metaphor from “substitution” theories to “interaction” theories or, to use Tracy’s term, theories of “tension.” Tracy, for example, interpreted Paul Ricoeur’s understanding of metaphor as affirming that the “inner tensions” generated by “the twist of some semantic impertinence,” meaning the introduction of a predicate not usually linked with the subject, are resolved as the “impertinence” becomes “a genuinely informative semantic innovation.” Through the tension-arousing interaction of the subject and predicate, meaning can be generated and, in the generation of meaning, the nature of the interaction between subject and predicate can only be understood in the context of alternative metaphors that might be used elsewhere. The complexity of this process is evident in table 1 as seen through the introduction of alternate metaphors for both subject and predicate.

---


59 Tracy, 97.
Table 1. Alternate Metaphors as Clues to Meaning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Alternate Subjects</th>
<th>Copula</th>
<th>Predicate</th>
<th>Alternative Predicates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primitive Methodists</td>
<td>Ranters</td>
<td>were</td>
<td>a revival</td>
<td>a new birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Prims</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a new life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Methodist schismatics</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a resurrection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bournites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a vital religious movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Clowesites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>an emotional religious sect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp Meeting people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a politically dangerous group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orthodox Methodists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>faithful Methodists</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Faithful Methodists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>schismatic Methodists</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interaction of the metaphors and the “gestalt switch” that occurs in the course of this interaction becomes even more complex through the addition of the metaphor of “decline.” To say, for example, “Primitive Methodism was a revival that experienced a decline” introduces a whole new semantic field as shown by table 2.

Since Christianity, along with Judaism and Islam, is quintessentially a religion of “the book,” then the source of these metaphors in Christianity is, according to Tracy, the Christian Scriptures. Metaphors used as part of the network associated with the root metaphor, all serve to explicate the meaning of that original root metaphor. For the sake of example, if, as Tracy argues, the root metaphor of Christianity is the Johannine
statement "God is love," then "Primitive Methodism," "revival," and "decline" can be seen to be components in a complex network of secondary and tertiary metaphors that relate to the primary metaphor.

Table 2. The Complexity of the Interaction of Metaphors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prim. Meth.</td>
<td>Ranterites</td>
<td>were (was)</td>
<td>Revival</td>
<td>faithful Methodists</td>
<td>decline</td>
<td>falling away</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prims</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a new birth</td>
<td></td>
<td>loss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist Schism</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a new life</td>
<td></td>
<td>decrease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bourmites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a resurrection</td>
<td></td>
<td>sinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clowesites</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a vital movement</td>
<td></td>
<td>backsliding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camp meeting people</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>an emotional religious sect</td>
<td></td>
<td>trouble</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orthodox Methodists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a politically dangerous group</td>
<td></td>
<td>lukewarmness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faithful Methodists</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>schismatic Methodists</td>
<td></td>
<td>lack</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In conclusion, since the network of metaphors in Primitive Methodism, Roman Catholicism, and Pentecostalism all share the same root metaphor and other secondary metaphors, then there should be some commonalities among Primitive Methodist, Roman Catholic, and Pentecostal understandings of the two sets of metaphors discussed in this

---

60 Tracy, 89 and 100.
study. However, since these three groups are very different in nature, it should be expected that their understanding of these metaphors would have significant differences. Since metaphorical meaning must be understood in terms of “interaction” or “tension” between the subjects and predicates in the metaphor, because the subjects change, the nature of the interaction must also change. In order to grasp the meaning generated by the interaction, effort must be made to understand both the subjects and the predicates as well as the networks of metaphors related to them.

Toward a New Paradigm

The complexity of, and the inherent difficulties in, the task of constructing a new paradigm to be used as a tool of interpretation, must be affirmed. The use of three subjects means that the networks of metaphors and their interaction will change significantly. However, a foundation has been laid by previous research.

The Use of Linear and Cyclical Models

In the ongoing debate concerning the cyclical and the linear interpretations of history, aspects of both perspectives can offer assistance in understanding these metaphors. For example, the affirmation inherent in linear models that recurrent duplicate conjunctures of factors do not happen and that belief in such conjunctures unduly simplifies historical process is helpful. Also useful is the emphasis in linear developmentalist models on the importance of the historical process of the group taken for itself without reference to outside factors.

On the other hand, the sensitivity of cyclical models to the surrounding context must be affirmed. Also, recognition that similar factors can be found in successive episodes in history and that the conjuncture of factors can occur in similar ways can assist
in constructing a new paradigm. Such a paradigm should be able to retain the possibility that enough regularity in the appearance of factors and their conjuncture occurs so that a class of phenomena described as "revivals" can be identified, while at the same time rendering unnecessary the assumption that they are, by definition, cycles.\(^6\)

The metaphor of "oscillation" is helpful in describing the pattern of "revivals." However, current use of this metaphor suffers from two weaknesses. First, by casting it in the language of cycle, historians have failed to deal adequately with the richness of the texture of history. Second, most state the paradigm of oscillation in terms of pairs of alternating states. This, too, is artificial and fails to account for the complexity of historical process.

"Oscillation" can be of help if it can be expressed in ways that neither demand a determinative cyclical interpretation nor mandate the acceptance of a mechanical view in which there is alternation between two recognisable states. Rather, if it can be used in a manner that connotes a pattern that, while appearing to have some degree of regularity, does not necessarily demand any kind of deterministic interpretation, then it can be of help. The oscillation model as I would define it emphasises not only that "revivals" reappear in the ongoing course of history, but also that, given the complexity of the interaction of factors, the sources of the recurrences will not be the same in each case.

Again, this is not to say that similarities among different episodes of "revival" will be

---

\(^6\) In his essay, "Historical Study and the Historical Dimension of Our World." Thomas McIntire made the important observation that "each event is unique, but it is also similar to others of its kind." Later, he referred to "similarities in kinds of events and processes." He argued that these similarities can be called "cycles." My concern with this nomenclature is that "cycles" are understood generally as referring to a theory that is based on repetition of factors and their interaction. A balance must be found whereby both the uniqueness and the similarity between a given context and others can be maintained. The term "cycle” seems to me to connote too much. C. T. McIntire, "Historical Study and the Historical Dimension of Our World," in History and Historical Understanding, ed. C. T. McIntire and Ronald A. Wells (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984), 24 and 26.
absent. Rather, resemblance in terms of kinds of factors that play a significant role may be evident as may the pattern of the conjuncture of these factors. However, given the intricate nature of historical reality, each instance of "revival" will be unique.

The language of "oscillation" can also be used to explain the difference in meaning between "revival" and "renewal." As humans change by virtue of being historical phenomena, so their religious life also changes. "Revivals" "renewals," and "declines" represent kinds of change that occur with a degree of frequency that gives the impression of a pattern that may be described as "oscillation." This pattern of "oscillation" can be characterised, on one hand, by the term "renewal." Renewal, as the positive aspect in the "oscillation," can be discerned through indicators such as increased growth or vitality in the ongoing life of something already existing. On the other hand, the negative aspect is seen in "declines," which refer to the termination of growth patterns or to that part of the "oscillation" that can in some way be characterised as loss.

When something new is brought about, the term best suited for the positive aspect of the "oscillation" is "revival." In the case of "revival," determination of the negative aspect in the "oscillation" process must be seen in a comparison of the new entity with other previously existing phenomena. When a "decline" leading to disintegration and termination in the course of history becomes recognisable, usually in retrospect, "oscillation" can be observed through comparing the historical process of the dead entity with the processes of other similar previous phenomena. Final "decline" ends the possibility of observation in the original setting and further "oscillations" can only be detected in new settings with new entities.
When "revivals" and "renewals" are compared to "declines," it becomes clear that pressing the metaphor of oscillation too far can lead to distortion. It is not necessary to force this paradigm beyond acceptable limits by making it refer to two contrasting states existing as opposite poles in some rigid faithfulness to the metaphor's origins in the realm of physics. Rather, the sources of "declines" may vary and the "declines" may lead to a variety of conditions all of which may be different from others.

The metaphor of "oscillation," as I would define it, affirms that although "revivals," "renewals," and "declines" may appear in what seems to be a regular pattern, the sources will always be different in their identity, their interaction, and their strength. Even though similarities of factors and their interplay may be evident, the uniqueness of each historical phenomenon can be protected through the affirmation that the exact conjuncture of factors will be unique in each case. This differs from the cyclical model in that the cyclical paradigm tends to affirm that the repeated conjuncture of factors will cause "revivals," "renewals," and "declines" according to a recognisable, determined pattern.

**Historical Process as "Coming-to-be, Being, and Ceasing-to-be"**

In a discussion of the nature of historical process, Thomas McIntire has provided a framework on which to construct a new paradigm. McIntire has stated that the historical dimension of reality is "identifiable as the temporal process of coming into being, carrying on, modifying, perhaps developing, and then passing away." According to McIntire, changes that occur in all phenomena during their course of existence

---

62 McIntire, 20.
through time can be classified according to three stages: "coming-to-be," "being," and "ceasing to be."

Using this paradigm, "revivals" could be categorised as phenomena that occur during the "coming-to-be" process of religious groups. According to McIntire, "coming-to-be" refers to "the constitutive way in which a phenomenon comes to be identifiable, manifesting its own integrality and coherence." When a "revival" occurs, it could be said that "coming-to-be" means that existence has begun anew rising out of that which was dead.

When the same kind of phenomenon results in renewed life in an already existent entity, then this new life can be said to relate to the "being" stage since modification occurs in that which previously existed and is still ongoing. Depending on the perspective of the observer or participant, such modification in already existent, historical entities could be described as development. When modifications are viewed positively, "renewal" is an appropriate metaphor to describe them. It can be said, then, that "revival" groups, when experiencing subsequent positive aspects of a process of oscillation, are experiencing "renewals."

Conversely, "declines" may be understood as periods during the ongoing life of a religious group when, although integrality and coherence are maintained, development ceases and metaphors such as "decline," "deterioration," "decay," or "loss" best describe the historical process of that group. Further developments or "renewals" are still possible during this stage of existence. "Decline," as distinct from "a decline," relates to the

---

63 McIntire, 31.
“ceasing-to-be” stage that occurs when “the identity, the integrality of the phenomenon begins to be lost, not to be regained, leading to its termination in the course of history.”

**Distinctions among “Revival,” “Renewal,” and “Awakening”**

“Revivals” or “renewals” all refer to the same kinds of phenomena undergoing the same kinds of changes. When these changes are seen in the “coming-to-be” stage of an entity, the best signifier is “revival.” However, these same kinds of changes occurring in the ongoing course of some entity’s existence can be described best in terms of “renewal.” I use the term “renewal” as opposed to “awakening” for three reasons: first, the term “awakening” is freighted with too much “baggage.” McLoughlin appears to have set the parameters for discussion of this term. His definition of “awakening” in terms of cultural transformation is understood widely if not accepted by all scholars. That to which I am referring in this study is not cultural transformation but changes in religious piety that do not necessarily have an impact on wider society. Second, “awakening” has not been as accessible to the non-historian as the other terms. Whereas “revival” and “renewal” have been used both in scholarly circles and in popular speech, “awakening” has had a usage restricted mainly to technical discussions by historians. When used in more popular contexts, it has been reduced to a technical term as a descriptor for a specific North American series of events as in “The Great Awakening” or “The Second Great Awakening.” Third, “renewal” came into extensive use in the late twentieth century in a wide variety of practices and reflection. To articulate these principles in language that respects the semantic weight of the metaphors, it could be said that when these changes refer to the birth of a new movement that comes out of or

---

64 McIntire, 32-33.
develops in opposition to an older body that is understood to be dead or fatally diseased, then the nomenclature of "revival" is most appropriate. When change is understood as the advent of increased vitality, return to previously abandoned principles, or renewed vision for the future, then the language of "renewal" should be used.

*Defining Marks of "Revival," and "Renewal"

"Revival," "renewal," "declines," and "decline" are recognisable changes that occur in historical process and can be seen in three realms of human life: the affective, cognitive, and volitional. While such changes occur, at base, in the lives of individuals, changes in groups take place when individuals experience similar changes as others at the same time and in the same context. Further, there is a continual rich interaction between the personal and social dimensions in all three of these realms of human life.

In the affective dimension, "revival" and "renewal" refer to changes in religious experience usually expressed in terms of a profound re-orienting experience and heightened religious fervour exhibited both in individual and corporate piety. Jerald C. Brauer, for example, in his comparison of the emergence of revivalism in English Puritanism and in the Great Awakening, stated that the "structure of religious experience appears identical in Puritanism in both England and in the Great Awakening as the first phase of Revivalism." In his study, Brauer included a typology of conversion, an experience that he understood to be characterised by dramatic affective shifts in the individual. Brauer stated that conversion was a "profound, overwhelming, totally transforming experience," and that the "struggle that preceded conversion was frequently a terrible and awful ordeal."65

---

An appeal to religious experience as a defining mark of “revival” does not necessarily entail overlooking Jon Butler’s salient observation that in the American context, “heightened emotionalism” characterised only some early revivals and that “colonial revivals nearly always reflected regional and local conditions.” Although Butler may be correct in his assertion, this does not mean that changes in the affective dimension were absent in some contexts. Rather, it could be argued that such changes took place regularly but the degree of affective change that occurred in each circumstance was mediated through the social traditions and values with which each context surrounded the display of emotion generally. Changes in the affective dimension can be missed if they are understood only in terms of a narrowly defined ecstatic religious enthusiasm.

The cognitive dimension refers to changes in the belief system of individuals in the group, changes understood by the group to be essential for membership. This does not refer only to the broad contours of theological systems that could be described in various ways such as “evangelical,” “liberal,” “sacramental,” or “reformed.” Rather, this is both broader and narrower than labels used to identify large sectors of the Christian faith would permit. Russell E. Richey, for example, has argued that one essential component necessary to the existence of a “revival” is general theological belief that is “conducive to, or at least permissive of, aggressive proselytism.” However, I would

---


67 Richey, 167. Often, a theology of conversion has been associated with “revivals.” Richey stated that “theology associated with revivals may well recast itself to make revival and conversion the norms of Christian community and existence.” Many, including Richey, have affirmed that “evangelical” was “the term most apt for this theology . . .” in nineteenth century North America. However, depending
also suggest that each group that experiences "revival" or "renewal" develops and maintains a belief in some doctrinal or practical distinctive that serves as a touchstone, functioning as the means by which members of the group are always reminded of their identity in relation to others. Classical Pentecostals, for example, explicitly refer to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the "initial evidence" of speaking in tongues as their distinctive doctrine.

When these distinctive beliefs are new constructs, new formulations previously not seen, usually they appear in the context of the "coming-to-be" of new groups. In this circumstance, the language of "revival" is best applied to them. When these groups recover lost or at least dormant distinctive beliefs, then "renewal" should be used.

The volitional dimension is also important: "revival" and "renewal" are characterised by changes in commitment patterns. In the case of "revival," individuals should be seen to relinquish previous commitments and to establish new ones. In "renewal," commitment changes are found among those who, though members, had lost their zeal; among those who could be considered to be adherents rather than members of the group; among those who were nominal members of the group; and among those who had some prior basis of sympathy for the group. "Renewal" occurs when these individuals commit themselves to more active involvement in the ongoing life of the group including participation in recruitment practices.

The changes in commitment patterns that are characteristic of "revivals" and "renewals" are susceptible to statistical observation through a variety of means. Many of

---

on the way "proselytism" and "conversion" are defined, this idea could be applied in contexts beyond the North American "evangelical" setting.
the recent studies of church growth patterns emphasise this dimension through analysis of
a variety of aspects of religious life that are open to quantitative study.\textsuperscript{68}

As individuals experience the same kinds of changes as others, they express these
changes in social ways. For example, Richey stated emphatically that "revivals" are
"impossible without crowds." For Richey, a revival represented "a species of crowd
behaviour . . . and crowds require a certain social density, a population to draw together."
Events, gatherings, and meetings of individuals of like mind and heart are necessary
expressions of "revival" and "renewal" and serve as fuel to continue them.\textsuperscript{69} A shared
sense of fellowship, community, and common purpose is an essential constituent of
"renewal" and "revival," and gatherings that foster this sense are a consistent feature of
them.\textsuperscript{70}

In his discussion of the social aspect of "revivals," Richey alluded to the
importance of liturgy, stating that "revivals" are recognisable as revivals "because they
have definite ritual form." A liturgical framework through which those being revived or
renewed give expression to the changes in their lives is necessary to confess, to preserve,
and to further the "revival" or "renewal."\textsuperscript{71} In the case of "renewal," the need for giving
appropriate liturgical expression to the ideas valued by those being renewed can lead to

\textsuperscript{68} See for example Currie, Gilbert, and Horsley; Alan Gilbert; Robert Currie; and Paul T. Phillips,
The Sectarian Spirit: Sectarianism, Society, and Politics In Victorian Cotton Towns (Toronto: University of
Toronto Press, 1982).

\textsuperscript{69} Richey, 169.

\textsuperscript{70} This is not to say that individuals cannot experience a personal revitalisation of their faith apart
from involvement with a group. What this does assert is that the phenomena known as "revivals" and
"renewals" are, by definition, social phenomena.

\textsuperscript{71} Some revival groups such as Classical Pentecostals would aver that they are non-liturgical or
even anti-liturgical. However, ritual expression seems to be necessary to at least some degree in order for a
gathering to proceed with a semblance of order. The issue would seem to be not whether there is liturgical
expression, but rather the quality of it.
tension with those who do not share the same desire for “renewal” and who refuse to accept new ideas and rituals.\textsuperscript{72} When the tensions become intolerable, those being renewed may break away and form a new group. At that point, the nomenclature should shift: now that something new has come into being, the language of “revival” becomes more appropriate.

Another social sign that “revival” is occurring is differentiation. If there has been a “revival” or a “renewal,” visible signs of new life should be evident both to observers and to participants. These signs of “revival” and “renewal” will include evidence of increasing diversity in the midst of a recognised and valued unity. This movement toward diversity should be seen in a process through which growing complexity becomes evident in the “revived” or “renewed” body. New members, each an individual, contribute to the growing complexity that can be understood as “development.” One function of this increasing complexity in the membership will be a growing diversity in programs offered as the group seeks to care both for its members and for those in its external constituency. In the midst of this growing diversity, however, a counterpoint appears to be needed to provide equilibrium: more and more value will be placed on corporate expressions of the group’s unity. Corporate worship with the entire membership, for example, may become a major priority.

Detection of development can be seen most obviously in the volitional realm by reference to continued, if unspectacular, numerical increases in membership, attendance, the ratio between membership and the general population (“MPR”), and by similar

\textsuperscript{72} This is similar to Rawlyk’s typology with the exception that it does not necessarily see the “conservatives” who refuse to accept the changes as merely “old lights,” to use McLoughlin’s term, but as those who may, in some contexts, be the force for order and development.
increases in pluriformity through differentiation as seen, for example, in the growth of Sunday Schools, and fraternal organisations.\textsuperscript{73} Further nuances in development processes can be discovered through comparison of the subject group with other chapels, parishes, or congregations in the same “circuit,” “diocese,” or “section,” and with the subject group’s national church. In the “being” stage, after “revival” or “renewal,” such signs of health in the volitional realm should be conspicuous.

\textit{The Defining Marks of “Declines” and “Decline”}

“Declines” can also be determined by reference to the three realms. In the first instance, they can be understood as a reversal of the positive conditions of “revival” or “renewal.” Perhaps the best way to articulate the nature of declines is to use two categories that Lakoff and Johnson would undoubtedly include in their lexicon of unnoticed or “conventional metaphors”: whereas “revivals” and “renewals” can be thought of as “gains,” “declines” are perhaps best understood as “losses.” These “losses” can be understood as an absence of, or a decreasing frequency in the manifestation of those behaviours characteristic of the changes that were originally perceived to be evidence of the “revival.” Accordingly, “loss” may come in many forms:

1. Loss of frequent and intense displays of emotion.
2. Loss of attendance.
3. Loss of membership.
4. Loss of growth in the MPR.
5. Loss of differentiation.
7. Loss of financial independence.
8. Loss of unity through schism or through expulsion of individuals.

\textsuperscript{73} “MPR,” as a tool of measurement, refers to membership expressed as a percentage of the relevant population.
9. Loss of distinctive ideological commitments or practices.
10. Loss of ritual behaviours that had earlier been seen as necessary constituents to “revival.”
11. Loss through “ceasing to be” as a result of union.

When decline is occurring, the usual signs of health that are observable during “revival” or “renewal,” and during “development” will be contraindicated as obvious loss begins to be observable and pluriformity begins to disappear. Perhaps the most succinct way to express “declines” is as “loss” of complexity. A loss of people, money, resources, or programs means that the interaction between all the components that comprise the group is less rich and that the existence of the group is thereby diminished.

The study of quantifiable aspects of a group’s history can be of great help in observing and understanding “declines.” Such study can give essential information concerning levels of commitment among a group’s members and adherents. Where quantification is used, for the purposes of this study a “decline” will be defined as an unabated loss of ten percent or more in members or adherents. However, “declines” may occur that are not conducive to statistical analysis. Evidence of these “declines” can be found in anecdotal accounts from both members and outsiders. These anecdotal accounts give a depth of understanding missed by a methodology that is strictly statistical in nature.

When “losses” or “declines” appear to be irreversible and total, then “decline” can be said to be occurring.74 Often, however, the process of final “decline” is observable only in hindsight, after the group’s history has ceased. The experience of “decline” as

---

74 As “revival” may be valued in different ways, I also recognise that “declines” may not be viewed negatively by all participants or observers at all times. Decline in emotional intensity and loss of distinctive doctrines may be interpreted, for example, as signs of increased maturity or of spiritual growth. Even numerical decline can be interpreted positively. Loss of members can be understood as a sign that the group is cleansing or purifying itself of those who are spiritually immature or lacking in commitment.
opposed to "a decline" is determined often by a chronic wearing down of a group by a lack of resolution in one or more factors that contributed to a "decline." However, this does not preclude the possibility of a catastrophic event or series of events that could bring the history of the group to a dramatic and sudden end.

This study will deal, primarily, not with the sources of "revival" in the "coming-to-be" period of a religious group's history, but with the processes of "being" and "ceasing-to-be." It will seek to explore the "declines" that occur periodically during the history of a religious group and the experience of final "decline" through which a group loses integrality and coherence.\(^75\)

Chapter two will continue to probe the lexicon. Since this study will focus on three subject groups representing three movements of "revival," nuances of meaning developed by participants in, and commentators of, those movements will be explored. The importance of chapter two will be to present an understanding of the shifts of meaning that occur when the metaphor of "revival" is used as a predicate for three different subjects.

Chapter two will prepare the way for my analysis of the three, local subjects. Based on the understanding of the metaphors established in the first two chapters, chapters three to five will identify and discuss the "declines" that can be clearly delineated in the histories of the subject groups. These chapters will search for the sources of these "declines" in the writings of participants and, where appropriate, discuss the conditions that led to final "decline." Once the sources of "declines" have been

\(^75\) Implicit here is the assumption that "revival" is a one-time event or series of events. This calls into question the language of revival groups throughout history in North America and the United Kingdom whose rhetoric has encouraged followers to seek "revival" continually.
identified and understood, chapters six and seven will propose a typology of "declines" and "decline" that can serve as an interpretative tool for understanding historical process.
CHAPTER 2
THE METAPHORS: SHIFTS OF MEANING

If, in the use of metaphor, an interaction or "tension" is created between subject and predicate so that a "gestalt switch" produces meaning, then the metaphors of "revival" and "decline" must be revisited to understand the shifts of meaning that accrue to these metaphors by virtue of their subjects. The following will explore the way in which scholars within Primitive Methodism, Roman Catholicism, and Pentecostalism have interpreted the crucial metaphors.

**Primitive Methodist Understandings of "Revival"**

The tiny village of Englesea Brook is nestled in the rich, rolling farmland of County Cheshire amid the magnificent hedgeries and lazy country lanes common to this area of north-west England. Nearby is the bustling centre of Crewe, one of the most important rail termini in the United Kingdom. Although Englesea Brook is only a short trip by taxi from the Crewe rail station, it is so obscure that only the driver of one in the line of cabs I approached at the station professed knowledge of its whereabouts. In Englesea Brook, in a setting of stunning pastoral beauty, lies the tomb of Hugh Bourne.

Primitive Methodism began in the early years of the nineteenth century as part of a process of group proliferation within Methodism. All the new Methodist groups found relations with the Connexion increasingly difficult. The two central figures in the shaping of Primitive Methodism, Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, led two of these new groups. The relative importance of each of these individuals to the genesis of Primitive Methodism could
be debated. Most, however, see Bourne as the one who left the deepest mark on what became a new Connexion. H. B. Kendall, one of the most important of early Primitive Methodist historians, acknowledged Bourne’s leadership when he stated that Bourne’s personal qualities suited him to be the “director, legislator, and watchful guardian” of the cause.¹

One of the oldest Methodist chapels still in existence is preserved as a museum in Englesea Brook. Across the road is the village cemetery in which the dominant monument is Bourne’s. When he died, 20,000 people lined the twelve-mile funeral route from Bemersley, the location of the Bourne family home and the site of the Connexion Book Room, to the cemetery.² Though worn with time, the inscription is still legible and it is significant:

He was very earnest [?] for promoting camp meetings and other modes of religious worship amongst the commonalty. For half a century he preached the Gospel in Great Britain and America then fell asleep leaving behind 9,916 itinerant and local preachers 109,874 members in society . . . .³

¹ Bourne and Clowes came from different social contexts and were also vastly different in personality. Bourne, like his father before him, was a wheelwright. Clowes’ mother was Ann Wedgewood, placing him in one of the most eminent of pottery families. John Anderson has described Clowes as “clubbable” whereas Bourne was dour. “phlegmatic,” a farmer, but clever and devoted. H. B. Kendall, depicted Clowes as having a “frank and winning” manner, as being “great in social qualities” and having “what men are pleased to call personal magnetism.” Bourne on the other hand “had his oddities” but was “persistent, dogged, inflexible, industrious, methodical; able to grasp details; quick to detect, and stern to expose and punish breach of rule or wrong; and yet sensitive withal, and capable of much devotion and quiet enthusiasm.” The early collaboration of Bourne and Clowes was solidified by joint visits to James Crawfoot, the enigmatic leader of the “Magic Methodists” in Delamere Forest. For details on the backgrounds of Bourne and Clowes, see Julia Stewart Werner, The Primitive Methodist Connexion: Its Background and Early History (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1984), 55-56 and 65–66 and H. B. Kendall, The Origin and History of the Primitive Methodist Church (London: E. Dalton, ca. 1906), 28-31. See, also, John Anderson, curator: Mow Cop Methodist Chapel Museum, interviewed by John W. Stephenson, 12 June 1996.

² Marjorie Cookson and John Taylor, Museum Committee: Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum, interviewed by John W. Stephenson, 2 June 1996.

³ Inscription of Hugh Bourne’s Monument, Englesea Brook cemetery, Cheshire, UK.
In the pithy words of this inscription, the essence of the Primitive Methodist understanding of "revival" and "decline" is expressed. A brief exegesis of this inscription brings this essence into clear focus.

**The Distinctive Practice of Camp Meetings**

The inscription begins with a reference to Bourne and "camp-meetings." To Primitive Methodists, revival meant the successful implementation of such meetings and throughout their existence the Primitive Methodists maintained an ideological and emotional commitment to them.

Kendall stated that, by 1801, Primitive Methodism was already in an "embryonic stage" through a growing "perception of the urgent need for Evangelization" which became the "first quickening impulse" proleptically pointing the way to the revival that would culminate in Primitive Methodism. This felt need to evangelise soon found expression in "camp meetings." The development of the Primitive Methodist commitment to the "camp meeting" as a vehicle of "revival," and the crafting of a distinctively English camp meeting, seem to have occurred over a comparatively brief period of time. Kendall noted that the idea had been the "subject of thought, of talk, and of prayer" since 1801. By 1807, the first of such events had taken place. The inauguration of camp meetings may have been the defining moment for the movement. These gatherings were of such importance that they could be said to be crucial to the self-identity of the Primitive Methodists.

---

4 Kendall, 10.

5 Kendall, 23.
The repudiation of “camp meetings” by the Methodist Conference in 1807 led directly to the formal establishment of the Primitive Methodist Connexion. Primitive Methodist historians universally affirm the importance of this repudiation as the crucial issue leading to separation from the Wesleyans. Kendall stated that “in the midst of their deepest discouragements the eager but thwarted longings of Bourne and his companions found expression in the cry ‘Lord give us a camp meeting.’” Kendall recalled Bourne’s reaction to the interdict placed on camp meetings by the Methodist Conference: “it was revealed unto him that Camp Meetings ‘should not die but live,’ . . . and from that moment Hugh Bourne believed himself called of God to stand by Camp Meetings, and if he deserted the cause it would be at the peril of his soul.”

In Primitive Methodist histories, the first camp meetings have assumed the quality of myth. Most historians argue that the meeting held 31 May 1807 on the Cheshire side of the local landmark of Mow Cop was the most important early meeting. The meeting began at 6:00 AM and continued throughout the day. Additional camp-meetings quickly followed the Mow Cop meeting: on 19 July, a three-day meeting began “to counteract the activities

---

6 Perhaps the most important, early histories written by participants were H. B. Kendall’s study and John Petty’s The History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion From its Origin to the Conference of 1860, second ed. (London: R. Davies, 1864). The most important of recent studies concerning the Connexion’s origins is Werner’s book.

7 Kendall. 21.

8 Kendall, 33.

9 According to Anderson, Mow Cop was chosen as the site for the first camp-meeting for three reasons: Methodist meetings had long been held at Pointon’s farm on the hillside and so the location was known to Methodists in the area; it was manorial waste and therefore isolated; and it was geographically readily recognisable and easy to find. John Anderson, “Interview.” The Cop is a stunning promontory rising above Cheshire on one side and Staffordshire on the other.
of Wolstanton Wakes,” and a third was held at Norton-le-Moors from 23 to 25 August to diminish the drunkenness and brawling that regularly resulted from the Norton Wakes.10

Contrary to the opinion of many, John Kent has argued that the Norton meeting, not the Mow Cop gathering, was definitive. Kent stated that the first Mow Cop meeting took place on a Sunday without much preparation and that the number who came seemed to surprise the organizers. The Norton meeting, on the other hand, had been planned for months and took on added significance because the Wesleyan repudiation had occurred.11 Whichever meeting was most crucial, the point remains that these meetings established firmly the importance of camp meetings to the identity of Primitive Methodists over against Wesleyan Methodists.

The insistence of Primitive Methodist adherents to hold such meetings even in the face of condemnation by the religious authorities and in full knowledge that they were high risk endeavours politically, demonstrates that camp-meetings were crucial to Primitive Methodism’s identity. Many have noted that the assembly of large numbers in the open air legally contravened both the Conventicle and Five Mile Acts which were not repealed until 1812, and so was incautious given the political tenor of the time.12

J. B. Wilkinson, in his biography of Hugh Bourne, has shown that fears associated with camp meetings were at least in part justified. Wilkinson, for example, related a scene

---


12 See, for example, Kent, 45 and Alcock, 53-54. The Napoleonic wars and the social distress that followed produced a climate that could only provoke an attitude of distrust towards the Primitive Methodists from the government and society. The working class nature of many early Primitive Methodists exacerbated this. Bourne especially achieved popularity among the colliers of the local mines.
at the difficult second annual meeting of the Primitive Methodist Connexion held in May 1821. Bourne opposed one speaker whom he called "'a speaking radical,'" a term exeged by Wilkinson to mean someone of "'extreme radical persuasion" probably of Luddite sympathies. When supporters rallied to the defence of the unnamed speaker, Wilkinson quoted Bourne as stating that "'They opened out against me, against the King, and against the Government.'" In his reply, which resulted in the ouster of his opponent, Bourne emphasized that such talk could lead to a suspension of the liberty that the Primitive Methodists had known since the repeal of the Acts in 1812.13

A major factor leading to the Conference rejection of camp meetings was the association of such meetings with North American revivalism, an association that was generally viewed with suspicion by English Methodists. Specifically, American evangelist Lorenzo Dow, described by Kendall as "'a veritable comet in the Evangelistic world'" but distrusted by many for his flamboyant appearance and style, influenced the Primitive Methodists greatly. For Kendall, Dow was so important that Kendall quoted an anonymous source that stated "'If there had been no Dow there would have been no Mow.'"14 It must be stated, however, that although the style of the British camp meetings may have had strong points of contact with their American counterpart, structurally the British meetings were different. Generally, for example, camp-meetings in England were not overnight events as in the United States but rather one-day affairs.15

---

14 Kendall, 21 and 25.
15 John Anderson observed that as the Connexion developed, a whole order of forms accompanied by an appropriate lexicon was produced. "'Revival Meetings' were special gatherings held indoors and somehow different from Camp Meetings although the distinctions are hard to ascertain. "'Protracted
The name "Primitive Methodist" itself shows the importance of camp meetings. While various theories of the origination of the name are available, it is clear that when the early leaders formally chose the name they did so with direct reference to camp meetings.\textsuperscript{16} At a meeting on 13 February 1812, the leaders of the new movement formally adopted the name. Joan Alcock and others refer to an 1889 edition of the \textit{Primitive Methodist Magazine (PMM)} to propose that Bourne, in the end, had little to do with the formal appropriation of the name. Concerned with the epithets of “Bournites” and “Clowesites” that were used against them, the meeting of leaders from the new society discussed the issue of a name when Bourne was asleep. They decided on the name of “Primitive Methodist” since “they adhered to the primitive practice of preaching in the open air as Wesley had done.”\textsuperscript{17}

Not only was their commitment to “camp” meetings crucial, the form of these meetings also demonstrated the Primitive Methodist understanding of “revival.” Preaching was central with stands erected from which preachers at various locations of the site would seek to convince sinners of their need for forgiveness. Along with preaching, prayer occupied a significant place, a place sometimes overlooked in descriptions of the meetings. William Farndale, for example, stated that the “secret” of camp-meeting success was belief “in prayer as a fighting force” and “their firm conviction that prayer is more important than

---

\textsuperscript{16} The name appears as early as a class ticket dated 11 May 1809. This seems to be the term that Bourne intended for the new Connexion.

\textsuperscript{17} Alcock, 53. Alcock quoted this from an article in the \textit{Primitive Methodist Magazine (PMM)} 70 (1889): 297.
preaching.” In his history of Primitive Methodism, Farndale included a diagram that shows that, at a camp meeting held at Warrington on Sunday 12 August 1827, there was only one preaching stand surrounded by three praying “companies.” Bourne adopted this belief as well. Kendall referred to two “favourite ideas” of Bourne: “permanent praying companies” at work throughout the camp meeting and “various exercises,” the recounting of experiences and the telling of anecdotes. Both prayer and these “exercises” regularly accompanied the preaching at Bourne’s meetings.

The relationship between general Primitive Methodist piety and camp meetings is important. The Connexion became known as “Ranters” and, in their vibrant expressions of faith, music came to occupy a place of central importance. In 1807, Bourne published “A General Collection of Hymns and Spiritual Songs For Camp-Meetings and Revivals.” Most of the hymns in this collection were of American origin and had been imported by Dow. The Primitive Methodist high valuation of music that began with Bourne and continued throughout the movement’s history became clear to me when I visited the Englesea Brook

---

18 Primitive Methodists used four kinds of preachers: poorly paid itinerants and circuit preachers; paid local preachers; self-financed missionaries; and unpaid local preachers who were the largest contingent. See Werner’s discussion regarding Primitive Methodist preaching. 136-145.


20 Kendall. 26.

21 In the early years, in popular parlance, they were given the label “Ranters.” John Petty traced the origin of this term to meetings in “Belper in Derbyshire” during 1814. These meetings often went late into the night because of “souls being in distress.” When the meetings would end late in the night, the praying people were accustomed to sing through the streets as they returned home.” Townspeople, reacting to the commotion, dubbed them “Ranters.” John Petty, 61. Later, as an established religious denomination, the Primitive Methodists became known by the less evocative title of “Prim’s.” Both “Ranter” and “Prim” seem to be used by older Methodists almost endearingly, and with a sense of nostalgia.
museum. Perhaps the largest component in the museum's book holdings was an array of Primitive Methodist hymnbooks.

As music was crucial to Primitive Methodist piety generally, so it was important to camp meetings. Farndale noted, for example, that the first Mow Cop meeting began with singing. Kent also affirmed the importance of music, arguing that new music brought by Dow was very important to the entire camp-meeting experience. According to Kent, these new camp-meeting songs expressed "religious ecstasy with rough vigour."23

The lack of any theological distinctiveness in Primitive Methodism can be seen in a remark made by Archibald Harrison, the President of the Methodist Conference in 1945. Harrison stated that one hymn in particular was "full of the true spirit of revival." Farndale has said that this hymn has been known as the "Grand March" of Primitive Methodism. The lyrics are significant:

Hark, the gospel news is sounding:
Christ hath suffered on the tree;
Streams of mercy are abounding;
Grace for all is rich and free.
Now, poor sinner,
Look to Him who died for thee.24

If songs like this represent the "true spirit" of Primitive Methodism, then it appears that the distinctiveness of Primitive Methodism was a matter of style not content. Theologically,

---

22 Farndale. 49.
23 Kent. 64.
24 Farndale. 50-51.
Primitive Methodism appears to have been evangelicalism of the Wesleyan variety with the
addition of an overarching commitment to the distinctive practice of camp meetings.  

When studying early Primitive Methodist history, one is struck with the lack of
distinctiveness in the movement generally. Its music provides a good example: although
music was important to Primitive Methodist piety and has often been cited as a significant
distinctive element in Primitive Methodist revivalism, the case for its distinctiveness may
have been greatly overstated. John Anderson has argued that the musical tradition of the
“Primitive Methodists was no different than any other groups in Northwest England during
the nineteenth century.” Anderson maintained that there was a strong popular choral
tradition throughout North Staffordshire during this period, a tradition that featured
“repeating tunes” that were in canon if not in fugue-like style. Often, stringed instruments
accompanied the singing of these tunes. According to Anderson, all the churches in the
region used such songs. However, a steady increase in the popularity of organs during the
last half of the nineteenth century disturbed this entire tradition and eventually the
characteristic use of stringed instruments died out. Also, over time, some of these tunes
became more sophisticated. Anderson has stated that if there were any distinctive element
to Primitive Methodist music at all, it would be found in its early hymnody that was quite
unsophisticated. As with its music and its theology, Primitive Methodist piety generally

---

25 That camp meetings were the distinctive characteristic of Primitive Methodism is obvious. It is
ironic that such emphasis was placed on them when, according to Anderson, camp meetings could be
questioned as a tool for revival. Anderson maintained that their main contribution to the new movement
was their function as a means to attract attention. Anderson “Interview.”

26 For an example of the genre at full development, see Thomas Clark’s tune, “Cranbrooke.”
Anderson, “Interview.”

27 Anderson, “Interview.”
lacked distinctiveness. Camp meetings are left as the single most important identifying characteristic of Primitive Methodism in the nineteenth century.

*The Primitive Methodist Constituency: The “Commonalty”*

The inscription on the monument over Bourne’s tomb states that Bourne promoted the camp meetings “amongst the commonalty.” Much has been made of the connection between Primitive Methodism and the lower classes of the time especially in terms of its relationship to popular political dissent. To understand this relationship, the association of Primitive Methodism with Wesleyanism must be recognised. Kent, for example, has referred to Primitive Methodism as “the final wave of Methodist expansion.” In Kent’s words, Wesleyanism had developed into an “essentially urban denomination with a bourgeois imagination” becoming “more respectable, more institutionalized and more hereditary in membership.” By way of contrast, Primitive Methodism functioned as “a revolt of the field,” a movement of social change that grew as the farming poor became “conscious of a need for greater self-respect and for more respect from others,” and desired greater economic security. As a mechanism to promote the development of a social identity, the early camp meetings functioned, according to Kent, as demonstrations of the felt need of the rural poor to establish their own religious structure outside the established structures “as they themselves were outside the recognized social system.” Kent believed that the essence of Primitive Methodism was that it was a religious expression of the demand for social change.28

Whatever the relationship between the rise of Primitive Methodism and social trends of the time, one central point is clear: Primitive Methodism, at least in its formative years,
achieved considerable popularity among the working class. For example, Alan Gilbert’s sampling of the Non-Parochial Registers from 1800 until they were terminated in 1837, as shown in table 3, demonstrates Primitive Methodist success in attracting unskilled workers.

Even though Gilbert’s study found a significantly higher level of growth for Primitive Methodists among labourers and colliers, he argued that the idea that particular expressions of non-conformity in England served different social constituencies was false. However, he did admit that different denominations understood their mission self-consciously in terms of attracting specific social groups and that they patterned their ministry so as to fulfil goals related to their mission. Even this is significant. Central to the Primitive Methodist understanding of revival was the goal to reach the socially disadvantaged, the “commonalty.” I am not convinced that future research will verify Gilbert’s claim. Even in Gilbert’s study, the percentage of Primitive Methodist workers in unskilled occupations (labourers and colliers) was almost double that of Nonconformity in general and Wesleyanism in particular. I suspect that in locations of Primitive Methodist

---

29 Considerable and extended discussion has been devoted to the apparent relationship between early Primitive Methodism and political upset. Many have described Primitive Methodism either in terms of a “chiliasm of despair” consistent with the Halévy thesis or as the religious expression of political agitators. One of the most significant brief studies which deals with this issue is J. A. Jaffe’s study of Methodism in Durham. Jaffe’s conclusion is that “despite the fact that a religious revival roughly coincided with trade unionism, the origins of the two were markedly separate and historically distinct.” Jaffe argues compellingly that, at least in Durham, Methodism functioned neither as a “chiliasm of despair” nor “precisely [as] a religious complement to political radicalism.” J. A. Jaffe, “The ‘Chiliasm of Despair’ Reconsidered: Revivalism and Working-Class Agitation in County Durham,” Journal of British Studies 28 (1989): 23, 42. Werner appears to agree with Jaffe. In a variety of contexts in her study, Werner argued that the link between radicalism and revivalism so often associated with Primitive Methodism was obscure. In accepting the conclusions of Jaffe and Werner, my discussion of Primitive Methodism’s understanding of revival will not consider the relationship between political ferment and the Primitive Methodist religious experience.

30 Gilbert, 62.
strength, future research will result in an accentuation of the relationship between social status and religious adherence.

Table 3: Occupations of Methodists: 1800 – 1837.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupations</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Wesleyans Total</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Primitive Methodists Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merchants &amp; Manufacturers</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopkeepers</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>253</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>579</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artisans</td>
<td>6,531</td>
<td>59.4</td>
<td>2,750</td>
<td>62.7</td>
<td>1,149</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers</td>
<td>1,192</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>16.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colliers, Miners, etc.</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>334</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>928</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>13.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Primitive Methodists developed a polity that fostered their concern for the "commonalty." David L. Edwards, for example, stated that early Primitive Methodist legislation mandated that chapels were to be built not by a single benefactor or a small group of well-placed neighbours but "by the united efforts of the whole society." Criteria for credentialing preachers reflected this strategy as well: preachers were not to earn more

31 Gilbert, 59-63. Gilbert’s argument here should be viewed with some caution. The category of “artisan” is quite broad, covering a spectrum of “skilled” workers. Gilbert calls it a “residual category” referring to a “wide range of prestige, wealth, and skill.” Also, “other” refers to either notations that were illegible or to professions such as teacher or doctor, and fishermen, and seamen. Finally, the proportion of occupations is subject to geographical considerations.
than fifteen pounds a year at a time when a Church of England cleric who earned 150 pounds a year was considered poor. Also, itinerants in Primitive Methodism were appointed or dismissed by a predominantly lay Conference. The preachers were to be with the people, sharing in their poverty and struggles. Julia Werner highlighted the effectiveness of this strategy by quoting the lament of one Wesleyan superintendent who, in 1819, affirmed that the "real cause" of Primitive Methodist success was "the present plan of the [Wesleyan] preachers living in great towns . . . and only just preaching in the country." 

Many have affirmed that the twin characteristics of poverty and persecution were central elements in Primitive Methodist revivalism. Both Farndale and Werner, for example, related the story of one poor preacher who, when asked the nature of his expenses for preaching, replied "Twopence halfpenny." When asked to explain his cryptic response, the preacher replied that it would cover a penny's worth of cheese, a penny's worth of bread and a halfpenny for treacle water. Werner has observed that gains among miners and labourers in the "Black country" in 1819 were made among the "victims of industrial capitalism," those experiencing intense social and economic distress. Kent also emphasised the role of such distress in the success of Primitive Methodism. He stated that the years of growth for Primitive Methodism occurred from 1800 to 1817 during which a variety of destabilizing influences was present: lower-class poverty and violence, food riots,

---


33 Werner, 19.

34 Farndale, 53

35 Werner, 117.
the Despard conspiracy, and intensive Luddism. Kent characterized these years as ones of "hysteria."³⁶

Kent stated that, as early as 1803, Bourne had linked revival to persecution. In this regard, Farndale's findings are consistent with those of Kent. Farndale asserted that "page after page could be filled with well-nigh incredible stories of bitter and relentless persecution." This persecution included imprisonment, loss of employment, eviction from homes, and denial of food.³⁷ In his history, Kendall recounted a litany of stories detailing the suffering of the preachers, averring that "the worst evils endured by the early missionaries may be summed up in the word persecution which was rife . . . "³⁸

From the earliest moments, a theology of consequences accompanied the Primitive Methodist emphasis on the poor and disadvantaged. Their understanding of the consequences that would be a natural result of revival brought them close to the idea of "awakening": Primitive Methodist historians argued that whenever revival occurred, social conditions ameliorated. For example, Kendall, referring to Hugh Bourne's early efforts in Harriseahead, stated that when revival took place, "there was a great reformation in the neighbourhood." In his account, Kendall repeatedly referred to the changes in morals and social conditions that followed "revival." Referring to an unnamed "Historian of the first Railway," Kendall intoned, "To the advent of the Primitive Methodists in the North Country is due much of the transformation undoubtedly effected in the latter part of the first quarter

³⁶ Kent, 46.
³⁷ Farndale, 55 and Kent, 43.
³⁸ Kendall, 78-93.
Robert Mountford, in a recent popular study of the revival tradition in the potteries, quoted an earlier source in a section regarding the impact of Methodism in the region. Mountford stated that “the civilizing appeals of the evangelical message did much to turn the crushed, bewildered peasants of the Industrial Revolution into the urbane, purposeful potters of today.” Following a review of past periods of revival, Mountford looked forward to a recurrence of spiritual fervour, defining revival as “an outpouring of God’s Spirit upon his Church, which will lead God’s people to repentance of sin and a new desire for holiness.” Mountford affirmed that a new revival would “inevitably be followed by a dramatic numerical growth in the churches as many unbelievers come to a saving faith in the Lord. It will also profoundly affect the whole city for good, lifting the moral atmosphere and reestablishing the fear of God.” Here again, a doctrine of consequences, both social and religious, is an important component to revival.

Some would affirm that the Primitive Methodist attitude toward women in leadership was a central feature of the movement’s early character. Farndale, for example, recorded incidents through which Bourne began to be influenced by women preachers. Farndale believed that these experiences became significant both for Hugh Bourne’s personal development and for that of the whole movement. Bourne, for example, was greatly impressed with the gifts both of Mary Bosanquet and Mrs. Samuel Evans. In 1808, he published Remarks on the Ministry of Women defending female evangelists,

39 Kendall, 10 and 14.


41 Mountford, 47.
arguing that the Bible had approved of women in leadership and that John Wesley had used women as fit instruments to spread the gospel. By 1820, women had enjoyed obvious success as preachers and were valued for their abilities. By this time, nineteen of the Connexion’s forty-three evangelists were women.43

The “commonalty” may have been important to the genesis of Primitive Methodism in one other way. Kendall stated that expectancy was a crucial factor in the birth of a revival: “We see the need for a new evangelistic movement which existed at the beginning of the present century, and that this need raises the expectancy that such a movement will be begun.”44 For Kendall, a mood of expectant anticipation among the people was a necessary precondition for revival.

“Revival” as Significant Measurable Growth

Mountford’s reference to numerical gain is significant with regard to the final component of Bourne’s memorial inscription. The unknown engraver stated that Bourne “fell asleep leaving behind 9,916 itinerant and local preachers 109,874 members in society . . .” A frequent constituent of most Primitive Methodist histories is a concern for

---

42 Farndale, 48. Bosanquet would later become John Fletcher’s wife.

43 Farndale, 48 and Werner, 21 and 69. See also Henry Rack’s brief but important discussion of women preachers in Henry D. Rack, “How Primitive Was Primitive Methodism?: The Sixth Chapel Aid Lecture 1996” (Englesea Brook, UK: The Englesea Brook Primitive Methodist Museum Committee, 1996), 21-26. Also, see Wesley F. Swift’s discussion of Bourne and women preachers in which he shows the influence of the Quaker Methodists on Bourne in regard to his attitudes to women preachers. Wesley F. Swift, “The Women Itinerant Preachers of Early Methodism,” Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society 28 (1952): 90-94. See also, Dorothy E. Graham’s Chosen By God: A List of the Female Traveling Preachers of Early Primitive Methodism in which she traces the careers of ninety female Primitive Methodist itinerants. Dorothy E. Graham, Chosen By God: A List of the Female Traveling Preachers of Early Primitive Methodism (Bunbury, UK: Wesley Historical Society, 1989). Finally, a note of caution must be sounded: Rack observed that, while women were valued as preachers, they appear to have been paid less than men and were not allowed to have any role in the governance of the Connexion, except on some quarter-day boards. 25-26.

44 Kendall, 108.
numerical growth and other quantifiable elements that the historians interpret to be evidence of revival. Kendall, for example, emphasized the importance of numerical growth. Quoting "Mr. Herod," presumably George Herod, a convert and early Primitive Methodist itinerant minister and author, Kendall reported that in "about one year and nine months" during 1817 and 1818, "not less than seventy-five towns and villages were missioned . . . and not less than seventy-five local preachers and exhorters were raised up." Elsewhere, Kendall spoke of the "remarkable revivals" in Berkshire where "the habits and practices of the people have been changed, scores of sanctuaries erected, until now there are more Primitive Methodist congregations in Berkshire than of any other nonconformist body, and probably more Primitive Methodist Chapels."45

The Relationship of Emotional Fervour to Revival

One element that was absent from the inscription on Bourne's tombstone was reference to the importance of religious enthusiasm to Bourne. By the time of his death, the Primitive Methodist emphasis on emotion had already become muted. However, in its formative years, Primitive Methodists did consider religious experience to be a crucial component of revival even though, as Kent has maintained, revivalism in England during the early 1800s still "lacked shape" and was at times simply "nostalgia for the excitements of early Wesleyanism." When religious experience was not simply a refurbishment of an older Wesleyan piety, Kent argued that it became a "naive invocation of direct supernatural action, and clearly often ended in collective dissociation" accompanied by phenomena such

45 Kendall, 45.
46 Kendall, 60-61.
as speaking in tongues although not always recognized as such, “uncontrollable weeping,” and trances.47

The importance of religious experience to early Primitive Methodism can be traced to the movement’s earliest moments. Leonard Brown, for example, understood the genesis of Primitive Methodism in a most punctilious way. He traced its origins to Hugh Bourne’s dramatic experience on a Sunday afternoon in Spring 1799. Bourne had been consumed with guilt for over twenty years following his failure to fulfill a childhood promise to God that he and his whole family would serve Him. After reading John Fletcher’s Six Letters On the Spiritual Manifestation of the Son of God, Bourne stated that he “felt himself ‘filled with joy, and love, and glory, which made full amends for twenty years suffering.’”48 If this was the beginning of the revival, and if it can be supposed that Bourne sought to infuse the revival with values consistent with his own, then early Primitive Methodist values were consistent with the premium on personal experience found throughout North American and transatlantic Protestant revivalism.

In the early years, both Bourne and Clowes appear to have encouraged and valued a piety that emphasized religious experience.49 Kent stated that such a piety was attractive especially to the working class, since the potters, miners, and other rural workers of the nineteenth century had few opportunities for this kind of emotional experience. Crucial to

47 Kent, 44-45 and 63. Not only did Kent emphasise the importance of religious experience for Primitive Methodists, he attempted, repeatedly, to demonstrate the connection between the Primitive Methodist experience and twentieth century Pentecostalism.


49 Kent, 44-45.
the meetings was “positive encouragement to those taking part to release their feelings by shouting, singing, weeping, and physical movement.” According to Kent, Bourne interpreted these experiences to be indicative of an ordered though “excited” process that took participants “out of themselves” into experiences of “genuine sensations of peace, harmony, and joy.”

The nature of the physical phenomena that accompanied expressions of emotion at Primitive Methodist meetings has been the subject of much discussion. Henry Rack has provided the most concise catalogue of these phenomena. Rack asserted that Primitive Methodists experienced the same scope of experiences as early Wesleyans with the exception that, in his opinion, these occurrences appeared more frequently in Primitive Methodism and across a wider spectrum of the membership.

Dreams and visions also occupied an important place in early Primitive Methodist history as did foretelling, healing by prayer, perceived divine interventions particularly in the form of judgements on opponents, exorcism, and belief in the power of witches. Rack reported that James Crawfoot’s Magic Methodists of nearby Delamere Forest experienced the most striking cases of these manifestations. Although they later parted company, in the early days, Crawfoot appears to have strongly influenced Bourne.

50 Kent, 63 and 66. Kent related this understanding of revival to Emile Durkheim’s notion of “collective effervescence.”

51 Rack, 15.

52 Rack, 15-18. Many writers have commented regarding the relationship between Crawfoot and Bourne and Clowes.
One crucial preoccupation of Primitive Methodists was conversion which presupposed a strong emphasis on emotion. Werner, for example, listed the outcomes that were the desired goals at all Primitive Methodist meetings:

1. conviction of sin with the requisite mourning;
2. the experience of justification;
3. sudden sanctification of the justified;
4. reconversion of backsliders.  

After the painful experience of intense remorse for sin, justification, sometimes called "finding liberty" or "receiving pardon," could occur. Unlike many contemporary revivalist groups, conversion was understood by the Primitive Methodists not as an event but a process that, in James Obelkevich's words, was often "rough and turbulent."  

As central as conversion was, Obelkevich has contended that in the midst of poverty and lives lived generally in an atmosphere of uncertainty, death became a concern that competed with conversion in importance. This emphasis, too, nurtured a piety that valued religious experience. Obelkevich stated that the Primitive Methodists developed an entire set of conventions for dealing with death. They shaped these conventions "consciously and elaborately, in ways ranging from superstition to mourning etiquette to theology."  

Werner referred to "revival" and "revivalism" throughout her book but never explicitly defined the terms. She appears to have understood "revival" as conversionism plus noise. However, perhaps one of the most important contributions in Werner's work is

---

53 Werner, 147.


55 Obelkevich, 235.
a typology of the sources of revival that, she argued, characterised both Wesleyanism and
Primitive Methodism:

1. an atmosphere of tension or a sense of unease regarding either general or local
circumstances;
2. the ability to find means to communicate experiences from one place to another;
3. self-inducement when desire for revival was great, along with a willingness to
accept the consequences;
4. a positive attitude among the preachers;
5. a gifted preacher to serve as a catalyst.56

In spite of the importance of these phenomena to the early life of Primitive
Methodism, after the first initial years of growth most of these experiences either were lost
altogether or became muted. Visions, for example, appear to have ceased abruptly when
Mary Dunnell, one of the visionaries, became the object of social opprobrium when she
was caught in a bigamous marriage.57 A marked increase in religious fervour appears to have
ceased to be a crucial measurement of revival early in Primitive Methodist history.
Although the argument from silence is weak, I am tempted to see as deliberate its omission
from the inscription on Bourne’s monument that appears to have been written with such
intentionality.

Revival as “Primitive”

One last crucial element in the Primitive Methodist understanding of “revival” can be
found in their name. Intrinsic to the Primitive Methodist worldview is a sense, not always
consciously grasped, of restoration. The paradigm of “Restorationism” or “Primitivism”
has been much debated in recent years. Richard T. Hughes, for example, arguing in the
context of North American religion, has stated that, in spite of the diversity of opinion

56 Werner, 44 and 174.

57 Rack, 18.
regarding the nature of the primitivist impulse, there is general agreement that it can be defined as a need for "reversion" to a first or primitive order of things. This reversion is seen in a complex set of processes and can sometimes be "refracted through a secondary 'first time' . . . "58 Extrapolation is possible from the North American context to that of Primitive Methodism in England. Primitive Methodists understood their experience in the sense of "reversion" to a first order of things. Camp meetings represented a return to the original values that fuelled the earlier Wesleyan revival which itself was understood to represent a return to the values of the primitive Church.

**Primitive Methodist Understandings of “Declines”**

*The Absence of “Decline” in Early Primitive Methodist Histories*

A survey of the works of the earliest generations of Methodist historians reveals that the idea of “decline” is conspicuously absent. In the index of Robert Wearmouth’s *Methodism and the Working-Class Movements in England: 1800-1850,* for example, long lists of references to “distress” and “disturbance” are noted but the topic of “decline” is not present.59 Even with regard to the turbulent period of schism that racked Methodism in general from 1797 until 1850, authors avoided using the nomenclature of decline. More than a few have argued that schism was a sign of growth not decline. Maldwyn Edwards called the schisms “agitations” but concluded with a metaphor that has become a well-worn adage among Methodist historians: the schisms produced “multiplication by division.” Archibald Harrison used another metaphor, exulting that the movement had so much vitality

---


that the "stream was too turbulent to remain within banks."\textsuperscript{60} The only hint that Wearmouth gives that the divisions within Methodism were deleterious to growth was his use of the term "relapses" to describe the agitation of that period.\textsuperscript{61} Kendall, as noted by Obelkevich, interpreted early Primitive Methodist historical process in terms of development: Primitive Methodism developed from "local diversity to national unity, ascending through successive levels of church government and organization."\textsuperscript{62}

While eschewing any interpretations that viewed the Primitive Methodist historical process, taken as a whole, in terms of "decline," Kendall did use the language of "decrease" and "declension," admitting that there had been "declines." However, he stated that

The fact of an occasional decrease or succession of decreases will prove that the Connexion has not had a career of uninterrupted progress. Sometimes it has had to lament over declension. It has had to experience vicissitudes and pass through crises.

Kendall addressed one specific significant decline that occurred in 1828. Calling it "declension," he attributed its source to consolidation failing to keep pace with expansion. Rapid "multiplication" of preachers, many of whom lacked ability; the infiltration into the churches of those who loved power; and the insinuation into the Connexion of those who "had escaped from the firmer and therefore uncongenial discipline of other churches," were


\textsuperscript{61} Wearmouth, 15.

\textsuperscript{62} Obelkevich, 248-249.
all issues related to accelerated growth, and all contributed to the "decline" that brought growth to a halt.  

For Kendall, however, taken as whole the process had been one of development leading to the crowning moment of union; any "decreases" were functions of growth. This process of development culminated, according to Kendall, in union: Primitive Methodism was "first quickened by an evangelistic impulse — seeking new methods — thwarted and turned aside into an independent path by the force of circumstances, and finally coalescing with other movements of kindred origin and having similar aims and methods." 

The Twentieth Century Increase in the Use of the Idea of "Decline"

Typological Theories of Decline

In more recent years, "decline" has become a major category in Methodist historiography. Often, it has been included as part of a typology of historical process. To explain the history of Cornish Methodism, David Luker, for example, adopted Currie, Gilbert, and Horsley's cyclical paradigm explicitly. "Depression" and "declension" were understood to be the inevitable results of revival.

Currie, in his study of the drive toward union, explained Methodism in general, including Primitive Methodism, according to centuries: "the eighteenth century saw continued growth; the nineteenth, periodic 'revival'; the twentieth, decline." Currie even

---

63 Kendall, 116.

64 Kendall, 180 and 111.


66 Robert Currie, Methodism Divided: A Study in the Sociology of Ecumenicalism (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), 96. Currie can be even more precise: the pattern, he asserts, is "one of decreasing success, and then of failure and decline." 97.
located a turning-point in Methodist history, calling 1841 to 1851 the “severest setback” experienced in Methodism, a setback from which it has never recovered.67

Also developing his theory according to recognisable periods, Obelkevich advanced an understanding of Primitive Methodism crafted in obvious typological language, referring to the “stages in sect development” experienced by Primitive Methodism. According to Obelkevich, first, Methodism experienced “the heroic early years” or the period of “missioning,” an era pre-dating organization when evangelism was spontaneous and without encumbrances. Following this stage came the period of “revival,” in which the members turned inward and evangelism became formalised and practised in the context of existing chapels. Finally, after 1860, came the period of “denominationalism,” “marked most clearly by declining interest in revivalism.”68

Obelkevich argued that the actions and attitudes found in the second period of Primitive Methodist development presupposed an atmosphere of decline. In this period, a creeping Arminianism can be observed in which emphasis was taken off the sovereign work of God in conversion and placed on the activities of the preachers, who, through “protracted meetings,” sought to find more converts and to reawaken the lukewarm. As time went on, Primitive Methodism “settled into a routine” of predictable methods and practices and, as it became a denomination, interest in revivalism waned. Camp meetings

67 Currie, 92.

68 “Missioning” refers to the practice of “preaching without invitation in a parish, in the open air”. Obelkevich, 248-254. Obelkevich self-consciously uses the idea of “denomination” in the manner defined by Alan Gilbert, 255. In his discussion of the typologies of Ernst Troeltsch and Milton Yinger, Gilbert understands “denomination” to refer to a religious organisation that does not reject outside society; is less totalitarian than sects, and so is more capable of “performing socially integrative functions”; and is less exclusivist than either “churches” or “sects,” understanding itself as “one of a plurality of legitimate institutional alternatives.” Gilbert. 138-141.
continued but became more a tool of nostalgia rather than revival. Also, although
“protracted meetings” endured into the 1880s, fewer societies conducted them. Obelkevich
cautions that this did not mean that outward expansion was dead but that a major shift had
occurred: the Connexion had begun to turn inward.69

Kent advocated a theory based on the paradigm of institutionalisation,
arguing that such a process occurred in Primitive Methodism as expressed in its new nature
as an established denomination. This was due, Kent stated, because, by 1850, the
“American impulse had exhausted itself in Primitive Methodism.”70

Decline as Loss of Prayer

“Declines” appear to have occurred early in the life of Primitive Methodism. Some
recent attempts to discuss “declines” in Primitive Methodist history have begun with a crisis
experienced by the movement even before formal organization in 1821. From 1816 to
1819, camp meetings appear to have, at least in some measure, lost their popularity. Both
Kent and Farndale refer to this decline and both refer to Bourne’s discussion of it in his
History of Primitive Methodism. Although the details are obscure and Bourne’s account is
self-contradictory, it is clear that the meetings had “degenerated” into a “monotonous
programme” of long sermons. Prayer gatherings had been dropped so that the meetings
featured only sermons delivered one after the other. The result was that the camp meetings
were “losing their power” and conversions had ceased. In 1819, Bourne introduced
regulations that restored prayer services to a place of primacy in the camp meetings. Then,
according to Bourne, God “restored the converting power to the camp-meetings and . . .

69 Obelkevich, 251 and 253.
70 Kent, 70.
the circuit began to revive.” Farndale interpreted the decline and subsequent resurgence of camp meeting popularity as evidence that intense prayer was, indeed, the “secret” of Mow Cop.71

While the decline of 1816-1819 has gained the attention of a number of historians, only John Petty has identified a decline that occurred earlier, in 1814: quoting Bourne, Petty stated that “missionary efforts appear to have slackened.” Bourne interpreted this change in terms of institutionalisation: “When a considerable number of societies were raised up, the missionary efforts began to decline; and, in the former part of the year 1814, they were laid aside.” In Petty’s words, this decline represented a “calamity which has too often befallen the Church of Christ . . . .”72

**Decline as Loss of the “Primitive”**

As a result of their 1820 Conference, at which they confronted a sharp numerical decline in membership within their ranks, the Wesleyans published the “Liverpool Minutes” which advocated a return to “primitive” methods and “primitive” Methodism. The procedures recommended were consistent with those that had been earning so many converts to the Primitive Methodist Connexion. Early Primitive Methodist leaders had worked to provide an alternative to the growing professionalism in the Wesleyan clergy. With a leadership that was as poor as the people they served, that lived with the people, and that showed concern and exercised pastoral care for each individual, the early Primitive Methodists were explicitly seeking to return to the perceived pristine days of “primitive” Methodism. The “Liverpool Minutes” show that the Wesleyans, faced with decline, were

---

71 Kent, 55 and Farndale, 69-70.

72 Petty, 60.
also adopting a restorationist attitude, understanding their goal as reversion to an idealised past. By 1820, however, the Primitive Methodists had developed their own, restorationist vision to an extent that went far beyond that which the Wesleyans were adopting.

Even with regard to camp meetings, the restorationist impulse is evident. Based on Rack's observations, it appears that both Bourne and Dow held to a thoroughgoing restorationist vision, believing that camp-meetings were not novel but a continuation, or rather a return, to the practices found not just in early Methodism but in the Bible itself.\(^7^4\)

**Decline as Numerical Loss**

*Decline as Loss of Growth Rate*

One of the most articulate commentators of Primitive Methodist history in general, and the idea of “decline” in particular, is Robert Currie. One important assertion that he has made is that membership change has often been the “crucial index of success and failure in religious organizations.” Currie asserted that growth and decline in membership can be measured in various ways. One of the most obvious is “growth rate,” the “net change in full membership,” or “the increase or decrease in the total number of full members during any given period.” For Currie, growth rate functioned as “a quantitative summary of all the processes of loss and gain of membership within the organization.”\(^7^5\)

By analysis of membership changes throughout Methodism, Currie interpreted the data as indicating a pattern of “sudden and rapid changes in growth rate especially in the

---

\(^7^3\) Werner. 14-20. Werner stated that Primitive Methodists offered a “triple allure”: revivalism, “low-cost religion,” and a “refurbishing of the past.”

\(^7^4\) Rack, 8. See, also, *PMM* 2 (1821): 1.

\(^7^5\) Currie, 86.
nineteenth century,” giving way to “a brief period of steady low growth, then to absolute
decline.” The growth rate of the Primitive Methodists, as seen in table 4, was consonant
with this general pattern.

One of the few early writers that dealt with negative growth patterns was John Petty.
Kendall quoted Petty’s attribution of the factors that he understood had worked to “retard”
growth: social and political conditions; missionary work in thinly populated areas; and an
inability to offer “outward attractions” such as learning, eloquence of preachers, or elegant
sanctuaries. However, Kendall maintained, in some areas, the Primitive Methodists had
“played the part of “lion-provider” meaning that they had “beaten the bushes” while others
had “netted the game.” Kendall’s comment alludes to another source of numerical decline
that will be discussed in greater detail in chapter three: competition.

\textit{Decline as Loss of “MPR”}

As significant as growth rate is, Currie stated that the growth or decline of an
organisation could best be seen through its “MPR.” According to Currie, for organisations
committed to expansion “an increasing MPR is essential” while stability is “just healthy,”
and a declining MPR is “pathological” and indicates “general organizational decline.”
Currie’s argument was that the MPR shows that Primitive Methodism experienced “marked
deceleration” during the 1850s but “approached stability” from 1861 to 1881. However, by

\footnote{Currie, 93.}

\footnote{Kendall, 113.}
union in 1932, all three participating groups, including Primitive Methodism, “had suffered prolonged fall” in MPR and, consequently, were experiencing decline.\textsuperscript{78}

Table 4. Primitive Methodist Growth Rate: 1821 – 1932

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1821-1823</td>
<td>60.0</td>
<td>1878-1880</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1824-1826</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>1881-1883</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1827-1829</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>1884-1886</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1830-1832</td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>1887-1889</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833-1835</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>1890-1892</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836-1838</td>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>1893-1895</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839-1841</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1896-1898</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1842-1844</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>1899-1901</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845-1847</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>1902-1904</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848-1850</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>1905-1907</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851-1853</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1908-1910</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854-1856</td>
<td>-0.5</td>
<td>1911-1913</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857-1859</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>1914-1916</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860-1862</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>1917-1919</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863-1865</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1920-1922</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866-1868</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>1923-1925</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869-1871</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1926-1928</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872-1874</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1929-1931</td>
<td>-0.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875-1877</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textit{Ecumenism as Decline}

Currie’s analysis expressed a view of decline that is found among a variety of historians: the Methodist union of 1932, rather than representing a mechanism of growth,

\textsuperscript{78} Currie, 89-92. See, also, Currie's, “A Micro-Theory of Methodist Growth.” The three groups that united were the Wesleyan, Primitive Methodist, and United Methodist Connexions.

\textsuperscript{79} Robert Currie, 94-96.
was actually a function and an expression of decline. Currie explicitly numbered himself with those who have argued that during decline ecumenical movement toward union grows rapidly and “united churches result from organizational response to adverse conditions.” In documenting the assertion that decline leads to union, Currie differentiated between “frontal” and “lateral” growth, i.e., when the acquisition of new members (“frontal” growth) declines or ceases, organisations will attempt to offset this failure by “lateral” growth, amalgamation with other organisations.  

Cyril J. Davey’s argument is consistent with Currie’s. Davey argued that union did not indicate growth or the dawn of a great future. Rather, it brought immense problems. According to Davey, “the real battle-ground remained where it had always been, in the circuits. Fusion between local societies was usually viewed as the surrender of the weaker to the stronger.” Since Primitive Methodists were fewer in number than the Wesleyans, it was they who often lost their societies. Davey used strong language to express his resentment toward those whose actions, he believed, had damaged Methodism profoundly: “There were in 1932, and there remained, too many bigots short-sighted, narrow-minded,

---

80 Currie, 85 and 101. The reaction to decline can be seen through Primitive Methodist attitudes to union in the face of a falling MPR. Currie argued that union was rejected, in 1900, in spite of a loss rate of 16% since 1880, because the Primitive Methodists were still too close to earlier success and they were in the midst of “a definite if short revival.” By 1924, their MPR had dropped 29% since 1881, and they had experienced thirteen annual declines in membership numbers. Also, these declines were experienced in the midst of their self-conscious attempts to celebrate their centenary. Present conditions compared to past achievements led to, in the words of the 1909 Primitive Methodist Conference, “a deep sense of humiliation and shame.” In this context, the push for union gained momentum.

unspiritual bigots who were incapable of thinking in the wide terms of the best interests of the Kingdom of God."\(^2\)

John Burgess also maintained the union as decline thesis. He stated that union took place in spite of considerable anti-union feeling between some Primitive Methodists and some Wesleyans. After union, Wesleyans, with 59% of the total membership, dominated most aspects of connexional life “taking nearly all major posts by the 1940s, elevating the status of the ministry, ending all semblance of circuit independence, and keeping Methodism on the road envisaged for the Wesleyan Connexion of earlier years.” The result was that expansion never did happen and hundreds of chapels closed. Based on Burgess’ conclusions, it could be argued that what could be described as growth by former Wesleyans, meant decline to those from a Primitive Methodist background.\(^3\)

Consistent with Davey’s general affirmation that circuits were the loci of agitation, Burgess observed that in Cumbria, for example, each circuit became “jealous of its own rights and independence; within a circuit Societies guarded their chapel and ministerial presence like gold.” Descriptors such as “rivalry,” “ill-feeling,” and “mutual fears” characterised the process. According to Burgess, this mutual distrust continued into the 1960s in locations where there was a duplication of chapels, “because of the determination of Societies to maintain their own identity and to keep ‘their chapel’ intact.”\(^4\) In the 1960s, during a movement to rationalise chapels, Burgess asserted that, in the event of a perceived duplication of services, “all too often” it was the Primitive chapel that was lost. Burgess

\(^2\) Davey, 172.


\(^4\) Burgess, 143 and 145.
argued that, even to the time of writing, when a chapel was lost, "dispossessed congregations . . . break up and disperse" rather than transfer loyalty to another chapel from a different background. By way of example, Burgess referred to the former Primitive chapel in Aspatria that closed in 1972. The result of closure was the loss to the circuit of one half of its 100 members. His conclusion was that the spirituality of Methodism had been affected adversely and lay participation had diminished in a united Church that had begun to exhibit increased, clergy power and control by professional administrators. The result was, he stated, that "the future for Methodism would appear to be bleak" and that the Church would exhibit "continued decline."85

The "union means decline" thesis is supported statistically by the work of Currie, Gilbert, and Horsley. In 1933, the year after union, the leakage rate rose dramatically to 28.27%.86 However, contrary to Burgess' assertion that leakage continued to be a significant problem for decades, Currie, Gilbert, and Horsley reported that leakage itself declined after 1933 and was reduced to 3.82% by 1960.87

**Decline as the Result of War**

Davey has argued that the decline inaugurated by union was exacerbated by war:

"The Theological Colleges were closed, and the recruiting of ministerial candidates practically ceased. Links with the overseas Church were tenuous or broken. Bomb destruction was tremendous." Table 5 illustrates the dramatic numerical decreases in

---

85 Burgess, 145.

86 When removals failed to register in their new circuit, the result was, in the language of a variety of writers, "leakage." See, for example, Currie, 98.
Methodism that occurred both in terms of local preachers and in terms of members during the war years.

Table 5. The Methodist Church: Membership Losses during the Second World War

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Church Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>904,852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>919,099</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>740,157</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6. The Methodist Church: Clergy Losses during the Second World War.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ministers</th>
<th>Local Preachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>4,408</td>
<td>41,300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>4,370</td>
<td>36,913</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>4,658</td>
<td>25,432</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Considering that one third of the ministers were supernumeraries and that the decrease in membership was accompanied by the loss of thousands of adherents, the situation by 1950 was worse than even these statistics indicate.  

---

87 Currie, Gilbert, and Horsley, 60. This volume provides copious, membership data for all Methodist groups and for all major organized expressions of Christianity in the United Kingdom. Concerning Methodists, see, for example, 140-145.

88 Davey, 174-175.
Numerical declines: A Caveat

Much of the discussion of declines in Methodism has proceeded in the context of statistical analysis. However, while affirming that such analysis is helpful, the caveat must be stated that it is fraught with a variety of problems. Luker, for example, has argued that such analysis does not take into account the complexity of religious belief and observance. To be meaningful, he maintained, statistical analysis must be nuanced with the addition of local and internal factors in the discussion. J. A. Jaffé strengthened Luker’s argument by noting the manner in which “removals,” the record of the relocation of society members from one circuit to another, could give a false picture of decline. In Primitive Methodist circuits in the north-east, for example, local migration within the coal fields was both “common and extensive.” A large removal rate might not be a sign of a decline but only a consequence of the exigencies in the mining industry at a specific time in a given region.

General migrancy could also skew attempts to make generalisations concerning decline. Robert Currie argued that in the complexity of historical process, “adverse changes” do not occur in an unvarying manner; decline in one area may be accompanied by rapid growth in another. He stated, for example, that Primitive Methodism, from 1861 to 1901, experienced a dramatic shift of strength in which growth in one region countered decline in another. From 1861 to 1881, growth occurred mainly in the traditional areas of Primitive Methodist strength: Cheshire, Lancashire, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire,

---

89 Luker, 604.
90 Jaffé, 38.
Northumberland and Durham. However, from 1881 to 1901, significant growth occurred in London and the south-east, the Thames valley, and the south midlands.91

Decline as Loss of Emotional Fervour

As an increase in emotional fervour was understood to be evidence of “revival,” a loss of emotional intensity was seen to be a sign of decline. Luker has developed this idea, arguing that decline, understood as the diminution of religious ardour and the resultant loss of adherents, was a necessary component in the historical process of a revival movement. He observed that many who were attracted to Methodist chapels during times of increased religious fervour came for only a short time. Referring to one unreferenced estimate that five out of six converts who joined the Connexion would be lost, Luker asserted that decline was often dramatic. He maintained that the character of a “revival” could vary significantly depending on the values of participants: the “revival” could be only a pretext “for a shallow and temporary conversion experience, but it could also be simply a source of entertainment, or a break from the routine of everyday life,” or “a response to a particular, external, secular situation.”92

One function of a decline in concern for “revival” was a general decline of commitment to and interest in a conversion-centred piety. Obelkevich argued that the posture of Primitive Methodists toward the outside world changed significantly in that they began to “entertain their fellow villagers rather than to convert them, and asked for their financial contributions rather than their spiritual commitment.” Along with a loss of interest

91 Currie, 103-106.

92 Luker, 615.
in conversions, manifestations of the supernatural such as visions, prophecies, and miracles, became “rare and distant” and emphasis on the “edifying deathbed” waned.  

The Relationship between Decline and Social Issues

As noted above, many historians have understood the historical process of Primitive Methodism in terms of its relationship to general social unrest. Kent, for example, argued that the Connexion declined when it “lost contact” with the movement of social protest that consolidated itself in trade unionism and in the “exploitation of the County Councils Act.” According to Kent, Primitive Methodists were too closely aligned with current political aspirations, promising poor miners imminent salvation. When deliverance did not materialise and the working class suffered political defeats during the 1840s, Primitive Methodism declined and the drive for social change turned more to trade unionism.

W. R. Ward argued that two “structural weaknesses” afflicted Methodism as a broad movement: the relationship between class and chapel, and closely associated with it, the relationship between Sunday Schools and the Society. The tension between the Methodist imperative of evangelism and the pietistic ideals of the class that sought to draw apart from the world to pursue sanctification, appears to have been chronic. On one hand, the inner core of class members felt compelled to attract as many converts as possible, but, on the other hand, the hoi polloi were notoriously difficult to assimilate. This long-standing

---

93 Obelkevich, 254.
94 See n. 29.
95 Kent, 39 and 42.
tension could only lead to difficulties as time passed. Revival meant opening the doors to the world; without “revival,” the Society could pursue its spiritual agenda in freedom.

The Sunday Schools brought this tension into sharp focus: according to Ward, Sunday School scholars often proved to be unresponsive to recruitment, difficult to control both in terms of teachers and students, and generally a “nuisance” in the Chapel.97 The conflict regarding instruction in writing on Sundays appears to have been a catalyst for local incidents of decline among Methodists generally. Ward showed, for example, the manner in which the Wesleyan Sunday School at Burslem was wracked with division over this issue. The “Burslem Wesleyan Sunday School,” which had had a history of divisiveness but which numbered nearly 1,700 students and 200 teachers, pulled out of the Chapel over the Sunday writing controversy and established an undenominational School that quickly grew to 1,450 members.98

Tensions with the Sunday Schools could be seen as a source of decline in an even more profound manner. Ward related the failure to resolve tensions with Schools to the acceptance of teetotalism by Methodist groups, including Primitive Methodism. Teetotalism had been rejected by the denominations at first. However, groups like the Primitive Methodists, who emphasised outreach to the working classes, soon bowed to the pressure exerted by advocates of teetotalist methodology and embraced the movement. Ward stated, for example, that, in 1843, Bourne credited the strong growth in the Durham Circuit to membership in teetotalism held by all the preachers of the Circuit.99

97 Ward, 135-136.

98 Ward, 172-173.

99 Ward, 291.
Initially, like revivalists, teetotallers sought to bring about a conversion crisis. However, over time, teetotallers began to turn their attention more to methods of social engineering, beginning an enormous program of education in the Sunday Schools. Ward’s point is that the use of social engineering techniques to achieve the transformation once accomplished through direct methods shows the decline of the power of direct methods to effect dramatic personal change. By the early 1850s, Ward argued, “At one level, revivalists and teetotallers had . . . almost reached the limits of what could be done by bringing on the crisis of individual decision; at another, the education policies . . . failed to answer . . . .” The embrace of a teetotalism that promoted change through social engineering in the Sunday Schools demonstrates the weakness in Methodism. Such weakness may show the vulnerability of Methodists to the ravages of liberal theology, a threat to which, according to Ward, less institutionalised groups like the Primitive Methodists, were especially susceptible.  

**Roman Catholic Understandings of “Revival”**

Roman Catholic revivalism grew out of the work of orders, first in Western Europe and then in North America, that emphasised the role of preaching in bringing new vitality to parishes. The most important study of Roman Catholic “revivals” is Jay Dolan’s *Catholic Revivalism: The American Experience, 1830-1900.* Foundational to an understanding of Roman Catholic revivalism is an awareness of Dolan’s argument.

100 Ward, 291.

The Relationship between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant Understandings of Revival

Central to Dolan’s argument is the assertion that the Roman Catholic expression of “revivalism” was similar in kind to that of Protestant revivalism or “evangelical religion” as he called it, but not derived from it. He asserted that both Protestant and Roman Catholic revivalism came from the same source, the seventeenth and eighteenth century spiritual “awakening” in Europe. Dolan identified a catalogue of characteristics that evangelical Protestant revivalism had in common with its Roman Catholic counterpart: the use of the itinerant revivalist; an emphasis on music, although in Roman Catholic revivals it never reached the “the level of popularity and excellence” found among the Protestants; the use of devotional handbooks; an emphasis on technique; and a theological emphasis on the conversion experience even though the manner in which this experience was to be both understood and maintained was different in each.

Dolan did acknowledge that there were differences in the development of the Protestant version of revivalism in America in comparison with the Roman Catholic experience. He stated, for example, that Protestant revivalism underwent a transformation that Roman Catholicism did not, moving from what could be described in Protestant terms as a Calvinist soteriology to a more Arminian one. Also, Dolan noted that the Protestant

\[\text{\textsuperscript{102}}\text{For a summary of Dolan’s understanding of the history of parish missions in Europe. see his helpful article, “American Catholics and Revival Religion: 1850-1900,” Horizons (Spring 1976): 40-43.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{103}}\text{Dolan noted that journalists perceived that Catholic parish missions and Protestant revivals were of the same kind. He cited one writer who referred to a Catholic mission as “a revival or protracted meeting.” This does not necessarily prove his point, however; this reference represents only the perceptions of one observer. “American Catholics.” 43.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{104}}\text{Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 187-190. The difference between Roman Catholic revivalism and an Arminian version of Protestant revivalism should not be overstated; both featured some emphasis on the technique of the evangelist.}\]
renewal tradition was not monolithic, but included a variegated landscape of theological and experiential expression.

Dolan does not go far enough, however, in establishing the differences between the two kinds of revivalism: I would argue that Catholic revivalism, from the outset, was not just a variation of Protestant revivalism but was distinct in kind due to several unique elements that characterised it. Roman Catholic “revivals” took the form of what became known as “parish missions.” The name itself expresses the nature of these “revivals”: they were conducted in a parish and aimed primarily, and in the first instance, at already believing Catholics. In Dolan’s words, the revivals were an appeal for “second conversion.” He characterised the goal of the revival as

the conversion of baptized believers who had fallen into mortal sin which, according to Catholic theology, had snuffed out the life of grace. The mission sought to restore this state of grace by revitalizing the dormant virtues of faith, hope, and love planted in the soul at baptism. Elsewhere, Dolan stated the intent of parish missions in concise terms: “to reclaim sinners . . . and renew the piety of the faithful.” However, Dolan failed to concede that the notion of revival, understood as a ministry of and in a local church to the already saved, even though their salvation might be “dormant,” represented a dramatic departure from Protestant ideas of revival.

The language used by Dolan may itself be significant as can be seen through a distinction Ward has made between “revival” and “revivalism.” Speaking in a series of

---

105 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 104.
106 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 104.
metaphors, Ward understood “revivals” as spontaneous “springs” or “showers of blessings” as opposed to the calculated “organised assault” of “revivalism.” The Roman Catholic model of “revival” was based entirely on careful preparation and execution. While many would argue that evangelical Protestant revivals moved from “revival” to “revivalism” with the passage of time, the Roman Catholic approach was rooted from beginning to end in “revivalism.”

According to the definitions developed in chapter one, Roman Catholic revivalism was first and last a “renewal” movement since it appealed primarily to those already within the fold and since no new group adopting an adversarial stance to the original body was formed from it. However, depending on the spiritual condition of individuals and the theological commitments of observers, it could be argued that Roman Catholic revivalism was indeed a “revival” movement since new life was imparted to individuals who were considered to be spiritually dead. Dolan’s language here is ambiguous and so cannot help in the determination of the best metaphor: he refers to the objects of parish missions as those whose spiritual lives were “snuffed out” or dead while also using the term “dormant” to describe their spiritual state.

Dolan appears to be correct insofar as the similarities between Catholic revivalism and Protestant revivalism from the mid-nineteenth century onward are too striking to ignore. Like Protestant revivalists, Roman Catholics maintained an emphasis on the presence of the divine during the revival. Reported cures highlighted the belief that a parish mission “was a special moment when God was present in an extraordinary manner.”

---


109 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 104.
presence of the supernatural at “revivals” became a major emphasis: in this unique setting, God was understood to be present and active in a singular way.\textsuperscript{110}

In the Roman Catholic context, there is also an explicit intentionality that is consistent with post-Finneyian, Protestant revivalism: revivals were carefully planned, orchestrated events aimed at a specific constituency.

Finally, also consistent with their Protestant counterparts, Roman Catholic revivalists emphasised the volitional aspect of “revival,” placing great emphasis on human agency in the conversion process. As Dolan has stated, the entire structure of a revival “was designed to produce conversion, to persuade people to repent.” Since human choice was crucial, the structure of revivals was always designed to appeal to the will. Hence, a strong emphasis on preaching was a feature of Roman Catholic revivals, an emphasis shared in common with Primitive Methodists and other Protestant revivalist groups.\textsuperscript{111} To prepare for the sermon, the liturgical form of a parish mission was calculated to establish “an atmosphere conducive to preaching.” The goal was always “to effect a change of heart and elicit a personal, experiential decision for Christ.”\textsuperscript{112}

\textit{The Centrality of the Sacraments to Revival}

It is at the crucial juncture of conversion that the Roman Catholic understanding of “revival” diverges most sharply from that of Protestantism: evidence of the changed heart in Roman Catholicism was always found in reception of the sacraments. Roman Catholic revivalism was essentially different from Protestant revivalism in that, while revivalists from

\textsuperscript{110} Dolan, \textit{Catholic Revivalism}, 146.

\textsuperscript{111} Dolan, \textit{Catholic Revivalism}, 107.

\textsuperscript{112} Dolan, \textit{Catholic Revivalism}, 139.
both traditions emphasised the goal of conversion and preaching as a major means to accomplish that goal, Roman Catholic “revivals” also had a unique and crucial sacramental emphasis. Dolan stated, for example, that the climax of the revival was the renewal of baptismal vows. To this end, the rituals of confession and communion were the final goals to which conversion pointed and the means by which the individual could be “revived.”

The combination of conversion with a sacramental emphasis was understood self-consciously by Roman Catholic revivalists as the unique essence of revival. Redemptorist preacher Alfred Young, for example, believed that revival must have both components. According to Dolan, Young stated that “conversion without confession was not sufficient.” Also, Young affirmed that “confession without conversion is not penance — not being truly converted, the communion does no good.” Both were necessary for true conversion.

Paulist Walter Elliott took the sacramental emphasis one step further: Roman Catholic conversion was similar to Protestant conversion but superior because of the sacramental component. Orestes Brownson, the controversial Roman Catholic convert, social activist, and friend of the Paulists, took this emphasis to its furthest extension: writing in the context of the “Laymen’s Revival” that was sweeping over North America in Protestant circles, Brownson stated that “these Protestant Revivals have, to some extent, followed in the wake of the Catholic missions . . . .” However, the Protestant revivals seemed to “have sprung out of efforts inspired by a spirit of rivalry” and bear only a “certain grotesque likeness” to true revivalism as found only in the Roman Church. While both

113 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 105.
114 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 106.
115 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 107.
kinds dealt in religious experience, Brownson argued that the Roman Catholic approach produced “a more refined species of excitement” as compared to the Protestants who “revel in the wilder and more extravagant manifestations of religious enthusiasm, which often degenerate into the most revolting scenes of a gross physical excitement . . . .” Brownson believed that Roman Catholic revivalism was not just different in kind from Protestant revivalism but, also, both prior and superior.

Brownson articulated four major errors that he believed were fundamental to Protestant revivalism: an excess of religious excitement; a lack of doctrinal instruction; a complete absence of liturgy; and most damning of all in his opinion, an inability “to give any positive and specific directions as to what must be done to obtain the pardon of sin and the grace of God.” By this, he was referring to the sacraments.

Accompanying the emphases of conversion and sacramentalism was another focus similar to the Protestants: personal holy living. According to Dolan, parish mission preachers encouraged a “rigorous moralism” in which religion was conceived primarily in terms of “obligations and duties.” However, the focus on purity complemented both the other emphases: “Personal religious experience became an important ingredient in the pursuit of holiness,” and the sacraments “ratified” and “nurtured” the converted in their pursuit.

---


117 Brownson, 296-298.

118 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 108 and 112.
Revival as Measurable Increase

Measurable outcomes were looked upon as proof that revival had occurred. While Primitive Methodists also demonstrated a felt need to prove the reality of revival through quantitative measurement, Roman Catholic categories were different. The number of young people who chose to pursue a religious vocation as the result of a parish mission, the number of those converted to temperance, and especially the number of those who went to the Confessional and received communion were seen as primary indicators of revival. Since Roman Catholic revivals were concerned mainly with Roman Catholics, conversion of Protestants was not seen as the primary goal. However, such conversions were valued and carefully recorded. Also, the success of a revival could be measured according to the degree to which it helped to establish and promote devotional confraternities and temperance societies. These fraternal organisations could function both as “community supports to reinforce” the individual’s pursuit of holiness and as sources of stability to conserve the gains made through revivals.

Unique among the Roman Catholic evidences that pointed to revival was the rise of practices characteristic of “devotionalism.” Frequent communions, an increase in devotion to Mary, homage to the saints through display and application of relics, the selling of scapulars, and renewal of the cult of the sacred heart chiefly in Jesuit settings all pointed to the achievement of revival.

---

119 Temperance was a difficult issue for Roman Catholic revival preachers. While the preachers appear to have valued it consistently, in some parishes, the temperance message had to be muted or eliminated altogether if saloon or other alcohol workers occupied places of influence.

120 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 139 and 142.

121 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 173-179.
Revival as a Tool of Social Engineering

Also central to Roman Catholic revivalism was an explicit cultural agenda. Dolan argued that Catholic revivals reinforced the nineteenth-century trend toward seeing the parish as the centre of all pastoral activity by “channeling” the revival experience into the parish community. In addition to being a religious movement, Catholic revivalism also became “a social movement which strove for the collective conversion of American Catholics.” Dolan stated that

With each new wave of immigrants the parish mission reappeared as a central component in the organizing process of the church. Later, as people settled into American society and established their communities, the revival became a “maintenance mechanism” of the total institutional system. . . .

The function of revivalism became that of an “organising movement” that helped immigrants cope with the stresses of dislocation.

Included in the social function of parish missions was an emphasis on education in general and on the parochial school in particular. Often, an increase occurred in the parish school population after the revival had ended. In parishes where there was no school, the revival could be used as a catalyst to begin one. Since there was controversy within the Roman Catholic community regarding the necessity of such schools, revival preaching on this theme was often apologetical in tone.  

The most important social consequence of revivalism was incorporation into the church of those who were converted, and the sacraments provided the most crucial mechanism to accomplish that goal. The clergy taught that while conversion was a

---

122 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 182.

123 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 180-182.
significant personal experience, only through the sacramental life of the institution could the converted be fulfilled. In this way, Catholic revivalism “blended nurture with conversion by its insistence on the sacraments as both the fulfilment of conversion and the means to preserve and perfect this religious experience.”

This insistence on the importance of the sacraments made individuals a part of the community and gave them a sense of identity beyond their individual lives. The revival preachers and the parish clergy believed that this emphasis provided an antidote that could prevent the losses that often followed the intense but potentially ephemeral experience of conversion in Protestant revivals.

Parish missions became recognized as important tools that could be used effectively to promote organisational growth. Throughout the last half of the nineteenth century, the Church hierarchy supported them as a valid means of parish development. Also, the hierarchy understood that they were an efficacious means to begin new parishes.

The Paucity of Material

Studies of parish missions understood as “revivals” can be found only rarely beyond Dolan’s history of the phenomenon in North America. One of the few references appears in the work of Jonathan Sperber who understood the nineteenth century in European Catholicism as a period of “revival.” As Dolan has done with the North American context, Sperber did with the European. For both, “revival” was synonymous with, and the consequence of, parish missions. Sperber relied on quantitative indicators for

---


determination of the occurrence of a “revival.” Numerical increases after parish missions as seen in “unprecedented” attendance records, renewed pilgrimages, a decline in illegitimacy, a rise in the number of vocations, and withdrawal of Catholics from inter-confessional groups together with a subsequent surge in membership in devotional confraternities, were all understood to be evidence that a “revival” had taken place.

Sperber’s description of the increase in vocations provides a good example of the use of statistical categories to prove that “revival” has occurred. In Ireland, vocations rose in spite of a decline in population: in 1800, there were 2,676 Catholics for each priest in Ireland whereas, in 1901, there were only 1,126. The numbers in Germany were also favourable but in a reverse manner: the number of members greatly increased in comparison to the clergy. A sample of twelve Prussian Dioceses showed a dramatic increase of members in only eight years, from 1873 to 1881. The diocese of Hildesheim, for example, grew from 493 to 1,584 members for every priest. Even when taking into account the Kulturkampf which occurred during this period and which reached its zenith in 1881, the numbers remained high in all parishes without significant Polish populations. Also, in 1866 there were 7,794 nuns while in 1908 there were almost 50,000.127

Sperber attributed the sources of European revivals to “political and subsistence crises” and changes in pastoral care. Most significant in pastoral care changes, perhaps, was a shift in the character of the ritual of confession. Under the influence of the ideas of St. Alphonsus of Liguori, the confessional changed from something feared and done once a

---

127 Sperber, 650-653. In this Kulturkampf, one third of the priests was lost due to government persecution.
year, to a ritual that served some of the functions of psychotherapy. Based on this model, in Europe as in North America confessions became the climax of the parish mission. At the end of the mission, large numbers of confessions would be heard. These confessions would often cover an individual’s entire life. This practice reflected not only the new character of the confessional but also the nature of the missions: they came to be understood as festivals in which “the community felt liberated from sin.”

Beyond the parish mission movement, only a few Roman Catholic historians have used the nomenclature of “revival” to describe historical processes in the Roman Catholic Church. Margaret Lavinia Anderson, for example, defined “revival” in a negative manner. Anderson attempted to demonstrate that the accepted truism that characteristic of the nineteenth century in Europe was a growing secularisation is not consistent with the perception of those who lived and wrote during that period. Anderson used Lord Macauley’s review of Leopold von Ranke’s History of the Popes, Fyodor Dostoevsky’s The Brothers’ Karamazov, and Friedrich Naumann’s discussion of Adolph von Harnack’s optimism regarding the ability of “modern methods” to overtake Catholic theology to show that contemporary observers from different backgrounds were all concerned, not with the loss, but with the increase of Roman Catholic religious power. Anderson showed that all three commented on the increasing ability of the clergy to control the people. Naumann, for example, asked, “Will the weakening of theological concepts diminish the power of the priest over heart and minds? . . . it is downright incredible how the priest succeeds in keeping even the unwilling and the indifferent on his string.” In similar fashion, Dostoevsky, through his grand inquisitor, said “the people are even more certain than ever

128 Sperber, 653 and 656-657.
that they are completely free, and indeed they themselves have brought us their freedom and
have laid it humbly at our feet . . . .” In this context, Anderson understood “revival” as an
increase in the ability of the Catholic hierarchy to control the minds and actions of the
people. “Vitality” was not found in the Church’s wealth, institutional power, or influence in
intellectual disciplines, but in the people’s willingness “to ally themselves with the Church”
which meant, in Anderson’s opinion, their willingness to sacrifice their freedom to the most
hierarchical institution known.129 Anderson’s discussion shows clearly that one’s valuation
of a particular “revival,” and perhaps of “revival” in general, is rooted in the complex
network of metaphors that are related to “revival” in an individual’s mind and the values
attached to them by the individual.

A final instance of the use of the idea of “revival” to understand Roman Catholic
history appears in the work of William C. Schrader who used the term “revival” to describe
changes in Roman Catholicism in Prussia during the early modern period. Schrader
developed his view of “revival” through the study of two German dioceses. In his analysis,
he referred to “revival” as a long multi-staged largely political process: the crucial first stage
was the retaking of power in Cathedral chapters from Protestants followed by the election
of Counter-Reformation bishops. The next stage was “the introduction of the Jesuits and
other reforming orders” which continued the process. “Revival” reached culmination with
“the recatholicization of the populace at large.” Schrader believed that the entire process of
revival could take several generations.130 However, just as revival was conceived of in

129 Margaret Lavinia Anderson, “The Limits of Secularization: On the Problem of the Catholic

130 William C. Schrader, “The Catholic Revival in Osnabruck and Minden,” The Catholic
terms of power, so was decline. According to Schrader, revival could be destroyed by political considerations. In the case of these dioceses, it was halted by Swedish military intervention. Later, because of the provisions of the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, the gains were lost permanently.\(^{131}\)

Latourette used a rich nomenclature most eloquently in his application of the idea of “revival” to Roman Catholic growth. In a brief discussion of the “marked revival” in the Roman Catholic Church during the nineteenth century, Latourette defined “revival” in a three-fold manner. According to Latourette, Roman Catholic “revival” could be seen in the “re-establishment” of former status and privilege as found in Spain and Russia and at least partially in France; in the use of parish missions in France which led to the renewal of once renounced baptismal vows; and in the stimulation of “a passionate attachment to the church” in Germany and France that he attributed to the influence of Romanticism. Latourette found evidence of “revival” in the establishment of new centres of scholarly endeavour, full enrolment in the seminaries, the founding of new orders and the renewal of old ones, and attempts to deal with the social ills brought on by industrialisation.\(^{132}\)

In a manner consistent with Anderson’s approach, Latourette dealt with the issue of secularisation in Europe during this period. He acknowledged that while social forces were robbing the Church of the “function which it had performed for more than a thousand years,” and the Church appeared to be unable to deal with the masses in the industrialised cities, nonetheless, “among a significant proportion of the population . . . loyalty to the

\(^{131}\) Schrader, 49-50.

church was stronger than ever and religious duties more faithfully observed." This, he argued, pointed to "revival."

Perhaps due both to their ecclesiology and their eschatology, among Roman Catholic historians the notions of "decline" and "declines" are largely absent from discussions of "revival" and its consequences. In Chapter four, I will show that only among the detailed reports of parish missions held by the Paulist order, and in private Paulist correspondence can periodic expressions of "decline" be found.

*The Zenith of Roman Catholic Parish Mission Revivalism: The Paulists*

While orders such as the Passionists, Redemptorists, and Jesuits first pioneered parish missions in Europe and then exported them to North America, it was the Paulists in North America who developed parish missions to their most sophisticated expression. The Paulists, given official provisional sanction in 1858, were the result of the vision and energy of Isaac Hecker, a recent convert to Roman Catholicism. Probably owing to the lasting effects of the "Americanism" controversy that has tainted his memory, few scholars undertook studies of Hecker's life and work until the last two decades of the twentieth century during which there was a flowering of study into the life of this extraordinary priest.  

Prior to this surge of interest, the most important work regarding Hecker was the biography written by his disciple and friend Walter Elliott.  


135 Walter Elliott, *The Life of Father Hecker* (New York: Arno Press, 1972). The importance of these new studies for a trustworthy account of Hecker's life is underscored by the limitations of Elliott's account. James A. McVann, in his unpublished history of the Paulist Fathers, gives a kind but realistic
After a long, sometimes tortuous, spiritual journey that included friendship with Brownson and intimate contact with the Brooke Farm transcendentalists, Hecker converted to Roman Catholicism.\textsuperscript{136} By 1848, he was a Redemptorist priest working as a missionary in the United States. Working with him were four other American priests who, also, were recent converts: Augustine Hewit, George Deshon, Francis Baker, and Clarence Walworth.

The chain of events that led to Hecker’s expulsion from the Redemptorists and ultimately his success at the Vatican in obtaining papal permission to establish his own religious society makes for compelling reading. However, it is beyond the confines of this study. What is significant for this study is that, by 1858, the Vatican had granted provisional approval for a new order and Hecker, Hewit, Deshon, and Baker became the founding members of the “Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle.”\textsuperscript{137} The Vatican chose to allow Hecker to establish a “Society” with the understanding that, in time, it could achieve full status as an order.

\textbf{Isaac Hecker and “Revival”: A Dual Agenda}

Hecker’s political beliefs shaped his spirituality and, consequently, his commitment to evangelism and revival. In the immense interior of St. Paul the Apostle Church in west

\textsuperscript{136} For a concise account of this crucial time in Hecker’s life, see O’Brien, 14-15 and 25-81. O’Brien’s work is perhaps the best easily available source for details on Hecker’s early life and spiritual journey. For a brief but helpful overview of Hecker’s early efforts to establish the Paulists, see John Farina, “Isaac Hecker’s Vision for the Paulists: Hopes and Realities,” in Farina, 182-220.

\textsuperscript{137} Conspicuous by his absence was Clarence Walworth. A gifted preacher, Walworth’s break with Hecker and the others is a frequent topic of discussion in Paulist histories.
midtown Manhattan, in a back corner only dimly lighted by natural light, stands the massive sarcophagus that rises above Hecker’s tomb. The towering sarcophagus, featuring an angel holding both Hecker and St. Paul, expresses succinctly Hecker’s vision:

In the union of Catholic faith and American civilization
A Future for the Church brighter than any past.138

This inscription expressed Hecker’s desire not only to emulate the evangelistic efforts of St. Paul but to emulate them in a manner that recast the Gospel message into a mould of twentieth-century Roman Catholicism combined with American “Manifest Destiny” ideology. Hecker wanted to present an apologetic to American society that Catholic culture was superior to Protestant culture and indeed the only medium through which American culture could reach true fulfilment.

Edward Langlois has argued that the defining political influences on Hecker were the Locofoco party in New York City, his friendship with Brownson, and his ties to the Transcendentalists, all in the context of Jacksonian democracy. Maintaining an optimistic view of human nature, a belief in America as chosen by God, and a strong commitment to Roman Catholicism as the truth, Hecker developed a theology and a polity that featured these three presuppositions at its base.139 According to Langlois, Hecker’s contribution to American political theory was to refute the popular Roman Catholic notion of that time that the United States was a “Protestant-inspired and ruled country alien to the church.”140

138 Sarcophagus, St. Paul the Apostle Church, Manhattan, New York City.
140 Langlois, 49.
David O’Brien has affirmed a similar reading of Hecker: as with countless others, the American democratic experiment had preoccupied Hecker and he wanted to develop a religious practice that could wed the truth of the Church with American social realities. In his efforts to develop such a piety, he took for granted, in O’Brien’s words, the worth of “freedom of conscience, self-reliance, and democratic government.” The country was like a new Eden with no past sins or history to clutter decision making and the American people “were innocent, open, sincere and ready to respond to the truth” when it was presented to them clearly. In this context, Hecker saw himself as the American St. Paul preaching “the Good News that there was a goal for the aspirations of their nature, an answer to the questions of their souls.” America, with God, would lead the world.¹⁴¹

Hecker’s success in inculcating his values into the Paulists can be seen a half century later when, in 1905, Paulist Alexander Doyle wrote, “The atmosphere of freedom has developed individuality so that no longer are men to be driven in herds . . . .” The freedom found in America was evidence that “the upward and onward struggle of humanity for better living, greater freedom, and higher existence will only more and more develop the religious sentiment in the heart.” The result could only be the expectation that “unless all signs fail, we may consequently expect in the coming years a new and wonderful revival of the religious spirit.” The Paulist debt to the Transcendentalists is also evident in Doyle’s words as seen in his quotation of Emerson’s axiom that “America is but another name for opportunity.” After giving a list of signs that the coming revival was imminent, Doyle

¹⁴¹ O’Brien, 7-13.
exuded, “Though these signs of the times are evident elsewhere, it is in America that they are more pronounced because America leads in the race of progress.”

The belief that in the march of progress, people generally, including Protestants who were the initial rulers of America, were ready to hear the truth of Catholicism, is evident both in Doyle’s article and in the writings of Elliott. Elliott stated, for example, that “the people are famishing for the truths that Catholicity alone can teach. The manifold religions that which sprang from the Reformation merely mock their divine appetite . . . .” Since “the American people crave to know the truth,” Elliott believed that it stood to reason that “this eagerness to hear the truth means the conversion of America.” Finally, Elliott affirmed the centrality of the United States in world history asserting “Win America for Jesus Christ and all is won.”

The values of Jacksonian democracy have continued to be highly regarded by the Paulists throughout history. In their quest to convert America, they have sought to attract creative young men who would boldly use whatever means appropriate for the times that they could find. Examples are many and diverse including substantial commitments both to the print and the broadcast media as Paulists have developed divisions that concentrate on publishing, radio, television, and cinema.


\[144\] The same spirit that was evident in the ministry of Paulist Benjamin Franklin Bowling in the 1940s when he developed a radio program called “Catholic Answers” and served as technical advisor in the making of the movie “Going My Way” can be see in the late 1990s in Eric Andrews, one of the priests at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle. Andrews entered the priesthood after working with the “Muppets.”
In conclusion, Roman Catholic revivalism was similar to the same phenomenon found in North American Protestant evangelicalism but also different in crucial ways. Both featured a strong emphasis on human action as the necessary foundation of revival and both made use of peripatetic evangelists who, through vivid preaching, became the main catalysts of revival. However, although Roman Catholicism shared the idea of the itinerant evangelist with Protestants, the Roman Catholic evangelist came as a preacher from a mission-oriented order, and came as a member of the hierarchy, operating explicitly with the institution’s agenda at the forefront of his mind.

Both Protestants and Roman Catholics featured the usual emphasis on increased commitment as shown through the compilation of empirical data to quantify the success of the “revival.” However, Roman Catholic “revivalism” varied from the Protestant model here, too, in the items considered necessary to be counted. Roman Catholicism was different in this regard not just in details but in kind.

While the Roman Catholic approach to revival stressed the importance of affective changes in the hearts of the people, this kindling of ardour was understood to be only a means to the end of directing the people to the comfort and stability of the sacraments as the normal consummation of revival experience. Also, from the outset, reception of the sacraments was seen as a means of strengthening the institution. It might be argued that Protestant revival groups soon moved from a rugged, individualistic notion of revival, in which the emphasis was on the individual’s experience, to an understanding of revival as a means to protect and further the goals of the group. However, in Roman Catholic

revivalism, the agenda of the institution was the driving force behind revivals from the beginning. Accordingly, there was an obvious power connection in the Roman Catholic variation. While the aim was still to stir the hearts of individuals, the “revival” was a carefully structured event, initiated, guided, and controlled by the clergy and understood to be a vehicle to foster the development of the institution.

The Roman Catholic idea of “revival” also varied from the North American Protestant model because it was fuelled by an explicit desire to effect cultural not just religious change. The ones to whom the “revival” was targeted were those whom the clergy wanted to bring from the margins of Roman Catholic life and culture to the centre, not just individuals who needed to be “saved.”

Finally, the Roman Catholic “revival” experience occasioned definitional problems. Should it be understood as “revival” or “renewal”? The ambiguity in Dolan’s descriptions of parish missions does not help attempts at categorisation. In reference to individuals, if the goal of Roman Catholic “revivals” was the rebirth of those who were spiritually “dead,” then “revival” is the best descriptor to use. However, if the goal primarily was the recovery of those whose faith was “dormant” or at “a low ebb,” to use only two metaphors, then “renewal” should be used to describe them. In relation to institutional concerns, often the point of parish missions was to renew the parish in its context. However, sometimes, parish missions served as an institutional tactic to begin a new parish by renewing the lives of those in the vicinity who were not currently involved in a Catholic community.

The distinction between “revival” and “revivalism” also shows that the Roman Catholic understanding differed from the Protestant. While it could be argued that
Protestant “revivals” over time changed from spontaneous experiences to the structured and planned encounters of “revivalism,” the Roman Catholic approach began with the latter.

Clearly, there were strong similarities between Protestant “revivals” and Roman Catholic “revivals.” However, there were also obvious differences between them. These differences suggest the conclusion that each was a unique genus of its own within the broad parameters of the metaphor of “revival.”

“Classical Pentecostal” Understandings of “Revival”

Questions of Identity

The study of Pentecostalism provokes questions of identity that are, perhaps, more complex than similar questions regarding Primitive Methodism and Roman Catholicism. Many scholars have taken for granted that Pentecostalism has been simply another expression of North American Protestant evangelical revivalism. While there is obvious and compelling evidence to support that assumption, some would challenge it. Canadian Pentecostal historian Gordon Atter, for example, referred to Pentecostalism as “the Third Force,” suggesting that Pentecostalism should be seen neither as Roman Catholic nor as Protestant in source and identity, but as a third kind of religious group. Atter, in reference to an uncited article in Life magazine, argued that “no longer was the religious world divided into two general camps, Protestant and Roman Catholic, but . . . a THIRD FORCE must now be reckoned with in Christian circles.”

Others have taken a different direction and have emphasised the connection between Pentecostal spirituality and the Roman Catholic mystical tradition, understanding Pentecostalism in continuity with that tradition.

---

145 Gordon Atter, The Third Force, 303. Atter’s use of this term is suggestive; he never amplifies the idea. His assertion fails to take into account the entire Eastern “force” of Orthodoxy.
To complicate matters of identity, Pentecostalism has undergone a process of subdivision and, by the 1970s, it appeared in at least three distinct forms. David Barrett, in his 1988 landmark analysis, developed a typology that described Pentecostalism in terms of three “waves” that can be categorised according to time, theology, and organisational strategy. Barrett used the phrase “Classical Pentecostals” to refer to that group of Christians which first appeared in North America from 1901 to 1913. The theology of this group emphasised an idea that was common to a variety of revivalist Protestant groups by the turn of the century: the “Baptism of the Holy Spirit.” The distinctive characteristic of “Classical Pentecostals” was theological: they claimed that the “Baptism” would be accompanied normatively by the experience of glossolalia. The experience of tongue-speaking was crucial since they understood it as the “initial evidence” that the “Baptism” had occurred.

Barrett defined “Classical Pentecostals” as those “who are members of explicitly Pentecostal denominations . . . whose major characteristic is a rediscovery of, and a new experience of, the supernatural with a powerful and energizing ministry of the Holy Spirit in the realm of the miraculous . . . .” The Baptism of the Holy Spirit, the presence of the “spiritual gifts” as expressed in the letters of St. Paul, and the intervention of demons and angels in time and space, were all primary ways in which Pentecostals believed that the miraculous was being manifested among them. Through both “crush-out” and “come-

---


147 Barrett. 124.
outism,” the Pentecostals initiated a process through which they developed a large variety of new religious organisations.

In the 1960s, the Charismatic Movement appeared as the second “wave” of Pentecostalism. Barrett has defined Charismatics as “those baptized or renewed in the Spirit within the mainline denominations . . . who remain within their denominations.” The central theological emphasis of Charismatics was the idea of “renewal.” They understood the Baptism of the Holy Spirit to be a crucial element in bringing about “renewal” in their already constituted denominations, but they rejected both any sense of need to establish new religious groups and the “initial evidence” doctrine. The study of the Charismatic movement becomes complicated since the term “Charismatic” is also used for schismatic secessionist bodies and other independent churches that left the Classical Pentecostal movement from the 1950s onward.\(^1\)

In the 1970s, the last “wave” of Pentecostals became visible and has become known simply as “The Third Wave.” Barrett defined this group as “persons in mainline nonpentecostal denominations, recently filled or empowered with the Spirit but usually nonglossolalic, who do not identify themselves with the terms ‘Pentecostal’ or ‘charismatic.’”\(^2\) The distinctive theological emphasis in the “Third Wave” has been the “power gifts”: the supernatural endowment of the ability to communicate messages from

\(^1\) Barrett, 124-125. Classical Pentecostalism was deeply wounded by the emergence, from 1948 to 1952, of a new variant of Pentecostalism that became known as the “Latter-Rain Movement.” Although the movement died as a coherent entity, many independent churches and Bible Institutes became the lasting consequence of the division. In the last decades of the twentieth century, many of these still enjoyed considerable success.

\(^2\) Barrett, 126.
God, the power to heal, and the ability to confront the demonic.\textsuperscript{150} In spite of its original nonglossolalic nature and repudiation of the term "Pentecostal," the "Third Wave" has been included with other Pentecostals since, like Classical and Charismatic Pentecostals, it has emphasised Baptism-like experiences and the "gifts of the Holy Spirit." In this way, scholars can affirm that there is a coherent macro-movement called "Pentecostalism." Problems of definition with these "waves" have been compounded since the mid-1990s, however, due to a dramatic interfacing of all three, resulting in numerous settings that represent new and diverse permutations of the waves.

The problems of identity do not end with cataloguing the three "waves." "Classical Pentecostalism" is itself divided into "Holiness," "Finished Work," and "Oneness" streams. "Holiness" Pentecostalism refers to those who came from the Wesleyan Holiness movement, an array of splinter groups that came-to-be with the fragmentation of Methodism during the last two decades of the nineteenth century. The distinctive attribute of "Holiness" Pentecostals is theological: they argue that there are three major "crisis experiences" available to all Christians: conversion, entire sanctification, understood in Wesleyan terms, and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.\textsuperscript{151}

Those early Pentecostals that came from a Reformed background have been called "Finished Work" Pentecostals because they affirm that the crucifixion of Christ accomplished complete positional sanctification for the Christian based on Christ's holiness. In opposition to "Holiness" Pentecostals, this stream argues that subsequent to conversion

\textsuperscript{150} The verbal gifts of the Spirit are generally called "tongues," "prophecy," and "words of knowledge."

\textsuperscript{151} Perhaps the best study of the Wesleyan "Holiness" movement is Melvin Dieter's \textit{The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century} (Metuchen, N.J.: Scarecrow Press, 1980).
the entire life of the individual is a quest to match in experience the position that the believer has by virtue of Christ's "finished work" on the cross. In their theology, experiential sanctification along the lines advocated by Wesley can never occur during life on earth. Consequently, they deny the doctrine of entire sanctification and argue that only two "crisis experiences" are possible.152

In 1913, at a camp meeting in Arroyo Seco, California, a Pentecostal ran through the camp in the early morning hours proclaiming a new revelation: there is only one God and Jesus is His name. From this flash point, a whole new stream of Classical Pentecostalism came into existence. These Pentecostals maintained "Finished Work" theology with the added idiosyncrasy of denial of the Trinity. Historically, these "Oneness Pentecostals" have been radically exclusivist and have generally not developed as rich a scholarly tradition as Charismatics have developed and which "Classical Pentecostals" have begun to develop.

Since one subject of this study is a "Classical Pentecostal" assembly from the "Finished Work" stream, a few comments concerning the origins of "Classical Pentecostalism" of the "Finished Work" variety are needed.

*Origins of the Pentecostal Revival*

Most scholars view the work of Charles Fox Parham from 1900 to 1907 and William Joseph Seymour in 1906 as seminal in the "coming-to-be" of "Classical Pentecostalism".152 The origins of Classical Pentecostalism have occasioned a vivid, historiographical debate among Pentecostal historians. Some, such as Vinson Synan, understand Pentecostal origins in Wesleyan Holiness terms. Certainly the early two major progenitors of the movement, Charles Fox Parham in Kansas and William J. Seymour in Los Angeles, were Holiness preachers. However, other scholars, most notably Edith Blumhofer, have argued for strong weight to be placed on the Reformed foundations of Pentecostalism. See, for example, Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States*. 

---

152 The origins of Classical Pentecostalism have occasioned a vivid, historiographical debate among Pentecostal historians. Some, such as Vinson Synan, understand Pentecostal origins in Wesleyan Holiness terms. Certainly the early two major progenitors of the movement, Charles Fox Parham in Kansas and William J. Seymour in Los Angeles, were Holiness preachers. However, other scholars, most notably Edith Blumhofer, have argued for strong weight to be placed on the Reformed foundations of Pentecostalism. See, for example, Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Movement in the United States*. 

Pentecostalism.” However, scholars have debated the relative importance of each. J. T. Nichol has articulated five reasons for granting a position of priority and pre-eminence to Parham: he was the accepted leader of the early Pentecostals in the Midwestern United States both before and during the beginnings of the Azusa Street Mission in California; he coined the term “Apostolic Faith” that became universally accepted as the title for the movement; he published the first Pentecostal periodical; he organised the first meetings that attracted people across state borders; and he was the first to issue ministerial credentials in the context of a new movement. To these, I would add two others: he was the first to formulate the distinctive “initial evidence” doctrine and it was in his ministry that manifestations of glossolalia were first seen regularly.

Parham had resigned his Methodist charge in Eudora, Kansas, and joined the ranks of the "come-outers" after being convinced that the Methodists had become institutionalised and lacked spiritual power and purity. For five years, he travelled as one of the scores of independent itinerant Holiness evangelists that were criss-crossing the continental United States. During this time, he developed both his theological system and his considerable oratorical gifts.

---


154 See John W. Stephenson, “The Centrality of a Common Interpretation of History to the Self-Definition of the Early Pentecostals” (Th.M. thesis, Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, 1991), 33-34. The issue of chronological precedence in the appearance of glossolalia has been a source of protracted controversy. However, it is only in Parham’s ministry that reports of “tongue-speaking” are documented, encased in a theological framework, and understood as integral to a new understanding of historical process. See Robert Mapes Anderson’s Vision of the Disinherited for a discussion of other claims to precedence, 253.

155 Perhaps the best biography of Parham is James Goff’s, Fields White Unto Harvest: Charles F. Parham and the Missionary Origins of Pentecostalism (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press,
In 1898, while living in Topeka Kansas, Parham established a church and a healing home. Later, he opened a short-term Bible school. At a school prayer meeting on 1 January 1901, the first instances of glossolalia began to take place. After a series of reverses that occurred in the ensuing years, Parham’s popularity began to grow and culminated in a large revival campaign held during the spring of 1905 in Houston, Texas. A series of meetings that extended into the following winter followed the initial services. By 1906, up to 25,000 in Houston had been directly affected by Parham’s preaching.\(^{156}\)

In Houston, William Seymour, a black holiness preacher from Louisiana, joined the new Bible school that Parham had established in the city as a means to train converts.\(^{157}\) After only a month at Parham’s school, Seymour answered a call to pastor a small Holiness congregation in Los Angeles. During a house prayer meeting held 9 April 1906, an outbreak of glossolalia occurred. In succeeding nights, a growing crowd of both whites

\(^{156}\) This figure is given by Menzies based on reports found in Klaude Kendrick’s, The Promise Fulfilled (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1961). See Menzies, 48 and Kendrick, 63. Although Parham’s message soon achieved national notice, success was attained without him: on 19 July 1907, Parham was arrested in San Antonio, Texas charged with “the commission of an unnatural offense,” a circumlocution for homosexual behaviour. San Antonio Light 19 and 21 July, 1907. Although the final disposition of the charge is unknown and Parham consistently maintained his innocence, his leadership of the Pentecostal movement was fatally compromised. Although he toiled on, primarily in the American Midwest, he died in relative obscurity. A variety of writers comment concerning this episode; see, for example, Goff’s helpful summary in the Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements. James Goff, “Parham, Charles Fox,” in Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements, ed. Stanley M. Burgess and Gary B. McGee (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988), 661. For more detail, see Lyle Murphy, “Beginning at Topeka,” Calvary Review 13:1 (Spring, 1994): 8-10.

\(^{157}\) Perhaps the best biography of Seymour is Douglas Nelson’s For Such A Time As This (Ph.D. diss., University of Birmingham, 1981). Nelson’s dissertation is also a good example of a growing black historiographical school within “Classical Pentecostalism.” For an overview of Seymour’s spiritual development, see Nelson’s comments, 151-167. Parham’s relationship with blacks has been a source of significant controversy. It appears that Parham denied Seymour access to his classes at first and then relented, allowing him to listen from an adjacent room through an open door. Nelson, 208-210.
and blacks augmented the meetings, which had been attended, originally, by only working-class blacks. The press of the crowd became so great that the front porch of the home collapsed under the strain. To alleviate the acute need for space, Seymour and his small flock acquired an old building at 312 Azusa Street in an industrial section of the city.\textsuperscript{158}

Services began in the hall on Easter Saturday 1906 with one hundred in attendance. By the middle of May, huge crowds gathered daily. At each meeting, the Azusa Street Mission, with dimensions of forty feet by sixty feet, was jammed with 750-800 people inside and 400-500 outside.\textsuperscript{159} By September, the Mission had sent out missionaries to Africa and Scandinavia. Seymour consolidated his leadership of the movement and contributed to the movement’s growth by launching a periodical, \textit{Apostolic Faith}, which burgeoned from 5,000 to 50,000 copies in only a few months.

The progenitor of the “Finished Work” branch of “Classical Pentecostalism” was William Durham, an independent, Baptist evangelist from Chicago. After receiving the Baptism of the Holy Spirit at Azusa Street in 1907, Durham became the foremost apologist for the Pentecostal message in the northern Midwestern states. Reflecting on his experience, he began to interpret Pentecostalism in terms more comfortable with his reformed background. Accordingly, he rejected entire sanctification and argued for only two “blessings” or “crisis experiences.”\textsuperscript{160} The “Finished Work” innovation took root by 1912, and, in just over a decade, became the majority voice in “Classical Pentecostalism.”


\textsuperscript{159} Anderson, 69 and Nelson, 195-196.

\textsuperscript{160} Durham propagated his new interpretation through his periodical \textit{Pentecostal Testimony}. 
“Revival” as Numerical Growth

“Classical Pentecostals” have always understood themselves in terms of revival. Even in the late 1990s, constant reference to revival could be heard in Pentecostal churches and camp meetings. Like so many other North American revival groups that began in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Pentecostals advocated a piety centred on evangelism. The all-important goal was to bring as many as possible to the “crisis experience” of conversion. Observers could know that revival had taken place because of the increase in the number of members.

Numerical growth understood as the proof that revival had occurred surfaced early in Pentecostal histories. Edith Blumhofer has quoted B. F. Lawrence whose 1916 study is perhaps the first self-conscious Pentecostal history. Lawrence’s reports show a concern to document numerical growth and manifestations of supernatural activity. In reference to the rise of Pentecostalism, Lawrence documented the results of this “great activity of the Lord’s Spirit”: there had been the

salvation of hundreds of thousands of sinners . . . . Tens of thousands have been healed of various diseases; other hundreds of thousands have received a Pentecostal Baptism in the Holy Spirit; lunatics and demoniacs have been restored to reason and to peace; believers have been brought into a vital touch with God . . . (and) hundreds have felt the missionary zeal of the first evangelists . . . .

The importance of numerical growth as proof of “revival” has been affirmed throughout Pentecostal history. Canadian Pentecostal historian Thomas Miller, for example, in his history of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC), argued that swelling numbers of converts and members demonstrated revival: “At the time of writing the PAOC has enjoyed eight decades of uninterrupted growth” and has “been uncommonly

---

successful.” Miller attributed success to the “ministry of the Holy Spirit among them” and the acceptance of the Bible by Pentecostals as the “sole source of authority in doctrine and practice.” This is consistent with Gloria Kulbeck’s first attempt to write a history of the PAOC a generation earlier. In her chronicle, she used “revival” and “awakening” interchangeably, affirming that “revival” was demonstrated by numerical and institutional growth. Kulbeck engaged in very little theological discussion in her chronicle except for the affirmation that Pentecostals represented an “outpouring of the Holy Spirit on bands of seeking believers . . .”

*Pentecostal “Revival”: Ideological Markers*

Early Pentecostals appear to have maintained three unique beliefs that became characteristic of their understanding of “revival,” and these beliefs have endured throughout their history. Most striking of all was their interpretation of history. Pentecostals, like other “revival” groups in the early twentieth century such as the Fundamentalist and Keswick movements, adopted a “primitivist” or “restorationist” approach to ecclesiology. However, while earlier groups had crafted their “primitivist” tendencies in terms of a need to return in practice to New Testament ideals of piety and ethics, the Pentecostals went further: they argued that the Pentecostal experience represented not just a renewal of emphasis on Apostolic ideals but a recurrence of the Apostolic moment itself. This “recurrence” was so akin to the New Testament experience as to be ontologically of the

---


same order. Through the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, Pentecostals had been granted special privileges and power, the privileges and power of the Apostolic church.\textsuperscript{164} Grant Wacker has stated that Pentecostals understood historical process not only as being linear but also as being circular so that "the historical time line was curving back to the beginning, forming a full cycle."\textsuperscript{165} Through disobedience, the church in history had lost the power of the Apostolic age, but God, in His sovereign power, had bent the linear process of history back so that it had returned to the Apostolic age, albeit in new cultural garb.

The Apostolic Faith, the earliest periodical to come from the Pentecostal movement, emphasized the idea of "recurrence" even in its inaugural issue. The banner headline heralded "PENTECOST HAS COME." Later in the same issue, the editor, William Seymour, noted similarities between the circumstances in Los Angeles in the twentieth century and those of first-century Palestine. He asserted, for example, that "it has been said of the work in Los Angeles that it was 'born in a manger and resurrected in a barn' . . . . This is the Nazareth of Los Angeles."\textsuperscript{166} In the same issue, he reiterated the idea but added one nuance. He argued that the power of the Apostolic age had not been lost but hidden: "The real Pentecost that has been hidden for all these centuries, the Lord is giving back to the earth through some real humble people that have no better sense than to believe God."\textsuperscript{167}

\textsuperscript{164} Stephenson, 73-83.


\textsuperscript{166} William J. Seymour, \textit{The Apostolic Faith} (Sept. 1906): 1, 3.

\textsuperscript{167} \textit{The Apostolic Faith} (September, 1906): 6.
Early Pentecostals believed that the ultimate sign that the conditions of the first Pentecost had returned was the raising of the dead. Seymour wrote “All the signs of Mark 16:16-18 have followed except raising the dead, and we believe God will have someone to receive that power.” Ten months later, the following account appeared:

Miss Eula Wilson, a girl of fifteen from Wichita, Kan., had been given up to die by the doctors. She seemed to die and was laid out for burial. Hours afterward she suddenly raised up and said, “O Mama. I have been in heaven and Jesus has healed me and told me to eat, drink, and walk.” She was completely healed and has not been sick at all since.  

D. Wesley Myland added a significant nuance to the “restorationist” theme: the twentieth-century Pentecostal experience was the Apostolic experience, but it was a “Gentile Pentecost” as compared to the first or “Jewish Pentecost” recorded in the book of Acts. His analysis shows the degree to which the “primitivist” theme was all-pervasive in the minds of the early Pentecostals. In his account of his conversion, he wrote,

the light of the sun shall be seven-fold, (perfection) as the light of seven days, -- in one day. It was like that the night God baptized me. It was like that when the Lord Jesus Christ revealed Himself to Saul in mid-day on the way to Damascus.

In recent years, Edith Blumhofer and others have turned to the idea of “primitivism” or “restorationism” as an interpretative key for Pentecostalism. Blumhofer has defined Restorationism as “the attempt to recapture the presumed vitality, message, and form of the Apostolic Church.” In the introduction to her history of the Assemblies of God, for

---

168 Apostolic Faith (November, 1906): 4 and (September, 1907):1:9:1. This was the only month in which two issues were published.


170 Myland, 47. Pentecostals have experienced dramatic social lift since their humble mainly poor beginnings.
example, Blumhofer argued that restorationism represented the key to understanding Pentecostalism. She noted that Lawrence called Pentecostalism a “reversion” to New Testament conditions and experiences. According to Blumhofer, “revival” was the restoration of the conditions of the first century, the results of which could be measured not just by the addition of new members but by the number of supernatural manifestations that were consistent with those in the first century.

Like so many other Protestant revival groups, early Pentecostals maintained a strong apocalyptic emphasis. Pentecostals believed that the end of all things was imminent, that the return of Christ to bring history to a consummation could come at any moment. Following the theology of the Keswick movement, Pentecostals believed that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was a crucial tool and sign of God’s eschatological activity, functioning as a gift to give power for witnessing. Completely unique, however, were Pentecostal assertions that the “initial evidence” of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit was glossolalia and that the Baptism marked the return of the Apostolic moment.

For the early Pentecostals, the idea of an imminent dramatic end was tied inextricably to their distinctive commitment to the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and to “initial evidence.” George Haywood, one of the most well-known “Oneness” preachers, for

---


173 James Goff has argued that eschatology was the driving force behind the early Pentecostals. In the late 1990s, a certain angst was felt in some circles as concern mounted that the eschatological emphasis was being muted or even lost.

174 Pentecostals have placed such a strong emphasis on the “initial evidence” doctrine, understanding it as their distinctive belief, that the doctrine has acquired great psychological and emotional weight. It remains as the ultimate non-negotiable doctrine in most “Classical Pentecostal” circles.
example, stated that "tongues" were "signs to Apostolic Fathers that a man received the Holy Ghost. They are a sign that modern Christendom has not received the Holy Ghost. They are a sign that the time of refreshing has come from the presence of the Lord . . . and Jesus is soon to come." Kulbeck affirmed the same principle, quoting Eustace Purdie, the founder of higher education in the PAOC. Kulbeck stated that the meaning of the Pentecostal "revival" was that it was a final call from God to sinners prior to the imminent return of Christ.

Myland took a Biblical metaphor and applied it to the idea of an imminent eschaton. His exegetical emphasis, the idea of the "latter-rain," has had enduring influence in the "Classical Pentecostal" movement. Using the prophecy in which the Biblical prophet Joel referred to Palestinian rainfall patterns, Myland argued that Joel's text must be understood metaphorically in relation to eschatology. Myland's work is lengthy and complex, and established his reputation among early Pentecostals as a Bible scholar.

The importance of the Joel passage throughout Pentecostal history cannot be overstated. Pentecostals have argued that Joel's prophecy was fulfilled twice: at the Day of Pentecost and with their arrival. In this metaphor, the themes of "recurrence" and

---


176 Kulbeck, 5.

177 In Joel chapter two, reference to the "latter-rain" occurs immediately prior to a vivid apocalyptic passage. Joel prophesied that, "he hath given you the former rain moderately, and he will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain and the later rain . . . ." Holy Bible: King James Version, ed. C. I Schofield (reprint, New York: Oxford University Press, 1945), Joel 2:23. The use of the "latter rain" as a metaphor for the present age understood as the final moment of history appears to have been part of the eschatological expectation found in the Keswick movement and in Fundamentalism. Assemblies of God historian Carl Brumbac stated that "One topic stressed in the Bible conferences was the promise of the Father to pour out His Spirit in the last days." Preachers referred to this outpouring as the "Latter" or "Harvest rain." Brumbac, 8.
apocalypticism are both present: the “latter rain” marked the “recurrence” of Apostolic
time. Victor G. Brown, in his chronicle of the Western
Ontario District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, for example, began his history
with a standard rehearsal of the importance of the Joel passage. Brown argued that
fulfilment of the prophet’s promise in The Acts of the Apostles has been repeated in the
twentieth century as proven by the number of people experiencing the Baptism of the Holy
Spirit.

Brown’s definition of Pentecostalism reflects the importance of apocalypticism to
the Pentecostal understanding of “revival.” According to Brown, Pentecostalism was a
revival that could be characterised in several ways: it was located in time, beginning at the
turn of this century; it was based on the promise of an end-times “outpouring” of God’s
Spirit as found in the prophecies of Joel; it was proven to be a “revival” by the global
increase in those baptised in the Spirit; it was characterised by the appearance of miracles;
and it was tied to the activity of the third member of the Trinity.178

Charles Fox Parham, in what may have been the first attempt to write a Pentecostal
theology, articulated an understanding of the nature of tongue-speaking in the last days that
later Pentecostals came to regard as idiosyncratic. Parham argued that the language
received by the individual would be xenoglossolalic in nature. He stated,

In the close of the age, God proposes to send forth men and women preaching in
languages they know not a word of, which when interpreted the hearers will know is
truly a message from God, spoken through lips of clay by the power of the Holy
Ghost.179

178 Victor G. Brown, Fifty Years of Pentecostal History: 1933-1983 (Burlington, ON: PAOC-
Western Ontario District, 1983), 1. A popular accusation against Pentecostals has been that their theology
was in reality only a pneumatology.
This emphasis furthered the eschatological thrust of the Pentecostal message: the supernatural gift of languages was to be a miraculous aid to the last revival at the end of history.

The early Pentecostals also understood their world to be densely populated. They viewed historical process at the end of time in the context of a cosmic battle: a whole array of supernatural beings, locked in combat, were fighting for control of creation. In this battle between the forces of evil and good, these beings constantly impinged on the lives of humans. The Holy Spirit, angels, Satan, and demons were understood to be real beings that needed to be taken seriously. Pentecostals believed that the baptism of the Holy Spirit gave them power to be participants in the great battle that was soon drawing to a conclusion.

The Egalitarian Nature of Pentecostal Revival

The Pentecostal understanding of human agency was crucial to the way in which they related to the “dense universe” of which they were a part. The Baptism of the Holy Spirit was an encounter with God experienced by the individual. Consequently, both theologically and practically, they always placed emphasis on the individual and the individual’s relationship with God. Since all individuals could experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit and since the end was near and the task at hand so daunting, everyone was welcome to participate in the life and ministry of the church regardless of gender, age, race,


180 Wacker discusses this characteristic of the early Pentecostals in several places. See, for example “Golden Oldies,” 85-86.
or ethnic origins. In the early years, not only were the Pentecostals individualistic, they were also profoundly egalitarian.

In the egalitarian atmosphere of early Pentecostalism, women came to occupy crucial places of leadership. Since many of the earliest Pentecostals came from the Holiness movement, it is not surprising that Pentecostal attitudes toward women were consistent with their Holiness roots. In the Holiness movement, a strong tradition of women in leadership positions had been developed beginning with Phoebe Palmer. Women were not denied any avenue of service in the Holiness churches and often occupied visible positions of leadership. Consistent with this background, in the earliest years of Pentecostal history, women played crucial roles. The number of women involved in the ministries of Parham and Seymour, for example, bears witness to the importance of women in Pentecostal ministry. Also, at least four women evangelists enjoyed at least regional if not national prominence: Florence Crawford, Carrie Judd Montgomery, Maria Woodworth-Etter, and Aimee Semple McPherson.

One corollary to the strong emphasis on the individual was a deep suspicion of organisation. This suspicion was thoroughgoing, ranging from the manner in which they structured worship services, to a deep-seated reluctance to create fraternal societies for the facilitation of co-operative efforts. Roger Robbins has stated, for example, that

---

181 In the first known picture of the elders of the Azusa Street mission, six of the twelve are women. Fred T. Corum, comp., Like as of Fire: A Reprint of The Old Azusa Street Papers (Washington: Corum, 1981). The subsequent loss of women in leadership provides a significant study in institutionalisation. While the Assemblies of God in the United States has ordained women since 1937 and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada since 1984, the number of women in places of pastoral leadership is minimal. For a probing look at the lack of women in ministry in the PAOC, see Nelson Rogers, “The Ordination of Women in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada” (MSW major project, Carleton University, 1988).
every effort was made by early Pentecostals to strip the last vestiges of formality and human construction from the experience of worship. The mechanism of order and control were shattered in the singular, consuming desire to let the Holy Spirit have ‘right of way’ . . . .

That which appeared to be chaos because no human design was evident, was interpreted to be actually the manifestation of perfect order since the Holy Spirit was the Designer.

Antagonism toward efforts leading to formal structural organisation can be seen as early as an article that appeared in The Promise, perhaps the first Canadian Pentecostal periodical, published by the Hebden Mission in Toronto.183

“Classical Pentecostal” Understandings of “Declines”

*Early Concerns*

Concern for “decline” has never been absent from Pentecostal reflection. It can be found as early as the Azusa Street Mission as seen clearly in the beliefs of Frank Bartleman, an early participant in, and observer of, the Azusa Street meetings. Consistent with general, Pentecostal affirmations regarding the distinctiveness of the movement, he emphasised the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.184 However, he understood the essence of “revival” to be freedom from “ecclesiastical hierarchism and abuse.” Bartleman referred repeatedly to the lack of hierarchy, the lack of order, and to the spontaneity of the meetings. “Decline” to Bartleman was organisation: “Azusa began to fail the Lord also early in her history. God told me one day that they were going to organize . . . .” He believed that a “party” spirit

---


183 Kulbeck, 34.

would take over, a spirit that "has been the curse and death of every revival body sooner or later." Bartleman interpreted the raising of a sign outside the Mission to identify it to outsiders as evidence that his suspicions were well-founded.185

In 1957, Gloria Kulbeck described three dangers that she believed could provoke decline among Pentecostals:

1. Complacency or living in the past: "If they do not move forward, they will move backward. While they must appreciate the moving of God in their ranks in other days, they must not expect God's continued blessing if they live in the past."
2. Worldliness as defined in terms of I John 2:15-16 i.e., "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world."
3. "Loss of spiritual perspective" manifested in either a "disparagement or in an over-emphasis on education." Pentecostals must value education as a means to "satisfy perfectly natural desires for security and success in business and the professions" while at the same time recognizing that it is "merely a tool" that can lead to intellectual dryness.186

Kulbeck's comments provide a glimpse into the struggle with institutionalisation that the Pentecostals faced by the 1950s.

The Recent Fear of "Declines" Among Pentecostals

In the late 1990s, the language of decline began to be ubiquitous in "Classical Pentecostal" circles. In the wake of a collapse in the growth patterns of most North American "Classical Pentecostal" denominations, apprehension was recognisable at institutional conferences and meetings. As a result, some North American writers began to reflect on Classical Pentecostalism in the context of decline. In the United States, for example, Edith Blumhofer and Margaret Poloma both published articles in the Christian Century that probed the health of "Classical Pentecostalism" through an analysis of the

185 Bartleman, 59, 73-74.
186 Kulbeck, 342-344.
Assemblies of God. Blumhofer’s article proved to be especially vexatious to Assemblies of God leaders.\(^{187}\)

Poloma proposed three reasons for the “plateauning” of the Assemblies of God growth pattern:

1. loss of momentum in the Charismatic movement “reducing the pool of readily available recruits.” This argument is similar to that of Currie, Gilbert, and Horsley: decline occurs due to circumstances beyond a movement’s control, i.e., a group whose identity makes it sympathetic and vulnerable to recruitment by another group begins to wane, leading to loss to the group that was the beneficiary of recruitment.
2. the impact of “new charismatic ministries” or the appearance of competitors in the market.
3. televangelism scandals that have damaged the credibility of “Classical Pentecostals.”

Poloma argued, however, that these reasons are largely tangential. The major problem, she maintained, was sociological, found in “the tension between the charisma that initiated and renewed the Assemblies of God, and the rise of a bureaucratic organization that necessarily undergirds the successful denomination.”\(^{188}\) Building explicitly on Abraham Maslow’s ideas in *Religions, Values, and Peak Experiences*, Poloma asserted that once-charismatic religious movements have regularly “followed the path of overinstitutionalization and over-regulation, which in turn has discouraged much of the original charisma.” Whereas the emphasis on intense religious experience was a crucial factor in growth, “institutional

---


\(^{188}\) Poloma, 633.
mechanisms” begin to endanger charisma and could “stifle the Spirit.” If Poloma is correct, the early Pentecostal fear of organisation may have been well-founded.

In their polemical Christian Century article, Blumhofer and Paul Tinlin stated that “American Pentecostals have not found the courage mainliners have shown in subjecting their communities to critical scrutiny.” Blumhofer and Tinlin maintained that, like other groups, the Assemblies of God were “beset with bureaucratization and bewildered by cultural change.” They noted that after a self-study had, in their words, “yielded evidence of declension,” a decadal program, “Decade of Harvest,” was initiated for the 1990s.

Blumhofer and Tinlin lamented that the goals of this program were focused on numbers not “uneasiness with the world” as in the movement’s early days. They concluded that, according to the Assemblies of God’s own goals, the program had failed and had “merely maintained or slightly improved the status quo.” They argued that obvious decline may well be the future for the Assemblies of God if they continue to rely on “outmoded programs and outdated methods” and fail to deal with theological questions such as their commitment to the “initial evidence” doctrine and dispensational premillennialism.

Although Blumhofer and Tinlin were concerned with numerical criteria as measurements of growth, these were not their greatest interest. Their definition of decline, a rather unique one for a group that has assiduously sought to reject the authority of “tradition,” expresses

---

189 Poloma, 634. As a sociologist, Poloma roots her comments in the work of Maslow. See Abraham Maslow, Religions, Values, and Peak Experiences (Harmondsworth, UK: Penguin Books, 1976). In the realm of history, the same thesis can be seen in Hans von Campenhausen’s study, Ecclesiastical Authority and Spiritual Power in the Church of the First Three Centuries (London: Black, 1969).

190 Blumhofer and Tinlin, 684-685.
their central concern: "The point is not numbers, but spiritual strength -- being faithful to the tradition's calling and yet confronting and engaging that calling creatively."\(^{191}\)

In Canadian Pentecostal circles, talk about decline began to increase in the last two decades of the twentieth century. In the 1990s, Canadian Pentecostals began not only to worry audibly about decline but also to write about it. Miller, for example, in a manner consistent with Blumhofer, spoke of the problems faced by Pentecostals: it is "spiritual decline" that must be dealt with. He understood "spiritual decline" to be a failure to retain "primary religious emphases." In his discussion of decline, Miller related the historical process of "Classical Pentecostalism" to David O. Moberg's stages of sect development.\(^{192}\)

In 1988, in a manner that paralleled the Assemblies of God, the PAOC adopted a decadal strategy, the "Decade of Destiny." The PAOC devised this program in response to concern that numerical growth had slowed. The concern behind the strategy can be seen in General Superintendent James McKnight's comments at the 1990 General Conference: "All is not well. We have seriously plateaued in our growth in the last decade, and especially in the last couple of years."\(^{193}\) Miller argued that two specific problems indicated decline: numerical growth was slowing down and income for world mission "had leveled off." [\(sic\)]\(^{194}\)

\(^{191}\) Blumhofer and Tinlin, 687.

\(^{192}\) Miller, 15. The so-called third or fourth generation syndrome, in which movements of revival are understood to decline inevitably with the passage of time and generational succession, has long been a topic of popular conversation among Pentecostal scholars and pastors.

\(^{193}\) Miller, 397-399. See also James M. McKnight, "Continuing the Process of the Decade of Destiny," The Conference (Winnipeg: PAOC, 1990), 1, 13.

\(^{194}\) Miller, 399. This highlights a problem that has been percolating in the PAOC for a number of years: a dissatisfaction with institutional overseas Missions' strategies.
In the context of slowed growth and even outright decline, the PAOC at the turn of the century was manifesting a growing preoccupation with growth issues as *angst* had begun settling in among both the leadership and the clergy.

**Conclusions**

Participants in, and observers of the groups described in this chapter, understood their group self-consciously either as a revival or as the instrument of revival. Similarly, awareness of “decline” developed in all three groups as their historical processes continued. This chapter continued to refine definitions for both “revival” and “decline.” “Declines,” especially in two of these groups, have begun to come into sharper focus. “Declines” in the Paulist order will become more clear in chapter four. Since St. Paul the Apostle Church was the mother church for the entire order, it is difficult to distinguish between “declines” in the order and those relating to the home parish. However, in chapter four I will attempt to make such a differentiation.

Now that the process of definition has reached this point, the manner in which the “gestalt switch” functions when each group becomes the subject of the metaphors “revival” and “decline” begins to become more obvious. Table 7 shows the characteristics of the interaction of subject and predicate of all three metaphors: “Primitive Methodism was a revival,” “Pentecostalism was a revival,” and “the Paulists were a revival.” Table 8 shows the changes in the “gestalt switch” occasioned by the variation of subject when the metaphor is “decline.”

The complexity of the interaction initiated by the juxtaposition of these three subjects with the two metaphors is brought into sharp relief by these tables. While it is obvious that the resultant meanings differ in each case, it is equally as clear that substantial
commonalties are also evident among the groups. Chapters three to five will focus on three local examples in order to see whether the interaction between the subjects and the metaphors can be clarified further, and to see whether sufficient commonalties are evident in the uses of both metaphors to postulate a recognisable typology of decline.

Table 7. "Revival": Shifts in the "Gestalt Switch" Occasioned by Changes of Subject

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Copula</th>
<th>Predicate</th>
<th>Alternate Predicates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primitive Methodism</td>
<td>was</td>
<td>a revival</td>
<td>- camp meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- &quot;primitive&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- for the common people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- for the oppressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- a means of social &quot;lift&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- a group that valued numerical increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- emotionally intense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- a group that suffered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- a restoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- a group that valued women leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- a group that valued the poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paulists</td>
<td>were</td>
<td>a revival</td>
<td>a group that valued:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- numerical increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- parish missions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- planned evangelism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- the sacraments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- holiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- the poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- emotional intensity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- inculturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- the institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- being &quot;American&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecostalism</td>
<td>was</td>
<td>a revival</td>
<td>a restoration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>apocalyptic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a group that valued:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- numerical increase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- spiritual power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- women in leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- spontaneity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- the individual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- the poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- equality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a group that did not value:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- organisation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8. "Decline": Shifts in the “Gestalt Switch” Occasioned by Changes of Subject.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Predicate</th>
<th>Alternate Predicates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primitive Methodism</td>
<td>experienced</td>
<td>a decline.</td>
<td>numerical decreases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a loss of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• prayer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• interest in evangelism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• emotional fervour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• spiritual power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• social power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• the ability to grow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• identity because of union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paulists</td>
<td>experienced</td>
<td>a decline.</td>
<td>See Chapter 4.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecostalism</td>
<td>experienced</td>
<td>a decline.</td>
<td>• numerical decreases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• institutionalisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• organisation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• complacency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• worldliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a loss of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• potential recruits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• credibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• relevance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A rich reservoir of evidence relating both to the Congleton Primitive Methodist Chapel and to the Circuit of which the Chapel became the centre is available as an excellent source for historical research. From 1843 onward, the collection of extant historical documents is extensive. Prior to that date, scattered anecdotal accounts give at least some evidence of the early development of Primitive Methodism in the town. These sources take on added significance as they afford a glimpse into the genesis of Primitive Methodism itself. Early records indicate involvement by the residents of the town of Congleton in the earliest camp meeting activities that would become “Primitive Methodism.”

In this chapter, I will evaluate the evidence relating to Primitive Methodist activity in Congleton in order to discover sources of “declines” in the histories of both the Chapel and the Circuit. Although the Chapel and Circuit have continued in history, at least in some form, the evidence will also give some insight into the idea of final “decline.” The most important sources of evidence are annual reports from the Chapel, minutes of Circuit Quarter Day Meetings, and minutes of Circuit Committee meetings. The statistical information and anecdotal comment provided by these documents have provided a rich base for research. In addition to them, anecdotal and statistical data from Connexional
publications, newspaper reports, and assorted local sources have served to corroborate my findings and, in some cases, to introduce important new considerations.

**The Social Character of Congleton**

Driving into Congleton one descends into a narrow valley. In 1887, Robert Head described its sylvan surroundings: Congleton “is built on a gentle acclivity rising from the southern side of the river Dane . . . . the town appears nestling in a green and pleasant valley, with hilly barriers guarding its east and south sides: its extremities being interspersed with wooded heights and verdant undulations.”¹ Three miles away to the north is the still mysterious “Cloud,” rising to a height of 1,190 feet above sea level; Mow Cop, at an elevation of 1,101 feet, is about four miles away to the south-east.² At the centre of the town, two worlds live side by side uneasily. Up the gradual slope of the main street are the usual shops and pubs; just off to one side is a series of stores joined to make a small but delightful mall. Surrounding this idyllic scene, however, are massive hulks of old textile factories, silent witnesses to the town’s past. As one leaves the downtown core and ascends a steep hill toward a residential district, a casual visitor could easily miss the church. On the side of the hill, up Canal Street, tucked down below street level, lies Wellspring Methodist Church. Housed in a modern brick building, Wellspring is home to a community of Christians with a long and rich history.

The Internet offers a variety of pages that describe the advantages of Congleton. One writer stated that it has “all the benefits of a medium-sized, light industrial market

---


² The Cloud is situated in a magnificent setting overlooking the surrounding area. Jeremy Condliffe stated that local residents view the area as having mystical associations and that evidence of ancient pagan worship has been found in the vicinity. Jeremy Condliffe, editor of the *Congleton Chronicle*, interview by John W. Stephenson, 11 June 1996.
town with the close proximities of two major conurbations.” In terms of modern transportation, at first glance Congleton appears to be in an enviable position: situated forty kilometres south of Manchester in the south-east corner of County Cheshire, Congleton is just north of the Potteries in general and, most importantly, it is near the new regional municipality of Stoke-On-Trent. In addition, Chester lies close at hand to the west and Liverpool, to the north-west, is readily accessible. At the turn of the twenty-first century, Congleton appeared to be situating itself economically as a progressive manufacturing town accommodating both light and heavy industry.³

Neither Manhattan, nor London, Ontario, has had as long a municipal history as Congleton. Its long history is important to this study in that it laid a social foundation from which sectarian groups such as the Primitive Methodists could rise. The enduring character of Congleton is significant to this study. Congleton has always been something of the outsider; its residents have been of an independent mind, and its populace has consistently demonstrated strength of character. In recent years, for example, national public transportation policy has demonstrated why an observer acquires a sense that Congleton is the outsider. Missed by the M6 motorway and “off the beaten track,” Congleton has had to struggle to be noticed. In 1996, The Congleton Chronicle covered the national government’s decision to curtail rail services to the town in the wake of rail privatisation. The government had announced, first, the decision to end inter-city rail

service from Congleton to London. One week later, it extended cancellation of services to include routes to Manchester and Birmingham.⁴

The independent inclination of Congleton residents has manifested itself in a variety of ways. Politically, for example, this propensity has been a consistent characteristic of the town's citizenry at least as far back as the Mercian rebellion in northern England in 1069.⁵ In the realm of religion, Congleton was the arena of long-term conflict as residents fought to defeat the policies of the established Church. As early as 1086, a priest is recorded to have been resident in the nearby village of Astbury. The earliest recorded histories of the area make it clear that Congleton was part of Astbury parish. Although by the thirteenth century Congleton may have had it own chapel, parochial organisation made it increasingly difficult to establish an independent church. The rectors of Astbury were understandably reluctant to let Congleton slip from their control. Although negotiators devised a rapprochement so that Congleton acquired its own chaplain and chapel, the town, nonetheless, remained part of the parish of Astbury.⁶

Tension between the town and the rectors of Astbury can be observed through the

⁴“No Intercity Trains to Stop at Congleton?,” Congleton Chronicle, 7 June 1996, 44-45. The struggle to gain and keep access to rail services has been ongoing in the town since 1839 when the Manchester and Birmingham Railway withdrew from a plan to build a line through Congleton to link Manchester and Crewe with Staffordshire. David Iredale, “Industry, Trade, and People,” in History of Congleton: Published to Celebrate the 700th Anniversary of the Granting of the Charter to the Town, ed. W. B. Stephens (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press for the Congleton Historical Society, 1970), 134-135.

⁵Two histories of Congleton have been written that are helpful in understanding the nature of the town: Robert Head’s Congleton, Past and Present: A History of This Old Cheshire Town and W. B. Stephens’, History of Congleton: Published to Celebrate the 700th Anniversary of the Granting of the Charter to the Town. Both are useful in that they present the history of the town in great detail. A more accurate grasp of Congleton’s characteristics is possible because these two histories are separated in time by almost a century.

centuries, erupting in extensive litigation in the eighteenth century between the town Corporation and the rectors. Both conceptually and practically, subservience to Astbury rankled the townspeople as they were forced to travel to the parish church for baptisms, marriages, and burials.  

With the appearance of religious dissent, political and religious factors coalesced. Robert Head stated that “the infancy of Nonconformity in Congleton” occurred from the accession of James I to the passing of the Act of Uniformity in 1662. Congleton’s history, from this time on, featured a deep tension between dissenters and supporters of the Church. Although dissenters encountered significant opposition in Congleton, nonetheless, the popularity of dissenting groups of many kinds, from the mid-seventeenth century on, illustrates the independent bent of Congleton society.

Even in the realm of recreation, the independent nature of Congleton residents can be seen. Congleton was noted in the surrounding regions for the bearbaits and cockfights that occurred usually during its May Fair and during its Wakes. W. B. Stephens and Norah Fuidge referred to these contests as the “outstanding sports” of the area in the seventeenth century and quoted a popular local verse: “Congleton, rare, Congleton rare, Sold the Bible to pay for a bear.”

---


8 Head, 250.

9 Head gives a detailed account of the development of dissent and the introduction of Methodism into the town. Head, 251-253.

10 Head, p. 65 and W. B. Stephens and Norah Fuidge, “Tudor and Stuart Congleton,” in Stephens, 63. Congleton’s webpage states that the town is known as the “Bear Town” from the incident that was apparently behind this verse. During Elizabethan times, the town’s bear died one year immediately before the Annual Wakes. Legend has it that money saved to buy a new town Bible was used instead to buy a new bear so that the celebrations would not be ruined. “An Introduction to Congleton”; accessed 1 October, 1999; available from http://www.congleton.gov.uk/congleton.html; Internet.
The strength of the character of Congleton’s citizens was born from repeated hardships endured over the centuries. Suffering came often to Congleton, appearing in many guises. The first recorded catastrophe to buffet the village occurred in 1451 when the River Dane overflowed and “took with it half the town.” Both in 1603-04 and 1641-42, Congleton suffered greatly from the plague. The severity of the first plague was such that a levy was made “through the country ‘for the relief of the infected towns of Macclesfield and Congleton.”” The second and “more disastrous visitation” occurred in the early winter of 1641 and decimated the town which “once busy with thrifty inhabitants, became deserted, and the streets and thoroughfares overgrown with grass. The town also endured exceptionally difficult winters such as those of 1614 and 1615 and 1634-35.

Congleton’s history was such that residents developed a corporate temperament that nurtured independence of thought and action. Together with endurance derived from recurrent hardships, these attributes were conducive to the appearance of new religious groups in the town.

**Economic Development in Congleton**

An understanding of Congleton’s economic development is crucial in order to see the relationship between social realities and the rise of Primitive Methodism. In both “the coming-to-be” and the “being” stages of Primitive Methodism in Congleton, economic conditions were of great importance as a shaping influence.

---

11 Congleton Historical Society “Historical Features”; accessed 26 June, 1998; available from http://www.leek.ac.uk/students/MJ_History.html, Internet; and Head, 71-73.

12 Head, 74.

13 W. B. Stephens and Norah Fuide, in Stephens, 56.
During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the dominant industry in the town was leather manufacturing including skinning, tanning, and glove making. Poll tax records from 1660, for example, indicate the trade of seventy-five workers in Congleton, forty of whom were employed in the leather trades. Also, by this time, Congleton had become the most important economic centre in the immediate vicinity.14

Second in importance economically during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were felt making and linen and woollen weaving. By the late seventeenth century, the staple trade of the town had become the famous “Congleton Points,” the forerunner of buttons.

In 1752, a new industry came to the town that would have long-term consequences: John Clayton of Stockport built the second silk mill in England, patterned after the first in Derby. As an incentive, the town Corporation gave Clayton the land for his mill rent-free for 300 years. From 1800 to 1824, with the introduction of spun silk spinning and the construction of more mills, the town prospered.15 Although trade was beginning to flourish, many Congleton men also worked as labourers in agriculture or other unskilled jobs. It was they who experienced the most hardship in times of social dislocation brought about by natural calamities.16

Economic progress was interrupted from 1824 to 1826 when the silk industry suffered dramatic decline due, according to Head, to national free trade policies and

14 Stephens and Fudge, 47 and 54-55.

15 Head, 145-147. Head attributes the rise of the silk trade to French Protestant refugees fleeing France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1698. The establishment of ribbon making in 1755 and the building of a large cotton-spinning mill in 1785 further aided the laying of a foundation for economic prosperity.

16 Stephens and Fudge, 56-58.
changing fashions. During this time, Clayton left for London and most of the other owners also closed their mills. The result, Head stated, was that "terrible distress prevailed." In January 1829, the workers demonstrated. The Macclesfield Courier and Herald reported that more than 7,000 joined the protest. The reporter commented that "it was truly depressing to witness the deep sense of calamity visible on every countenance." This decline, however, proved to be only transitory since, in 1830, a "revival" took place. The old mill was purchased and reopened, inaugurating "a season of good trade" marred only by one outbreak of conflict severe enough to warrant military intervention.17

In 1839 and 1840, the new Chartist movement spread unrest in Congleton and managed to exert considerable influence over workers, an influence that Head blamed on economic decline. Although the Chartists found a receptive audience in the "meagrely paid operatives," the end results of their agitation in the town were destructive. Head recorded that the legacy of the Chartist episode was "depressed trade," as eighteen mills stopped production; considerable emigration, as "many inhabitants left the place;" and a sharp decline in property values as three hundred houses were left vacant. Head summed up the effect of Chartist activity tersely: "Masters and servants suffered alike."18

In 1842, consolidation of companies and the consequent reduction of the number of employees led to "serious riots." On 1 August, thousands of Chartist marchers came into Congleton down the Macclesfield Road. They were met by no opposition and stopped work wherever they passed by. Their aim was the destruction of machinery and a general

17 Head, 151.
18 Head, 152-154.
intimidation of foremen and management. The rioters, facing only an ill organised and frightened borough police, took control of the town for two days and nights.\textsuperscript{19}

Again, in 1847, economic depression debilitated the town seriously. However, between this depression and precipitous events that occurred in 1860 that began a protracted depression, was a brief interlude that was perhaps the most prosperous time for the silk trade in Congleton. As trade increased, so did the population of the town: between the years 1851-1861, the population increased from 10,517 to 12,338. By 1859, forty silk throwing mills were operating employing over 5,000 workers.\textsuperscript{20}

The year 1860 stands as a sort of \textit{annus horribilis} in Congleton’s history. Again, Head attributed the dramatic economic decline that began in that year, again to changing fashions and, most importantly, to the ratification of the Cobden free trade treaty with France that allowed French silk products into England with no protective tariffs to shield the English silk industry.\textsuperscript{21}

The crisis deepened as time passed and sporadic labour agitation began to punctuate the otherwise peaceful historical process of the town. Strikes occurred in 1863 resulting in further loss. In 1872, between 2,000 and 3,000 workers struck because of a reduction in wages. Head affirmed that between 1861 and 1867 the population of Congleton declined by about a thousand due to a growing sense among the people that the silk trade would never recover. In 1883, only twenty-two silk companies were left with an

\textsuperscript{19} Head, 152-153 and Iredale, 145.

\textsuperscript{20} Iredale, 146 and Head, 154. Head’s account here is ambiguous and difficult to follow.

\textsuperscript{21} Head, 154 and 156. Iredale refused to limit attribution of sources for the decline to only those factors stated by Head. He asserted that “lack of technical training, outdated machinery, (and) expensive raw materials” all contributed to the decline as “perhaps half of Congleton’s textile firms never adapted themselves to the demands of a changing world . . . ,” 146-147.
aggregate workforce of 2,222, with one company unaccounted for. As many had feared, there was no cessation of the decline in the silk industry: by 1910, only seven silk mills still operated and, in 1960, no silk manufacturers had survived.\(^{22}\)

By the late 1860s, the town began to adjust to the loss of the silk industry. In 1867, a new era commenced with the introduction of fustian and velvet cutting. Although it would never match the levels of prosperity brought by the silk industry, the rapid growth of the new enterprise provided work for hundreds of unemployed workers. In 1909, however, the year that he concluded his history, Head asserted that the same problems that affected the silk trade, most significantly "changes in fashion," were affecting the velvet business.\(^{23}\)

Not all textile companies closed in the nineteenth century. Some like Berisford’s, which began as a ribbon-making factory in 1858, endured by making canny business decisions over the decades, choosing to change production lines when needed and to shift to synthetic fibres.

W. H. Semper found two additional sources of economic and social distress in the twentieth century. First, the problems of reconstruction after the First World War were of such magnitude that they appeared to some to be nearly "insuperable": inadequate housing; slum clearance; water supply and sewage problems; and road reconstruction needs all contributed to the distressing difficulties of post-war Congleton society. Second,

\(^{22}\) Head, 155 and 158; Iredale, 147.

\(^{23}\) Head, 159.
according to Semper, the depression of the 1930s affected Congleton economically, as it did many other towns.  

primitive methodist beginnings in congleton: 1804-1839

according to generally accepted historiographical theory, the history of Primitive Methodism in Congleton should be considered anomalous. The consensus has always been that the Primitive Methodists were less educated and less moneyed than the Wesleyans and consequently did not have the ability or the resources to write or maintain records in the same manner as their Wesleyan counterparts. Congleton Primitive Methodists, in contrast to this accepted wisdom, have maintained full records throughout most of their history. Even in recent years, this practice has been continued with the publication of two histories documenting the Primitive Methodist Society in the town.  

Either Congleton Primitive Methodism was indeed anomalous in terms of literacy and, it could be argued, in terms of its historical process, or the conventional understanding of Primitive Methodists and literacy needs to be rethought. Having said this, I must also add that, while Congleton figured into Primitive Methodist history from the earliest moments, long before formal organisation as a chapel or as the centre of a circuit, evidence of a systematic recording of life in the Congleton chapel is extant only from 1843. Prior to that, we are left to piece together what we can from scattered anecdotal evidence from a variety of primary and secondary sources.

---


The "coming-to be" of Primitive Methodism as a recognisable entity has been traced to various critical moments and at each of these, Congleton was close at hand. Some point, for example, to the Mow Cop meeting in May 1807 as the critical moment. Others trace the Connexion's genesis to the first preaching plan published in 1811 in which both Buglawton, an outgrowth of Congleton, and the Cloud were included. For some, the adoption of the name "Society of Primitive Methodists" at a meeting in nearby Tunstall in 1812, was crucial.

The origins of Primitive Methodism in Congleton can be found much earlier, however, in the visits of John Wesley who first came to the town in 1745 and visited the area, according to Head, a total of 19 times. Sometime prior to 1759, his followers established a Society in Congleton. The fledgling Society built its first chapel around 1760 on the East side of Mill Street. Although the Wesleyans became the objects of derision early on by some of the townspeople, they must have achieved considerable success since they soon built a new Chapel on Wagg Street seating about four hundred. A new larger chapel was built in 1808 at the same time as the first stirrings of Primitive Methodism. The possibility of a relationship between the second building project and the

---

26 John Anderson, Curator, Mow Cop Methodist Museum, interview by John W. Stephenson. 12 June 1996. Early Primitive Methodists met originally in Woodhouse Green farmhouse situated on the Cloud. The importance of the Cloud to early Primitive Methodists is seen in the building of their first Chapel at that location. Anderson stated that there is an old dissenting meeting place on the Cloud dating back to the late seventeenth century. Citing historian Steven Hatcher, Anderson argued that there may have been a tie at the Cloud between Primitive Methodism and old dissent.

27 The old town of Tunstall became one of the constituent entities in the new municipality of Stoke-on-Trent.

28 Head, 259-261. There is some difference of opinion regarding the number of times Wesley came to the town. Stephens, Dunning, Alcock, and Greenslade have argued that he came to Congleton twenty-four times. 242.
emergence of Primitive Methodism is intriguing. However, no direct evidence has been found that links the two.

The origins of Primitive Methodism in Congleton can be related directly to those whom Wesley visited in the town. His last call on Congleton seems to have been especially important. Using uncited sources, Methodist historian John Anderson stated that John Wesley visited Congleton for the final time on 29 March 1790. During his brief stay in the town, he called on several people on Wagg Street including James Clarke, a blacksmith. In 1804, Clarke brought Stockport “revivalists” to attend two meetings, including a lovefeast, at the Wagg Street Chapel. At both meetings, Hugh Bourne was present along with a group of Staffordshire Methodists who came “at his insistence.”

The next night, those in attendance at Bourne’s class meeting in Harriseahead felt a dramatic sense of what they perceived to be the Holy Spirit’s activity. This meeting so inspired the participants that, according to Julia Werner, they, in turn, influenced the piety of every society in the Burslem Circuit. On the following Christmas Day, the “revivalists” returned to Congleton and Bourne again attended. Through this succession of meetings in Congleton, the town played a significant role in the shaping of the piety of Primitive Methodism’s progenitor.

---

29 Anderson, Kinsey Street, 3. There seem to have been two groups of revivalists in Stockport both of whom were driven out of the Wesleyan Connexion around 1805. As early as 1794, the Superintendent of the Stockport circuit expressed concern regarding excesses in some of their meetings. Werner, 27.

30 Werner, 27 and 48.

31 Lines of causation are intriguing if, as yet, only tentative. The influence of Lorenzo Dow on the beginnings of Primitive Methodism generally, and even on Congleton Primitive Methodism in particular, needs further study. Dow may have influenced the Stockport “revivalists” and, in turn, they influenced Bourne. Also, three years later, in April 1807, at the end of his English tour, Lorenzo Dow preached at Congleton at 5:00 AM and 9:00 AM. Only a month later, the first camp meeting was held on nearby Mow Cop.
In spite of the location of Congleton and its early involvement in the beginnings of Primitive Methodism, Congleton is absent from accounts of Primitive Methodist activity until the 1820s. It appears that regular preaching in Congleton did not begin until 1820, and a chapel was not established until 1821. James Bonser, an early Congleton preacher, recorded in his journal that on 5 November 1820, he “renewed the tickets at Congleton at twenty-four members.” The 1848 and 1849 Schedules for the Congleton Chapel suggest that the membership may have been even greater in number than Bonser’s statement indicates. The 1848 Schedule includes a written notation that there were seventy members in 1821, and the 1849 Schedule gives 184 as what appears to be the 1821 Sunday attendance. John Anderson has found that Bonser recorded that on that Sunday in November 1820 he had preached in the open air at eleven, and at two, Elizabeth Dakin had preached in the room they had taken. Bonser’s notations show that the Congleton Primitive Methodists had no chapel and were few enough in number to meet in a rented room.

The failure or lack of interest in establishing a chapel at Congleton may have been due to the strength of the Wesleyan Chapel and its receptivity to the piety associated with Primitive Methodists. Anderson has argued that in the early years of the nineteenth century the piety associated with Primitive Methodism had an “invigorating” effect on the

---

32 Anderson, Kinsey Street, 4.


34 Anderson, Kinsey Street, 4. The first indoor Primitive Methodist preaching in Congleton was in a shop on Canal Street which later became a public house. Elizabeth Dakin was a protegée of Bourne. Her involvement at Congleton in 1820 may not be an indication of any strong commitment to the town on the part of the Connexion, since Dakin was from the Cloud and so was in close proximity to Congleton and readily available for occasional preaching.
Congleton Wesleyan Society as it grew from 180 to 300 members and the members were able to replace the old chapel. The replacement of the Wesleyan Chapel may not have been related to any desire to assert dominance over the upstart Primitive Methodists but, rather, may have been a function of acceptance of the values of the Primitive Methodists.

Two major early sources stand as witnesses to the apparent lack of direct Primitive Methodist activity in Congleton during the early years: William Antliff's *A Book Of Marvels*, and John Petty's history of the movement, *The History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion From Its Origin To the Conference of 1860. The First Jubilee Year of the Connexion*. Published originally in 1856 and then again in 1873, Antliff's work functions as an aretalogy for early Primitive Methodism. Consisting of a collection of accounts and testimonials from a variety of early Primitive Methodists and linked together in a loose fashion according to general topics, this volume gives much insight into the early character of the movement. Almost five hundred pages in length, it would be expected that in its many stories, Congleton, if it had been significant as a Primitive Methodism centre, would occupy at least some space. However, Congleton never appears to be mentioned with the exception of two references to itinerants in the Congleton Circuit. Antliff included the written works of Thomas Hill and Richard Jukes in his Bibliography

---

35 Anderson, 4.


37 The significance of this work may be seen in the notation on the frontispiece that it may be acquired from “all Primitive Methodist ministers.”
of helpful Primitive Methodist publications. Antliff’s work must be viewed with caution, however. The lack of reference to Congleton may be deceiving since Antliff is woefully inconsistent in his notation of place. While he named circuits and counties frequently, equally as often he resorted to general statements. Allusions to Cheshire, for example, could refer to Congleton as could repeated citations of activities “in C__.”

Petty’s history is more significant for an understanding of early Primitive Methodism history since his work appears to have been intended as at least a quasi-official account. Petty refers to Congleton only once. This lone reference described events in Congleton in 1822, a full fifteen years after the first camp meeting at Mow Cop. The reference occurs at the beginning of chapter thirteen which has the heading “Progress of the Connexion from the Conference of 1822 to that of 1823.” The first paragraph referred to the “considerable advancement” in Tunstall Circuit, the circuit that encompassed the initial heartland of the new Connexion: Mow Cop, Harriseahead, and the villages around Tunstall where Bourne made his first impact. Congleton was included in this Circuit until it became the centre of its own Circuit in 1839.

Petty began his description of success in the circuit with a comment regarding Congleton: “The work of God prospered greatly at Congleton, and the society became numerous and powerful.” In specific, Petty alluded to the “zealous and well-regulated”

---

38 "R. Jukes" was the itinerant at Congleton in 1845 and "T. Hill" was the itinerant from 1858-1859. Antliff, 448 and 445. Antliff records that Hill, “though never distinguished by great power . . . was a man of sterling principle and character, and finished his days in our ministry.”

39 See for example, Antliff, 84, 135, 150 and 88, 233, and 251-253. The difficulty in hypothesising that references to “C__” refer to Congleton is that “R. Eaglen,” the contributor in each case, is never mentioned in Congleton Primitive Methodist documents.

40 The frontispiece states that the book was compiled “Under the Direction of the Book Committee of the Denomination, And Approved by the Conference.”
efforts of the tract distributors in Congleton which “tended to enlarge the congregation and augment the society.” Of special interest for Petty was “a lovefeast of extraordinary power” which had been conducted by Bourne in Congleton in September 1822. During this lovefeast, “prayer was offered with penitents for several hours, and a considerable number found peace with God through faith in Christ.” Petty never referred to Congleton after this nor did he discuss any of the chapels and preaching points that at various times became part of Congleton Circuit: Dane-in-Shaw; Wornish Nook; Mow Cop; Withington; Newtown; Buglawton; Cloud; Timbersbrook; and Kent Green.

Petty’s account seems to be borrowed directly from a story that appeared in an 1822 edition of the Primitive Methodist Magazine. Petty, however, left out significant details. The magazine article affirmed that, by 1822, Primitive Methodism in Congleton was sufficiently developed in its organisation to form “Religious Tract and Visiting Societies” from which “companies” of two would conduct visitation every other Sunday. According to the article, each District of the town was to have one company and each company would visit “about twenty families.” When the visitations began on 23 March 1822, the Congleton Primitive Methodists believed explicitly that they were following apostolic example.

Petty also omitted reference to an often quoted report by James Bourne of a Sunday Camp Meeting held at Congleton on 19 May 1822. Those who attended this meeting met in the Church and processed to a Camp Meeting site about one mile from the town.

---

41 Petty, 165.

42 Probably, this was the same group of which Petty spoke in his reference to “zealous” tract distributors.
Preaching from two stands began after about thirty minutes of praying and, in response to the earnest prayer that afternoon, “the Lord made bare his arm; one backslider was healed and several mourners set at liberty; and the meeting increased in power to the last.” That evening, a lovefeast was held in the chapel and “a number more got saved.”

The circumstances in Congleton seem to have changed dramatically in a short time. Although some writers have interpreted one reference in Hugh Bourne’s diary to suggest that a small Primitive Methodist band was present in Congleton as early as 1809, there is no evidence beyond this to prove that there was organized Primitive Methodist activity in the town until perhaps 1820. The account in the Primitive Methodist Magazine, however, does seem to indicate that by 1822, an identifiable Primitive Methodist presence is in the town with sufficient resources to develop a system of outreach and to conduct camp meetings.

At least a partial explanation for this rapid change can be found in the history of Primitive Methodism generally. A crucial year for Primitive Methodists was 1819. In that year, they began to regard themselves as a Connexion, they established their Book Room in Bemersley, and they began to plan annual Conferences. Rapid expansion followed as the membership of 1,800 in 1819 more than quadrupled in four years, growing, some believed, too quickly. The leaders of the new Connexion soon realised that a number of

---

43 *Primitive Methodist Magazine (PMM)*, 1822, John Rylands University Library of Manchester (JRUL), 157.

44 *PMM (1822):* 208, JRUL.

circuit organisers were unsuitable and had to be dismissed. 46 It was in this charged atmosphere of rapid growth that the energy and commitment to establish a chapel in Congleton appeared.

The impression of the society, created especially by the Primitive Methodist Magazine and also by Petty, is that of a new Chapel enjoying at least some measure of success. This impression stands in opposition to Werner’s assertion that the Primitive Methodists found the Wesleyan hold on the town to be so secure when they sought to establish a chapel in 1820, that they could achieve very limited growth. Werner stated that their attempts to organise in Congleton coincided with a “revival” that “inaugurated a period of significant growth in the Wesleyan circuit” and, although a small society was begun, its efforts were eclipsed by “Wesleyan dynamism.” On the contrary, while Wesleyanism does appear to have enjoyed significant growth in this period, contemporary accounts of Congleton Primitive Methodism in the 1820s, while fragmentary, nonetheless give a portrait indicating that it, also, was a vigorous and rapidly growing Society. Further, Werner does not consider the possibility that Wesleyan growth may have been due to influence by Primitive Methodist piety. 47

The 1826 memoir of a Congleton artisan affords a glimpse of the new Chapel’s relationship with the Wesleyans and hints at one reason for the sudden success of Primitive Methodism in Congleton. The Primitive Methodist Magazine reported that flax-dresser and rope-maker John Andrew had been a Wesleyan class leader who had originally looked


47 Werner, 129. Although the Wagg Street Wesleyan chapel was strong and a force to be reckoned within the community, this does not mean necessarily that the Primitive Methodist Chapel was weak. Werner’s reference to a “revival” in Wagg Street at this time is undoubtedly that which Anderson explained as the reception of Primitive Methodist piety by a number of Wesleyans in Congleton.
upon the Primitive Methodists with a "jealous eye," but the Lord had "altered" his opinion of them. This was the only possible explanation because he was of "so steadfast a turn" that humans could not change his mind. It was "strongly impressed upon his mind" that God had a work for him to do and this impression "followed him constantly." Soon after, he had an impression to join the Primitive Methodists, a decision which he "long strove against." His conversion to Primitive Methodism was "a matter of surprise to them, and to all who knew him [the antecedent for "them" is not clear]."

The writer of the memoir stated that "usefulness" [sic] was of crucial value to Andrew. According to the writer, the fundamental difference between Wesleyans and Primitive Methodists was concern for evangelism as expressed in public preaching:

He (Andrew) had preached by a holy life and conversation for upwards of thirty years, but he now began publicly to call sinners to repentance; and in this labour of love he was made singularly useful. His whole soul was engaged in it, and he often regretted his having begun this work so late in life.49

Andrew was not an ordinary rank and file member of the Primitive Methodist Chapel but, rather, appears to have had some status in the Society. It was he who leased the land for the building of the Congleton Chapel to Hugh Bourne for 999 years at a nominal price and gave a gift a £50 for the Chapel's construction.50

Andrew may represent a type for others who joined the Primitive Methodists in Congleton during the early 1820s. That the Primitive Methodists attracted a committed Wesleyan because of his perception that Primitive Methodist piety was consonant with his own high valuation of usefulness, may indicate that Primitive Methodism grew because it

48 "Memoirs of the Late John Andrew of Congleton," PMM (1826): 73, JRUL.
49 PMM (1826): 76-77, JRUL.
50 Anderson, Kinsey Street, 4.
allowed, in contrast to the growing professionalism in the ranks of the Wesleyans, opportunity for lay leadership.

Some understanding of the early Primitive Methodist membership in Congleton is possible from extant anecdotal accounts, especially those found in the *Primitive Methodist Magazine*. Like many other Primitive Methodists, the members of the Congleton Chapel were preoccupied with dying well. This may indicate a working class context in which there was little to soften the harsh realities of early eighteenth-century English life. In 1830, for example, the *Primitive Methodist Magazine* published the obituary of Ann Andrew from Congleton, who is identified as the wife of John Andrew. However, this would cause chronological difficulties if she were the wife of the aforementioned John Andrew since she is reported to have died shortly after childbirth. The Ann Andrew to whom this obituary referred had been ill throughout her life. Finally, after the birth of her tenth child, “a consumption had taken place” and she died months later at thirty-nine. In the account of her death, she is quoted as saying while in meditation, “He (God) has lately given me such views into the atonement of Jesus, and manifested to me my interest therein. There I found a refuge from every fear.”

Other obituaries of Congleton chapel members maintain the same concern for dying properly. For example, John Heath, the society’s itinerant, wrote the obituary for George Kennerley who died at age seventy-five. Heath affirmed that Kennerley, a local preacher and class leader, had died well. He stated that when visited by friends during his final days, “they invariably found him resting on the atonement.”

---


52 *PMM*, (1869): 742, JRUL.
itinerant John Cooper wrote the obituary for James Broad, one of the most powerful laymen in the history of the Congleton chapel. Cooper reported that during the final days of Broad’s life, “His last affliction was severe and painful, but was borne with exemplary patience and resignation.” Here, again, are the virtues necessary to face death properly: trust, patience, hope, and resignation to God’s will. An 1851 obituary of Congleton Circuit member Jane Goodwin, written by Broad, portrayed an attitude not just of resignation but of victory. Goodwin appears to have had a long struggle with sickness. Broad wrote that her last illness “was tedious and protracted . . . .” However, her death was “most triumphant.” He reported that “The night before her death, her ecstasy was such that for about an hour, to the surprise of her sisters, she made the house ring with her shouts of victory!” In all these accounts, the emphasis is firmly on the proper way to meet death; there is no record of hope for physical healing.

That the premium placed on religious experience in early Methodist piety was still evident in Primitive Methodism and at Congleton can be seen in the report of a “protracted meeting” held at Congleton in 1839. This too may be an indication of the mainly working-class membership of the Chapel. The Primitive Methodist Magazine reported that the Quarter Day Meeting decided to hold a “protracted Meeting” after hearing of a highly successful one in the north of England. They did not know what form a protracted meeting should take but they “strove to follow the openings of Providence.” On Sunday 23 December the meeting began with a sermon. The Primitive Methodist Magazine reporter

53 PMM (1891): 632, JRUL.
54 PMM, (1851): 122, JRUL.
55 PMM (1830): 383, JRUL.
stated that “the praying in this service was mighty; and at times the power ran high: though occasionally the powers of darkness pressed heavily on the meeting; but one soul was clearly converted to God.” At the 5:00 AM prayer meeting held the next day, about fifty were present. The account reported that “At times much power rested on the meeting, although it was evident that the enemy was thrusting hard at the praying labourers.” The meetings continued until 1 January. The last night “was particularly powerful . . . thirteen in all, had found liberty . . . .”56 While this account shows that an emphasis was still placed on religious experience, it also indicates that an emphasis on the demonic, a characteristic of early Primitive Methodist theology, was present in the Congleton Chapel.

By the late 1830s, Congleton had developed to such a degree that organisational change was necessary. At first, Congleton had been included in the original Circuit of the Connexion centred in Tunstall. Often, writers have stated that in 1839 Congleton was separated from the unwieldy Tunstall Circuit to become the centre of its own Circuit.57 However, records printed in the Primitive Methodist Magazine show a more complex historical process. A brief report from the “Macclesfeld and Congleton Union Circuit” which was said to be part of the Tunstall District can be found in the 1835 volume of the

56 PMM (1839): 153-155, JRUL. According to Obelkevich, the “protracted meeting” became the chief tool to produce a “revival” after 1840. He stated that the era of rapid expansion being over, the aim in these meetings was not just the conversion of outsiders but “to rekindle the lukewarm piety of existing members.” As in America, this marked a dramatic shift in both the theory and practice of revivalism: revival meetings, once regarded as sovereign acts of God, now became the result of planned acts initiated by humans. Having said this, Obelkevich also warned that balance is needed: as planned as they might be, in this period, protracted meetings could take on a life of their own. If Obelkevich is correct, then Congleton became a leading innovator in 1839 by pioneering such a meeting. However, the account of Congleton’s protracted meeting runs counter to his argument: the Congleton event seems to indicate a surge of natural vitality not an event seeking to manufacture fervour. Obelkevich, 230.

57 Anderson speculated that there may have been a connection between the establishment of Congleton as a Circuit and the successful protracted meeting held in the Congleton Chapel late in 1839. This cannot be, however, since the decision to establish a separate Circuit in Congleton was made over a year earlier. Rather, the success at the protracted meeting may simply indicate the vitality in the Congleton Chapel at that time. Anderson, Kinsey Street, 11.
This union Circuit appears to have been prosperous. One of nineteen Circuits in the District, with 512 members, it reported a dramatic increase of 107 over the previous year. Similar reports for this new Circuit are posted in the 1836 and 1837 edition of the magazine. Both these reports suggest that the Circuit continued to prosper: in 1836, the Circuit reported 644 members and, in 1837, the Primitive Methodist Magazine listed its membership as 682.\(^{58}\) A section called “Reports of the Sunday Schools” for Tunstall District, found in the 1837 edition of the Primitive Methodist Magazine, listed Congleton under Macclesfield, and Macclesfield is reported to have its own Circuit.\(^{59}\) In the 1838 magazine section “Notices from the Circuit Reports,” Congleton is again listed under the “Macclesfield and Congleton Union Circuit.” However, the report ended with the notation “This is now formed into two, the Macclesfield circuit and Congleton circuit.”\(^{60}\) One year later, Congleton is listed alone in the notices and appears to have been more prosperous than Macclesfield. In 1839, the Primitive Methodist Magazine listed Macclesfield’s membership as 350 in comparison with Congleton that, after an increase of 150, boasted a membership of 535.\(^{61}\)

The “coming-to-be” stage of Congleton Primitive Methodism could be said to have lasted a considerable length of time, stretching from 1804 at least until the formal establishment of the Chapel in 1821. The study of Congleton Primitive Methodism, however, must also include the entire Congleton Circuit since it is difficult to separate the life of the Chapel from that of the Circuit of which the Chapel was the centre. One

\(^{58}\) PMM (1835): 266; (1836): 278-281; and (1837): 252. JRUL.

\(^{59}\) PMM (1837): 269-272, JRUL.

\(^{60}\) PMM (1838): 354, JRUL.
consequence of this intimate relationship between Chapel and Circuit is that the "coming-to-be" stage of Congleton Primitive Methodism could be said to have continued beyond 1821 lasting until 1839. Since the two are so closely related, the discussion that follows, while dealing primarily with the Chapel, will discuss the Chapel in the context of the entire Circuit.62

Town, Chapel, and Circuit: Comparative Strength

During the nineteenth century, the Congleton Primitive Methodist Circuit growth pattern bore a striking correlation to that of the town itself. A broad pattern can be discerned in which the town, Chapel, and Circuit can be seen to have grown and declined together: dramatic growth in the early 1820s; relative stasis from 1824 through the early 1840s; growth from the 1840s until 1860; great loss after 1860; and stasis through the end of the century. During a lengthy period from 1874 to 1909, for example, Chapel Schedules list the number of "inhabitants" in Congleton as 11,000. This appears to be an estimate as indicated by a comparison between the 1881 Chapel Schedule listing of 11,000 and Head's reference to a population in that year of 11,116.63 However, Chapel Schedule estimates do indicate a stagnation of growth in the town. Parallels, however, end after the close of the nineteenth century. While the patterns of growth experienced by the Primitive Methodists and the town diverged only four times in the nineteenth century, throughout most of the twentieth century, divergence of growth patterns became usual.

61 PMM (1839): 436, JRUL.
62 The Chapel shared itinerant preachers with the rest of the Circuit. Most of the Circuit consisted of Chapels and preaching points in the environs of the town.
63 Head, 170 and "Circuit Reports and Schedules," D, 1881-1909, CCRO.
As seen in table 9, a different perspective emerges when comparing the growth of the town with that of the nearby village of Astbury. Head showed that by the beginning of the nineteenth century, Congleton had won ascendancy over its rival, and through that century, it consolidated its primacy over against it. Although Congleton's growth stagnated vis a vis Astbury, Congleton's importance steadily increased while Astbury became relegated to obscurity. The presence of a strong Primitive Methodist Chapel in a town of regional consequence situated in the heartland of the Connexion was unquestionably important to Connexional leaders. Commitment to the nurture of such a Chapel must have had some measure of support at the District and Connexional levels.

Table 9. The Populations of Congleton and Astbury

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1801</th>
<th>1811</th>
<th>1821</th>
<th>1824</th>
<th>1831</th>
<th>1841</th>
<th>1851</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congleton</td>
<td>3,861</td>
<td>4,616</td>
<td>6,405</td>
<td>9,400</td>
<td>9,352</td>
<td>9,222</td>
<td>10,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newbold Astbury</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>598</td>
<td>641</td>
<td>705</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
<th>1881</th>
<th>1886</th>
<th>1891</th>
<th>1937</th>
<th>1951</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congleton</td>
<td>12,338</td>
<td>11,344</td>
<td>11,116</td>
<td>11,389</td>
<td>10,744</td>
<td>15,000</td>
<td>15,502</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astbury</td>
<td>741</td>
<td>783</td>
<td>768</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1961</th>
<th>1972</th>
<th>1998</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Congleton</td>
<td>16,802</td>
<td>20,370</td>
<td>Approx. 35,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Astbury</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When Primitive Methodist strength in Congleton is compared with Congleton Wesleyanism, the portrait of the Primitive Methodist Chapel and Circuit becomes even

64 Head, 170.
clearer. According to the information provided by itinerant John Morton in the 1851 Religious Census, as seen in table 10, the original 1821 building, known as the Lawton Street Primitive Methodist Chapel, had a capacity of five hundred sittings of which 200 were lettable and 300 were free.

Table 10. A Comparison: Lawton Street and Wagg Street Chapels: 1851

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lawton Street Primitive Methodist Chapel</th>
<th>Wagg Street Wesleyan Chapel</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sittings</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>not listed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average Attendance</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>AM: 450, PM: 700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AM Service</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afternoon Service</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evening Service</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday School</td>
<td>208 (afternoon)</td>
<td>150 (morning)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10, while helpful, obscures important considerations. For example, Morton was probably exaggerating the size of the Chapel by overstating the number of sittings. Other records give the number of sittings as 400. However, the appearance given by Table 10 that the Wesleyans were considerably stronger in Congleton than the Primitive Methodists is also suspect. When attendance at two of the other three Congleton area Primitive Methodist Chapels that day is added (Mosley and Key Green), there were 668 in attendance at the Primitive Methodist Chapels as compared to 820 in the four Wesleyan

65 "Religion Census of 1851," microfilm, CCRO. Although the Wesleyan Chapel itinerant did not fill out the form in the prescribed way, and although some maintain that the Sunday on which the Census was taken was not normative due to poor weather, this data, nonetheless, is helpful.
Chapels. Relative parity between the two Connexions in Congleton seems to have existed at this time since the Primitive Methodist Chapel in Buglawton with a capacity of 203 failed to make a return in the Census. Table 10 is important in that it shows that the Congleton Chapel attendance was significant and that the Chapel supported a thriving Sunday School. However, it does not show the added nuance that the Primitive Methodist Circuit was beginning to rival Wesleyan strength in the town. Also, attendance in both the Wesleyan and the Primitive Methodist Circuits in Congleton on that day demonstrates that both were significant social forces in the town. By comparison, the Church of England parishes had a total attendance of 994, not that far ahead of the two main Methodist Connexions.66

“Declines” in the History of Congleton Primitive Methodism

Numerical Decline Patterns: 1839-1993

Only after 1839 does it appear that Congleton Primitive Methodists began to keep formal Chapel records. However, after 1843, record keeping rapidly became thorough and orderly. While the early fragmented references reveal a small group typical of early Primitive Methodists in piety, the bulk of the evidence from 1843 onward discloses a literate socially respectable congregation with a growing representation from the higher levels of society.

The records maintained by the Chapel, the Circuit, and the Connexion from 1843 onward enable the observer to discern and to follow patterns of growth in Congleton Primitive Methodism. Most important for this study, the available documents make it possible to trace the patterns of decline.

Graph 1 shows that a dramatic burst of energy and life occurred in the Connexion as a whole from 1819 until 1823. It was in this context of rapid growth that the Primitive Methodists were able to establish a Congleton Society. The near collapse of the growth rate after 1823 appears to have established parameters for growth not only for the Connexion at large but also for local Societies such as Congleton. When one views the growth rates of the Kinsey Street Chapel and Circuit in concert with that of the Connexion, the possibility of long-term sustained growth locally appears to be compromised by the failure of the Connexion to experience that kind of growth. The Connexional growth pattern appears to mandate, if not declines, then at least minimal local growth.

Graph 1. Growth Pattern of the Primitive Methodist Connexion

---

67 This graph is based on the findings of Robert Currie in Methodism Divided: A Study in the Sociology of Ecumenicalism (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), 94-96. Currie’s findings appear to be different from those which appear in Currie, Gilbert, and Horsley, 140-143. The discrepancy may be explained by Currie’s admission that “Annual averages for triennial periods have been used to provide a slightly more generalized picture than that offered by figures for separate years.” Methodism Divided, 94, note 3. When both studies are compared with the official records of the Connexion, the shape of growth and declines appears to be consistent. See Robert Smith ed., Minuteary Records: Being Rules, Regulations, and
Through Chapel Schedules and Quarter Day Meeting minutes, attendance and membership patterns can be traced. Graphs 2 and 3 show Chapel attendance from 1848 until 1981. Most obvious in these graphs is the debilitating loss that occurred in the 1960s. This decline appears to be even more dramatic due to the absence of records from 1960 to 1971 so that the downturn on the graph is very pronounced. Graph 3 shows that the Kinsey Street Chapel achieved stasis in the early 1970s only to experience another decline in 1978 and 1979.

Graph 2. “Kinsey Street” Chapel Attendance

![Graph 2](image-url)

---


68 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1848-1980, CCRO.

When Chapel Attendance is recorded for each year for which records are available, the patterns of declines come into greater focus. After 1909, the nomenclature in Chapel Schedules shifted. The original category of "Attendance at principal services" was replaced, in 1910, with "adherents." The notation of 200 for "attendance" in 1909 and 200 for "adherents" in 1910 demonstrates that these pertain to the same category.

"Membership," defined as those who belong to a class, also provides an important indicator of "declines." Chapel membership was recorded only until 1909. In 1910, the Connexion introduced a new form incorporating major changes for gathering chapel information. "Inhabitants" and "Members" disappeared as entries and "Special Efforts," the category intended to monitor fund-raising activities, became "all other money raised,"

69 Trinity became the name of the new church that was built to replace the Wagg Street Wesleyan Chapel. The Kinsey Street Chapel was later replaced by Wellspring Methodist Church. "Circuit Stewards' Quarterly Statements," D, 1970-1981, Mow Cop Methodist Museum.
i.e., funds acquired beyond sittings, schools, and property. Also, a reference to other property, i.e., “Manses” appears; in the Kinsey Street Circuit only Congleton is listed as having one. Tables 11 and 12 give attendance and membership records for each available year.

Table 11. Congleton Primitive Methodist (Kinsey Street) Chapel Attendance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average Attendance “at principal services” (“adherents”)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Average Attendance “at principal services” (“adherents”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>1880</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>“about 300”</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>“about 300”</td>
<td>1883</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>“about 300”</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>“about 300”</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1857</td>
<td>“about 400”</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>450</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>1901-1921</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>1922-1933</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

70 In tables 11 through 16, years of decline are indicated by bold print. “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1848-1933, CCRO
Table 12. Kinsey Street Chapel Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1821</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>136</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1856</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>No return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>161</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871-1873</td>
<td>No Schedules</td>
<td>1899-1900</td>
<td>Not given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>Not given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>Members no longer given, only &quot;adherents&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Circuit membership, documented in Graphs 4 and 5 and tables 13, 14, and 15, was another important indicator of the health of Primitive Methodism in Congleton. From 1849 until 1969, after which a new "union circuit" came into being, Circuit membership experienced five periods of significant decline: from 1848 to 1854; during the last half of

---

71 "Circuit Reports and Schedules," D, 1848-1909, CCRO.
the 1860s; during the periods from 1887 until 1892; from 1961 until 1965; and from 1974 to 1980. From 1970 until 1981, the years for which "Union Circuit" membership is available, the pattern was one of continual decline with the exception of a slight upturn from 1979 until 1981. When Circuit membership is noted on a yearly basis, the patterns of decline become more obvious. By recording the patterns of decline first in graph form and then in table form, perspective is enhanced.

Graph 4. Congleton (Kinsey Street) Circuit Membership: 1845-1969

[Graph showing circuit membership from 1845 to 1969]

72 * Whenever data was not available for a given year, information from the next available year was used. The placement of the Congleton Chapel in four Circuits since 1821 means that the crossover from one Circuit to another will affect membership statistics. However, the Circuit that became known as the Kinsey Street Primitive Methodist Circuit remained intact from 1839 until 1970.

Table 13. Congleton Primitive Methodist Circuit Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>431</td>
<td>1856</td>
<td>301</td>
<td>1867</td>
<td>276</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>1857</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>1868</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1847</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>1858</td>
<td>302</td>
<td>1869</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1848</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>1859</td>
<td>312</td>
<td>1870</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1849</td>
<td>381</td>
<td>1860</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>1871-73</td>
<td>no returns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>1861</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>1874</td>
<td>252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>1862</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>1863</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>1876</td>
<td>285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>1864</td>
<td>430</td>
<td>1877-79</td>
<td>no returns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1854</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>1865</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>1880</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>1866</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 13 – *Continued*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1882</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>1953</td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1883</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>1909-11</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1884</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1912-1919</td>
<td>264</td>
<td>1955</td>
<td>324</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>1956</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1886</td>
<td>275</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>1957</td>
<td>354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1887-89</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>1922-1924</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>1958</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>1925-29</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>1959</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1891</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>1930-43</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1892</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>1944</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>1961</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1893</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>1962</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1894</td>
<td>226</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>1964</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1896</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>263</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>1966</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898-1903</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904-06</td>
<td>245</td>
<td>1951</td>
<td>290</td>
<td>1968</td>
<td>313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>1952</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>1969</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

When Circuit membership is compared with Chapel membership, important observations become evident. First, as Graphs 4 and 5 and tables 13, 14, and 15 indicate, while at times the Chapel mirrors the declines in the Circuit, at other times the patterns are not parallel. The losses in the Circuit from 1848 until 1854, for example, are not found in the Chapel until 1854, during which the Chapel experienced a moderate decline for only one year. Second, during periods of parallel decline, losses were not equal in strength. While the overall pattern of Chapel membership from 1887 until 1892, for example,

followed that of the Circuit, Chapel losses continued for three years after the Circuit had stabilised. Also, whereas the pattern in the Circuit during that time was one of unmitigated decline, the Chapel experienced a surge of membership in 1889 for one year following which it again rejoined the Circuit pattern. However, by 1895, when declines in both Chapel and Circuit had been arrested, Chapel membership had declined by a total of 27.7 per cent while Circuit membership loss had experienced a loss of only 14.9 per cent.

Table 15. Kinsey Street Circuit Membership in Five-Year Intervals: 1845-1969

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>390</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>292</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>238</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>251</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>245</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950</td>
<td>362</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>357</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1965</td>
<td>309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Membership patterns during the turbulent, economic distress of the 1860s show important parallels between Chapel and Circuit as is clearly evident in Graph 6. The Circuit grew throughout the first five years of the decade while the Chapel, after an initial

---

75 Since for most of the Society's history, the Chapel was situated on Kinsey Street, most of the documents related to the Chapel and Circuit bear the name of the street.

loss in 1860, also experienced strong growth until 1864. Only after a period of sustained
distress did both Chapel and Circuit experience dramatic decline. The conclusion that
appears to be most appropriate is that economic distress does not affect membership
deleteriously if experienced only in the short term. If, however, it continues on a
prolonged basis, severe decline results. Also, a comparison of the growth patterns of the
general population in the town and the Chapel shows that the same external factors that
affected the town generally also affected the Primitive Methodists.

Graph 6. Kinsey Street Circuit and Chapel Membership

77 "Annual Reports," D, 1845–1870, 1874–1876. Also, see "Reports on Sunday Schools," D, 1875,
1876; and "Circuit Plans: Jan.–Apr. 1846–1848 and Apr.–July 1849, 1850," D; "Chapel Schedules," D, 1848,
Reports on Sunday Schools from 1881; Chapel Schedules, D, 1881–1890; "Circuit Reports and Schedules," 
D, 1891–1896; "Circuit Reports and Schedules," D, 1897–1932; and "Primitive Methodist (Kinsey Street)
Circuit: Annual Returns," D, 1933–1959, CCRO.
The preceding tables and graphs give a pattern that could be described using the paradigm of oscillation. These oscillations tended to feature lengthy periods of decline followed by only brief intervals of growth to offer respite from previous losses. This pattern shows a disturbing most recent decline that posed a significant threat to the life of the Chapel.

The most powerful decline in the history of the Chapel appears to have occurred after a crisis in 1870. The Chapel has never recovered from this blow. After three years of no returns, the 1874 return for the Circuit indicated a total loss of forty-eight members from 1870. The loss in Chapel membership in the same year was seventy-one, indicating that the Congleton Chapel during this period had become a hindrance to what was generally a modest pattern of growth in the Circuit.

Chapel membership declined during two other significant episodes. The Society built a new Chapel during 1889 and 1890 on Kinsey Street, a newer area of the town that had been developed only since 1818. Opening on Wednesday, 15 April 1891 with a capacity of 500 of which 250 sittings were lettable and 250 were free, Reverend James Wood DD, Principal of the Primitive Methodist Theological Institute in Manchester conducted the first service. The Society’s choice for preacher that day highlights the social lift that had occurred by this time in Primitive Methodism generally and in the members of Congleton’s Society. Immediately following the construction of the new Chapel, membership in both Chapel and Circuit declined dramatically.

A further period of decline in Chapel but not in Circuit membership can be seen in the years 1903 to 1906. Again, this decline coincided with another major capital works expenditure. The original Chapel had been built with a pipe organ, albeit a small one with
only six stops. On 9 April 1904, the headline of the Congleton Chronicle read “Primitive Methodist Chapel, Congleton. Opening the New Organ.” In that year, the Society installed a new much more sophisticated organ. The Chronicle reported that the cost was almost 300 pounds of which 250 had “already been subscribed,” including 125 “from Mr. Carnegie.” The presence and involvement of the mayor in the dedication service for the organ again demonstrates social lift; the Primitive Methodist Society had become acceptable to Congleton society.

Decline Patterns in Chapel and Circuit Organisations and Practices

Nuances in the patterns of decline become discernible when one takes into account aspects of life in the Chapel and Circuit other than Chapel and Circuit membership and attendance at principal services. For example, as seen in graph 7 and table 16, attendance records of the Sunday School, a major ministry of the Chapel, are helpful in understanding the declines experienced by the Society. In graph form, the contours of decline become obvious.

Table 16 and Graph 7 show that Sunday School attendance at the Kinsey Street Chapel experienced five episodes of decline. These statistics must be viewed with some caution, however, since nowhere are the criteria stated for inclusion as a Sunday School scholar. Also, there are scattered indications that, at times, numbers were inflated. The Circuit Report for 1907, for example, reported that 84 males and 95 females participated in the Congleton Sunday School. However, an unknown redactor placed the numbers 49 and 61 in pencil above the columns. From 1945 onward, a hint appears that indicates that, at

---

78 Congleton Chronicle, 9 April 1904, sec.5, p. 6. The donation was a gift from the Carnegie Trust. John Anderson stated that the Trust during this time was giving out many organ grants around the country. Anderson related this munificence to a nagging guilt felt by Carnegie for perceived past sins. Anderson, Interview.
least by this time, attendance records had become overly generous. A second number
giving “average attendance” follows the usual entry for Sunday School attendance. In
1946 for example, the average attendance was only fifty-three even though the number of
Sunday School students appears as 112.

Graph 7. Sunday School Attendance

Table 16. Kinsey Street Sunday School Membership: 1845-1959

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>191</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

79 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1855-1951. CCRO.
Table 16 – Continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>268</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>158</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>219</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1895</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1935</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>181</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though Sunday School returns must be viewed with some caution, they are nonetheless helpful. The decline in 1855, for example, actually represented an increase over the more drastic decline experienced in 1854.\(^{81}\) However, it is significant that the overall pattern of decline in the Sunday School from 1850 to 1855 parallels the decline in Chapel membership during the same period. Again, in the 1880s, Sunday School attendance and Chapel membership are parallel. However, in this case, a decline in the

\(^{80}\) In order to show the patterns of growth and decline more legibly, table 8 records attendance in five year intervals. Occasionally, the interval in the table is other than five years due to missing years in the records. “Annual Reports and Schedules,” D, 1845-1933, and “Annual Returns,” D, 1933-1959.

\(^{81}\) “Annual Reports and Schedules,” D, 1855, CCRO.
Sunday School began prior to the membership decline. In turn, the decline in Sunday School attendance began after a decline in Chapel attendance.\textsuperscript{82} This would seem to indicate that the life of the whole is complex with a degree of interaction among the various ways in which individuals expressed commitment to the Society.

The Second World War also produced negative outcomes in terms of Congleton Chapel Sunday School attendance: 1939: 135; 1940: 151; 1941: 114; 1942: 114. From 1943 through 1945, Congleton Sunday School statistics are not given. Not only did the war seem to affect the Chapel Sunday School, the entire circuit experienced decline in Sunday School attendance during the war years, falling from 588 in 1934 to 357 by 1945. This would affirm the interpretation that war is adverse to growth especially among youth.

Since outdoor and other venues of preaching beyond the regular services of the Chapel were crucial to the identity of Primitive Methodists, the number of "preaching points" and the number of "lay preachers" are also important to consider. By 1922, the Kinsey Street Circuit no longer had regular preaching occurring outside its nine chapels. While it could be argued that in the process of institutionalisation informal "preaching places" had been replaced by formal more developed "Chapels" the problem remains that from 1845 to 1922 the Circuit suffered a net loss of fifteen, or fifty-eight percent, of its preaching locations. Documented by graph 8, this apparent steady erosion of commitment to "preaching places" outside the Chapels is especially significant. For a group that found its distinctive practice in informal preaching beyond the confines of established places and times, the loss of "preaching places" represents a serious decline in the life of the Circuit since its very identity is denied.

\textsuperscript{82} Decline in Chapel membership began in 1887, whereas decline in Sunday School attendance started in 1884 and decline in Chapel attendance occurred beginning in 1882.
Graph 9 accentuates the Circuit's decline by showing the losses in the number of lay preachers used in the Circuit. As preaching "outside" was of crucial importance to Primitive Methodists, so was the democratisation of preaching through the use of untrained lay preachers. From a high of forty-nine in 1863, the number of lay preachers in the circuit dwindled to only seventeen in 1952, the last year for which this information was recorded.

Graph 8. Kinsey Street Circuit Chapel and Preaching Points

83 "Annual Reports and Schedules," D, 1845-1933, CCRO.
The inability of the Circuit and Chapel to develop fraternal organisations also may have played a role in their failure to sustain growth patterns. Development through the nurture of such organisations is absent throughout the history of Congleton Primitive Methodism.

Organisations that served as auxiliary programs in the histories of the Chapels are mentioned first in 1899. Table 17 shows the development of such organisations at the Kinsey Street Chapel until union. Many reports record only the Congleton Chapel as having such organisations and in these Circuit reports, a variety of ambiguous and anomalous references can be found. For example, in 1904, the Christian Education (C. E.) Society was mentioned in the Circuit report for Congleton but a zero was entered in the

---

84 Annual Reports and Schedules, D, 1845-1933, and “Annual Returns,” D, 1933-1952. CCRO.
column for membership. In the 1905 report, unsuccessful attempts appear to have been made to erase the number. The Christian Education Society seems not to have captured the imaginations of Chapel members. In 1907, only Mow Cop is listed on the Circuit report as having one and a notation indicated that it had been terminated for lack of interest. In 1909, Congleton is listed as having a Band of Hope but the entry has been crossed out. In that year, for the first time “Total Juvenile Abstainers at the School” appears as a category as this method of recording Temperance pledges seems to have superseded the earlier program. However, Bands of Hope quickly reappeared in the Circuit and in Congleton. In 1922, though, no organisations are listed in the circuit. In 1924, both Bands of Hope and Temperance Leagues are listed in the report but a zero is placed beside each. Also, both a Senior Guild and a Junior Guild are listed for Congleton under “Young Peoples Guild” but no numbers are given. In the content of the reports and in the manner of reporting, there seems to be a lack of resonance among the people for such organisations. With the exception of the “Young People’s Guild” that by 1932 seems to have been thriving in Congleton, fraternal organisations throughout the Circuit did not seem to flourish. Although they cannot be said to have had contributed directly to increases in the Chapel during times of growth or to decreases in times of decline, nonetheless, their failure to prosper may indicate a chronic malaise both in the Chapel and in the Circuit.
Table 17. Kinsey Street Chapel Fraternal Organisations Prior to Union

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. of Org's</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>No. of Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1899</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>87 Juveniles; 31 adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>105 Juv.; 35 Adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>105 Juv.; 35 adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>110 Juv.; adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>120 Juveniles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>145 Juveniles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>140 Juveniles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>140 Juveniles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>117 Juveniles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Junior Society</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Jr. Society</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Jr. Society</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Band of Hope</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Band of Hope Jr. Society</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Table 17 - Continued.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>No. Of Org's</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>No. of Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Jr. Society</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Temperance League</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jr Temp. League</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Jr. Society</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Temperance League</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Young Abstainers</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>C. E. Jr. Society</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Temperance League</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Young Abstainers</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Temperance League</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Young Abstainers</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>C. E. Society</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Young Abstainers</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Young Peoples Guild</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td></td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Young Peoples Guild</td>
<td>Senior 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Junior 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Young Peoples Guild</td>
<td>Senior 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(C. E. Jr. Society)</td>
<td>Junior 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Young Peoples Guild</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(C. E. Jr. Society)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Young Peoples Guild</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(C. E. Jr. Society)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Young Peoples Guild</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(C. E. Jr. Society)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Young Peoples Guild</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(C. E. Jr. Society)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1932</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Young Peoples Guild</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(C. E. Jr. Society)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

85 "Annual Reports and Schedules," D, 1899-1932, CCRO.
When all aspects of the Chapel and Circuit are taken into account, several assertions can be made. First, numerical declines were not global, meaning that not every aspect of Congleton Primitive Methodism was affected equally during a period of decline. Second, declines in the life of the Chapel were not necessarily mirrored in the life of the Circuit even though the two were closely linked. Third, observing when periods of decline occur shows only episodes of decline prior to stabilisation but not lasting effects that may have been present in the long term even when numerical decline had been arrested.

Declines in Chapel attendance, which included those not as committed as the inner core of members, usually preceded a decline in membership. This can be seen to have occurred three times in the nineteenth century. Only once, from 1898 to 1903, did loss of attendance follow a loss of membership.

The Sunday School program experienced two sustained periods of decline. In each episode, the Sunday School declined both after a general decline in the chapel and before another one. This raises key questions as to the relationship of a Sunday School to the overall health of a church.

Tracking the number of preaching points used by the Circuit becomes a story of "decline" not of "declines" since preaching points were ultimately lost. For the purposes of this study, this shows that "ceasing-to-be" may be a process that occurs in one or more aspects of an entity without loss of the entity's overall coherence and identity.

Lastly, there is a strong correlation between Chapel membership and Circuit membership and attendance. The intriguing nuance here, however, is that Chapel attendance declines seem to appear prior to either Chapel membership or Circuit declines.
It is tempting to posit that loss in overall Chapel attendance may have served as some sort of precipitating factor that affected both the Society and the Circuit.

**Kinsey Street Chapel and Circuit: Sources of Decline**

As difficult as it is to ascertain the sources of decline, a variety of trauma that played at least some role in the onset of decline can be detected during the declines experienced by both the Circuit and the Chapel. 86

**Emigration and Expulsion**

While some such as John Morton, who itinerated in Congleton from 1851 to 1852, felt constrained to present compelling reasons for decline, others simply reported decreases without comment. The report for 1854, for example, shows a significant decrease as thirty-eight members were lost. The young itinerant, James Dunn Whittaker, explained the decrease tersely: twelve had left; nine had been expelled for non-attendance; eleven had left town; and forty-two had “fallen.” 87 Even Whittaker’s brief comment is helpful, however. It shows that emigration from Congleton played a role in decline. Also, it introduces a new metaphor into the discussion: decline occurs because of “falling,” a term that was probably indicative of moral failure, broadly understood.

86 The substantial decline in Circuit membership that occurred from 1839 through 1842, during which years Circuit membership fell from 539 to 385, lacks sufficient documentation to comment effectively. This decline is intriguing however, as the decline is approximately the same as the 150 new members touted as the fruit of the 1839 protracted meeting. Robert Smith, vol. 1, 1842, 18, JRUL. Although the years 1814-1830 are given in the title, reports are found in the volume to 1843. See also Robert Smith, *Minutary Records Being Rules, Regulations, and Reports Made and Published By the Primitive Methodist Connexion: 1831-1840*, vol. 2, 1839, 13 and 1840, 10, JRUL.

87 Whitaker was only thirty-one when he took over the circuit from Morton. “Annual Reports and Schedules,” D, 1853-1854, CCRO. In 1853, the Report gives the first mention of a desire to erect a monument in the form of a chapel on Mow Cop in honour of Hugh Bourne. This impulse to build a monument would be the source of significant controversy within the Circuit as time went on.
Economic Distress and Demographic Shifts

Although disastrous economic change in Congleton began in 1860, decline in Congleton Chapel and Circuit did not follow suit. While Chapel attendance did experience a moderate decline from 1861 until 1864 falling from 500 to 400, Chapel membership actually grew significantly increasing from 118 to 161, an increase mirrored in Circuit membership which rose from 340 in 1860 to 430 by 1863. Contributing to this increase may have been the addition of a second itinerant for the Circuit beginning in 1861. It is noteworthy that, in a time of distress, the Circuit had the courage to augment not decrease its ministry.88

The Congleton experience demonstrates that even if economic factors influence the history of a religious group, the influence is not necessarily directly contiguous from one aspect of the group’s life to another. In Congleton, Chapel attendance fell in the years from 1861 to 1864, and a failure to attract more adherents apparently ensued. However, those who left appear to have been peripheral adherents whereas committed members remained and a considerable number of those on the periphery joined the ranks of the committed.89 Again, the influence of economic decline seems to be related to duration: decline appeared among the committed of both Chapel and Circuit only after they had been worn down by an extended period of economic difficulty.

Religious declines in Congleton can be related also to occupational shifts among members and adherents of the Chapel. In the middle years of the nineteenth century, the

88 “Annual Reports and Schedules,” D, 1860–1864, CCRO. Usually, the itinerants consisted of an older experienced preacher and a younger inexperienced one; itinerants in the Circuit were universally male.

89 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings, Jun. 1859–Sept. 1860, D, and “Chapel Schedules,” D, 1860–1862 and 1864, CCRO. See also, Robert Smith, vol. 5 and Robert Smythe, vol. 6, JRUL.
composition of the membership of the Chapel was consistent with that of the general population in terms of occupation. From a "Register of Christenings" dated July 1843 to March 1865, the occupations of those with at least some involvement in the Chapel can be traced. The cover has been damaged and the inscription bearing the words "Primitive Methodist . . ." is only marginally legible. However, it appears to be a standard register: inside are the words "Baptisms solemnized in the Parish of Astbury in the County of Cheshire in the year . . ." On some subsequent pages, the words "Congleton in Astbury" appear while on others, the phrase "Astbury and other places" can be found. The occupations that I have included are only those of persons who gave Congleton as their place of residence. So as not to skew the findings, as far as possible I have eliminated all those who appear more than once due to multiple births in this period. Those listed represent different individuals and families that brought their children for christening. When a mother's name was noted in the column reserved for the name of the father, I have included her occupation if one was given.

The Register, as shown by table 18, revealed that in this period, during which the Primitive Methodist Chapel was consolidating its gains and achieving a measure of respectability, the Chapel's membership, occupationally, was consistent with that of the entire community. Employment in the silk industry was predominant with unskilled labour of various sorts a distant but sizable second force. Leather working and textile manufacturing, as in the general population, were also still well represented.

90 "Register of Christenings July 1843 - March 1865." CCRO.
Table 18. Congleton Occupations in a "Register of Christenings"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silkman, Silk Weaver, Silk Woman, Silk Girl, Silk Piecer, Silk Winder, Twist Maker, Throwing Mill Man, Silk Draper, Maker Up</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourer</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shoemaker, Shoe Maker Piecer</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weaver</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unmarried, unemployed women</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miner, collier</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ribbon Weaver</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spinner, Cotton Spinner</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miller, Mill Man</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joiner</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocer, Green Grocer</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabinet Maker, Carpenter</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tailor</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brick Setter, Brick Layer, Brick Maker, Brick Setter</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minister</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boatsman</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmer</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engine Driver</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clock and Watch Maker</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butcher</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forge Man</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dresser</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sawyer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leather Cutter</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soldier</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanic</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General Dealer, Provision Dealer</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stone Mason; Clerk; Plumber; Cotton Piecer; Printer; Cow Wainer; Plumber; School Master; Carder; Barber; Excavator, Coal Dealer; Sproster; Moulder</td>
<td>1 each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

91 "Register of Christenings." CCRO.
Through a comparison of Census records with class membership lists, I have been able to identify the occupations of some members in later years. By the last decade of the nineteenth century, a hint of a shift is evident in the membership of the Chapel. Where multiple matches were found for names, none was included. Table 19 is based, admittedly, on fragmentary records and, consequently, it is at best only suggestive. Further study is needed.

In the 1881 Census records, silk manufacturing still appeared to be the dominant occupation among Kinsey Street Chapel members even though the silk trade had been permanently weakened in Congleton since 1860. However, in 1891, while silk workers seemed to remain the majority, fustian cutting was beginning to be evident as an occupation of members. By comparison, in the 1891 Census, there were many fustian workers listed among the residents of Congleton. My tentative conclusion is that failure to attract fustian workers by 1881, fourteen years after fustian cutting had been introduced to the town, indicates an inability to adjust to changing demographic patterns and this made the Chapel vulnerable to the decline that in fact occurred in the early 1880s. As silk workers emigrated from Congleton, the Chapel and Circuit failed to replace them.

Chapel and Circuit documents make it clear that the members believed that economic trouble was responsible for decline. Although there is no reference to economic problems in the first four years of difficulty precipitated by the collapse of the silk industry in 1860, references to “bad trade” and “depressed trade” as a cause of decline appear in Circuit documents with regularity from 1864. In that year, in spite of recording that no gains had been made numerically, the writer of the Circuit’s annual report stated “we are

---

92 The first reference to “bad trade” antedates the 1860 silk industry collapse. John Morton refers to it in passing in his 1853 Annual report. “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1853, CCRO.
increasing considering the depressed state of trade.” Perhaps a harbinger of future difficulties and a hint that dissatisfaction in the Circuit was growing is found in the inclusion of a letter regarding Joseph Ferguson, the junior itinerant in the Circuit, asking that he be restationed “on the grounds of his suitability and usefulness.” The letter affirmed that this was the Circuit’s “universal wish.”

Table 19. Kinsey Street Chapel Membership 1881 and 1891

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Members 1881</th>
<th>Class Members 1891</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Silk Work: 12</td>
<td>Silk Work: 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cornmilling: 1</td>
<td>Fustian Cutter: 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocers: 2</td>
<td>Writing Clerk: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potter: 1</td>
<td>Engineer’s apprentice: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Gass” fitter: 1</td>
<td>Lodging House Keeper: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tea Dealer: 1</td>
<td>Servant: 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural labourer 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The effects of the silk industry collapse began to be felt in earnest in 1865, both in Congleton and throughout the Circuit. The minutes of a meeting held 3 September 1866 referred, for example, to the bad state of trade “in the town and neighbourhood.” The Circuit report for 1865 outlined the factors that had led to the disastrous decline experienced by the Circuit in just one year. A crucial factor precipitating decline had been

93 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1864, CCRO.


95 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1866, CCRO.
forty-nine “removals” caused by “the very depressed state of the staple trade of Congleton and Neighbourhood.” Also, eighty-six had “fallen” or left the society. Lastly, three preaching places had been lost, two because they had no congregation, the third because the owner of the house in which preaching had taken place “refused to have the Meetings continued.” The report stated that the Chapel had suffered net decreases of fifty in attendance and thirty-seven in membership. The 1866 Circuit report told a story of continued decline: there were seventeen removals and forty-three had “fallen” or left. The writer of the report noted wearily that “religion is, at a very low ebb in Congleton and its vicinity, other denominations have suffered to a far greater extent than we have, and why, we cannot tell.” [sic]

The Circuit report of 1867 added a further dimension to the relationship of the decline to Congleton’s economic problems: while many were leaving the town, no one was immigrating to it. The reported decrease of that year included thirty-eight removals with no offsetting immigration.

In the midst of this decline, however, there were several encouraging developments: in spite of all the difficulties, the 1867 report could note an increase of twenty-two for the last quarter and that the Circuit had raised the largest amount of missionary funds ever collected in one year.

Chapel and Circuit refusals to grant requests for aid from outside the Circuit demonstrate the degree of difficulty that they had begun to experience after 1860. The

---

96 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1865. CCRO.

97 No Chapel Schedule is extant for 1866. However, by the next year the membership had decreased another twenty-nine from 1865 to ninety-five. “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1866, CCRO.

98 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1867, CCRO.
September 1862 Quarter Day meeting, for example, due to the bad state of the silk industry, rejected a plea from the General Committee of the Connexion for aid for Lancashire Primitive Methodists. Economic decline adversely affected the way in which both the Circuit’s members and adherents handled all their financial obligations. Not only was assistance no longer possible on an ad hoc basis for those in need beyond the Circuit, calls from Connexional ministries for obligatory support had to be rebuffed as well. The Quarter Day meeting of 4 December 1865, for example, resolved “That in consequence of the badness of trade and the financial depression of this station we cannot at present forward anything for the education of young men for the ministry.” A similar resolution was passed at the 2 December 1867 Quarter Day meeting as the Circuit leaders voted to retain one third of the money raised for missions. At the same meeting, the Circuit refused to contribute to the building fund “in consequence of the bad state of the Silk trade . . . .”

The economic difficulties in the Circuit are underlined by other entries found in the minutes of meetings held in the last half of the 1860s. At the December 1865 meeting, for example, the Circuit expressed thanks to Brother Gibson “for his kindness in begging money to make up deficient salaries.” Also, the minutes of the meeting of 2 December 1867 included a statement that Peter Heasom had left the Connexion and the country without paying his debts.

99 See also the Quarter Day meeting minutes of 4 September 1865. Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings, D, 1862, CCRO.

100 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1865, CCRO.

101 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1867, CCRO.

102 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1867, CCRO.
Professional Leadership

Beyond the economic collapse of the 1860s and the difficult years that followed, Chapel and Circuit documents give hints of other sources of decline. The brief period of decline in the Circuit beginning in 1847, for example, appears to have been related to a factor unique in the history of Congleton Primitive Methodism. The decline followed the departure of Richard Jukes, perhaps the one itinerant minister posted to Congleton who had considerable fame beyond the Circuit. A prolific hymn writer, Jukes became known as the “Bard of the Poor.” While John Anderson has stated that none of his hymns have survived in modern collections, Alcock has said that some of his hymns can be found in the New Methodist Hymn Book.103

Both Anderson and Alcock refer to an uncited source that asserted that under Jukes’ leadership, ninety-nine new members joined the Circuit in one year. This extravagant figure, however, may not have been accurate; the Annual Return from the Circuit for 1846 indicates only an increase of thirteen from the previous year. Either the uncited report was exaggerated or we have here an example of the Primitive Methodist practice of “reservation” of members.104 The 1847 Return reported only 420 members, a loss of twenty-four. Although the stated loss represented only five percent of the Circuit membership, it was enough to prompt a new itinerant, James Prosser, to blame the decrease on two factors: the loss of the popular Jukes who left against the wishes of the

---

103 John Anderson, Kinsey Street, 12; Alcock, 58. Antliff, in his Book of Marvels, includes a Bibliography of Jukes’ works.

104 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1846, CCRO. As a hedge against future losses, in times of growth, some itinerants would report a lower growth rate in a Circuit. In the event of future declines, the preacher could offset the appearance of decline by appeal to the number of members “reserved.”
Circuit and the lack of strong leaders in rural settings. If the loss reported by Prosser is accurate then the decline following Jukes’ departure was prodigious indeed since all the number “reserved” was used up and more. John Anderson stated that Jukes left “‘owing to his family being too heavy for too small a Circuit.” If Jukes did achieve great success, his accomplishment may have been counterproductive. By bringing a leader of exceptional ability into a small Circuit with limited resources, the Connexion produced a situation that would lead to substantial decline after his departure as preachers followed who were more committed to the Circuit but less gifted.

The following year brought an even steeper decline with the further loss of thirty-nine members. The itinerant blamed the losses on four factors: first, two new competitors had arrived in Congleton, the “Association Methodists” and Baptists, and these new challengers had attracted weaker members; second, internal tensions appeared as a “female” caused eight to leave through “differing with her neighbours;” third, emigration was significant as twenty four had left town; fourth, discipline was proving to be difficult to maintain as sixty two had “fallen.” Most disturbing of all was the loss of four classes, one because the leader was drunk and three because of a lack of leaders. According to the report, the losses could have been much worse: a total of 122 had been lost but this dramatic decline had been substantially offset by eighty three who had joined.

The decline in the Circuit was arrested in 1849 under the leadership of James Prosser. Prosser, who in the following year reported that he had made 2,599 visits and

105 “Annual Reports and Schedules,” D, 1847, CCRO.

106 John Anderson, Kinsey Street, 12.

107 By showing in the report that many had joined the Circuit during his tenure and that losses were not because of his work, the itinerant, Harvey Leigh, affirmed his position. The pressure to produce was intense for Primitive Methodist itinerants as their record followed them from charge to charge.
converted more than sixty since the previous July, logged an astounding visitation rate. Since no change was reported in membership numbers, if his report is accurate, then such intense activity was needed simply to maintain equilibrium in the Circuit. A year later, with a modest increase in membership of nine, Prosser wrote "our congregations are good and more settled than what they have been for many years . . . ."\textsuperscript{108}

The "settled" nature of the Circuit lasted but briefly: in 1851 decline resumed. From 1850 to 1854, the Circuit membership declined by fifteen per cent.\textsuperscript{109} In 1851, John Morton recorded the loss of forty-eight members. In his report, Morton gave four full pages of explanation accounting for the loss. Most shocking of his explanations is the accusation that inaccuracies resulted because Prosser did not follow proper record-keeping procedures. Morton's report made Prosser appear to be either incompetent or deceitful as Morton traced a net total of forty-six members who were counted inappropriately in 1850. These allegations cast a shadow over Prosser's reports \textit{in toto}. Consequently, the fleeting times of prosperity in the Circuit may not have been so prosperous after all.\textsuperscript{110}

A survey of all available evidence makes the state of the Congleton Chapel and Circuit during this period even more difficult to ascertain. For example, although decline occurred in Chapel attendance from 1852 to 1856, the number of classes at the Congleton Chapel peaked at thirteen in the second quarter of 1853. On the other hand, in 1856, Chapel membership increased, but, by then, the number of classes had fallen sharply to

\textsuperscript{108} "Annual Reports and Schedules," D, 1849 and 1850, CCRO.

\textsuperscript{109} The Report for 1853 showed a slight increase of six members prior to another decrease in 1854.

\textsuperscript{110} "Annual Reports and Schedules," D, 1851, CCRO.
only eight. This indicates, again, that patterns of decline can be complex and interwoven with patterns of growth.

During the years of decline from 1880 to 1882, another incident occurred in which an itinerant accused his predecessor of deceptive recording practices. William Forth, the minister in 1881, in the same fashion as John Morton in 1851 blamed the decline of that year on either inefficient or deceptive reporting by his predecessor, Joseph Timmins. Forth reported that twenty-five persons attended a Bible class but only came one time per quarter “namely when they had a Knife and Fork treat provided for them, which quarterly treat was followed by games and pastimes.” The report promised that by “a better attention to discipline and a greater degree of piety,” the decrease would not recur.112

We should not judge Timmins prematurely, however. The evidence provides an ambiguous picture of his ministry. He may have attempted to go as far as possible in restoring integrity to reporting in Congleton reports. Circuit Reports are missing for the years 1876 through 1879. However, Chapel Schedules are extant. The 1879 Chapel Schedule recorded that Sunday attendance at the Kinsey Street Chapel was 400. In the 1880 Chapel Schedule, presumably prepared by Timmins, the Sunday attendance was given as 400 which was crossed out in ink and replaced by 200 which was also crossed out in ink and replaced by 180 in written pencil. If Timmins was the author of this Schedule, either the ink redactions come from him showing that he felt compelled to amend the official account, or the corrections represent the work of a later hand. The case for


112 The same kind of circumstance is found in the 1927 Circuit Report: the itinerant blamed an apparent decrease in the Mow Cop Society to his predecessor’s decision to enrol “young men” the previous
assuming that this year was indeed a year of great decline and that Timmins was prepared to report it accurately is furthered by Timmins' report of the Chapel fund. Economically, 1880 had been a disastrous year. Income in 1879 had been £80 5/5½. In 1880, Timmins reported the dismal news that, given the balance on hand in January, the yearly income was only £19 8/2½. 

Forth stayed only one year. The itinerant in 1882, John Ford, did not deal directly with the continued loss of members but commented that he had removed two preaching places: one had not been preached at in four years while another had never had preaching.

The reports from Timmins, Forth, and Ford raise two possibilities. First, if Forth's interpretation is accurate, declines result from a lack of commitment on the part of adherents coupled with a lack of concern for discipline on the part of the leadership. Second, declines at times may be only apparent since earlier reports of growth were false. In the latter instance, a "decline" may represent simply a return to accurate reporting.

**Discipline**

John Morton introduced another major source of decline in his 1852 report. In the course of his account, he gave a litany of discipline problems that he believed were behind the reported decrease of eighteen members. Perhaps the most troubling of these was the case of Christopher Taylor, a local preacher and Sunday School superintendent, who had had an affair. Three weeks after the funeral of his wife, his mistress gave birth "which caused the enemy to triumph . . . ." In another case, Charles Forster, "the best beloved by the members, and the most respected local preacher . . ." had borrowed money "in almost

---

113 "Circuit Reports and Schedules," D, 1879 and 1880, CCRO.
every place in the circuit . . . ." Forster had committed fraud, failed to repay, lied, and
become an alcoholic, all of which resulted in his expulsion. In turn, he blamed the
Primitive Methodists for his troubles. Morton alleged, also, that improper conduct of an
undisclosed kind by a male Sunday School teacher toward a young girl in the School had
taken place. In the face of these monumental problems, it is surprising that the losses had
not been greater. Included in the Report was a unanimous request by the Congleton
Quarter Day Board asking that Morton be allowed to stay even though regulations did not
permit a tenure of more than two years. In the request, the Board praised Morton for his
leadership during the crises. The request was denied.

Discipline, both in terms of minor matters that any ecclesiastical body faces and in
terms of major crises, appears to have been an issue with which the Quarter Day Board
wrestled continually. The Minutes of Quarter Day and Committee Meetings are replete
with references to the former kind of disciplinary problems. The Quarter Day meeting
held 22 September 1845, ruled, for example, that local preachers could not take exhorters
with them unless either the Quarter Day or Circuit Committees had authorised the
exhorters.114 The 15 December 1851 meeting censured local preacher “Brother Orme” for
taking an “objectionable person” to his preaching appointment. On 12 December 1853, the
Committee sanctioned “Sister Evenson” by letter for sending an unauthorised person to
“supply her appointment.”115

Even seemingly routine matters, however, appear to have had an edge to them.
Problems with the kind and abilities of the local preachers seemed to be incessant. Two

---

114 "Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings," D, 1845, CCRO.
115 Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1851, CCRO.
examples are representative. First, the Committee passed a resolution on 15 March 1852 to "sensu [sic] George Wright for taking Thomas Higgins to preach at one location and also for having Higgins lead Wright's class at another location. Wright was unwilling to accept the criticism and so resigned. Second, at a meeting held 13 March 1853, the Committee pleaded with preachers to exercise care regarding whom they take with them as "there are many impostors." The nature of the activities of these "impostors" can only be surmised. It is reasonable to assume, however, that there was a theological component to their perceived deception. The Quarter Day meeting held in September 1862 attempted to establish a safeguard by ordering eight exhorters to produce written statements of their doctrinal views, a demand also made of four new prayer leaders.

Not only did the Circuit leadership have to struggle with problems of ministerial protocol, the problems ran much deeper. As shown, for example, by the record of Taylor's infidelity, during this period the Circuit encountered several serious predicaments in the realm of sexual morality. Four years after the Taylor episode, the Circuit Committee expelled Thomas Atkinson from the Congleton Society on 5 March 1856 for sexual impropriety, with the proviso that the case would be "prudently made known" at Buglawton and Congleton. As well, in the Minutes of the 5 December 1870 Quarter Day meeting, a reference is made to a "Special Committee Meeting" held 21 September 1870. At the September meeting, the Board had suspended Matthew Henshall for

---

116 "Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings," D, 1852 and 1853. CCRO.
117 "Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings," D, 1862. CCRO.
118 "Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings," D, 1856, CCRO.
“seducing Emma Broad.” The conditions of his suspension were that he withdraw from the choir and “stand aloof from her class . . .” for a period of three months.¹¹⁹

The problems that stemmed from sexual impropriety in the Circuit may have been exacerbated by what appears to have been the practice of the Circuit to give lenient terms of punishment. The week after Atkinson’s ejection, the expulsion was reversed and a suspension of only three months invoked. With regard to the Henshall case, the December Quarter Day meeting revoked his suspension in terms of membership but left his name off the preaching plan. However, the Committee told him that if he behaved himself he could resume his ministry at the end of the quarter.

*Internal Tension*

Another deep problem encountered by both the Chapel and Circuit that appears to have influenced the onset and course of declines was debilitating interpersonal tension both *ad intra* and *ad extra*. These tensions became evident in terms of relationships within the Circuit, relationships between itinerants and the Congleton Chapel, and relationships within the membership of the Congleton Chapel.

Within five years of the establishment of the new Congleton Circuit, the town’s Chapel had formally established its prominence. At a meeting held Christmas Day 1844, the Quarter Day meeting resolved to hold leaders meetings every fortnight in the Congleton Chapel. This appears to have acknowledged that the Congleton Chapel was to be the centre of Circuit activities.¹²⁰ As time passed, the only Chapel in the Circuit that

¹¹⁹ “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1870, CCRO.

¹²⁰ “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1844, CCRO.
began to rival Congleton in size was that at venerable Mow Cop. As the Mow Chapel grew, tensions with Congleton grew also.

The earliest hint of strained relations between Congleton and Mow Cop came during a Quarter Day Meeting held 23 March 1853, in the form of a reference to the construction of a memorial to the recently deceased Hugh Bourne.\(^{121}\) However, the muted language of that meeting was replaced by the inflamed rhetoric seen in an open confrontation that occurred at the Quarter Day meeting of 14 May 1856. Lay preacher Samuel Oakes was questioned by the meeting regarding written charges that he had made that slandered Congleton preachers. In these charges, Oakes had alleged their inferiority; their unwillingness to transfer Mow Cop to Tunstall Circuit; their designs for the “breaking up” of the Mount Pleasant Society; and their plan to “break up” Mow Cop. Also, there is reference in the minutes to the “Mow agitators” and an affirmation that “we have no confidence in Mow Friends at present.”\(^{122}\) At a 30 July committee meeting in that same year, the minutes recorded a lengthy discussion regarding the conflict between Mow Cop and the Circuit Committee. In defence of their handling of the Mow Cop Society which wanted to defect and join the Tunstall Circuit, the Committee argued that for twenty years, Tunstall had tried to establish a Society at Mow Cop and had failed. However, after its birth as a Circuit, Congleton had worked in Mow Cop and succeeded in “raising a society” and a Chapel.\(^{123}\)

\(^{121}\) “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1853, CCRO.

\(^{122}\) “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1856, CCRO.

\(^{123}\) “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1856, CCRO.
Evidence that relations continued to sour and that hostilities escalated to include the leadership of the Tunstall Circuit can be found in a committee meeting of 7 September 1856. The Committee met to protest the unwarranted incursion of Tunstall into Congleton’s territory by establishing preaching at Mount Pleasant, less than a mile from Mow Cop Chapel. The Committee placed blame for the Mow Cop agitation chiefly on local preacher Job Shenton. A truce in the discord between the Mow Chapel and the Circuit leadership may be indicated by two entries that appear in the minutes of the quarterly meeting held 16 March 1857. First, the Committee voted to place the initials of “J. Shenton” on the plan, referring possibly to Job Shenton. Second, a resolution was accepted affirming the commitment of the Congleton Circuit to build a new chapel at Mow Cop.

In spite of this apparent rapprochement between the Circuit and Mow Cop, there are indications that relations remained strained both between Tunstall and Congleton and between the Mow Cop Chapel and the Congleton leadership. On 22 May 1861, when the Committee reconvened an adjourned Quarter Day meeting, a series of resolutions related to actions by Tunstall Circuit was passed. In these resolutions, the actions of the Tunstall Circuit were called “dishonest,” “dishonourable,” and “a violent infringement.” The issue appears to have been, once again, incursions by preachers into Congleton’s territory. The minutes of the meeting of 18 June 1862 included a cryptic resolution that might signify continued conflict: “That the Letter which came from Mow Cop be buried

---

124 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1856, CCRO. This turn of events raises the possibility that, at least in some measure, the conflict was nurtured, if not engendered, by the Tunstall Circuit leadership.

125 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1857, CCRO.

126 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1861, CCRO.
forever." Eventually, Mow Cop would grow until it challenged Kinsey Street in terms of size. By 1909, Kinsey Street had only fifty members as compared to Mow Cop’s eighty-nine and Mow Cop had the same number in attendance on Sundays as Kinsey Street. In light of the traditional dominance of the Kinsey Street Chapel, it is understandable that relations between Congleton and Mow Cop would remain strained.

**Lay and Clergy Power Conflicts**

As important as economic conditions in Congleton were to the health of the Chapel and the Circuit, and as cogent as the statements in the documents are in reference to the influence of other factors, one factor appears to have been especially crucial in the onset of decline. A polity that fostered strong lay leadership while at the same time restricting the clergy to tenures of short duration ran the risk of an inordinate amount of power accruing to laypersons. One potential result of this strategy of church governance is the possibility of struggles for control that could end in devastating results to the health of both the Chapel and the Circuit.

At the conclusion of the 5 December 1870 Quarter Day meeting at which Matthew Henshall’s discipline for sexual immorality was ratified and adjusted, a strange resolution was proposed. The startling resolution called for dissolution of the Congleton Chapel Committee. Six weeks later, a “special committee” met which condemned three Circuit leaders as “constant wranglers and sowers of discord among the brethren.” Also, one of these three, James Broad, was to be reported to the District Committee “as one who slights

---

127 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1862, CCRO.

128 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1909, CCRO.

129 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1870, CCRO.
our religious services and refuses to lend us aid in the business matters of the Station and also as one who seeks to damage the influence, the character, and usefulness of our minister.”

The conflict that appears to have erupted over Henshall’s discipline pitted one group of laymen, who had positioned themselves in opposition to the minister, against another group siding with the itinerant. The conflict reached a climax at the 6 March 1871 Quarter Day meeting. Someone at the meeting moved Resolution “31”: “That this meeting considers that the Special Committee called to charge Christopher Taylor C. H. Chatwin George Willott James Pickford and James Broad to the District Committee acted illegally.” Immediately following this entry appears the number “32,” presumably for resolution “32.” However, following the number is one word: “That.” After a large space, a terse notation appears: “Termination of business for this day.”

Following the notations of the 6 March meeting appear the minutes for another “Special Committee meeting” held the next night, along with two undated resumptions of the “adjourned” Quarter Day meeting. The 7 March meeting seems to have been called and dominated by the opposite side as that which controlled the 25 January meeting. Among the resolutions of the 7 March meeting was a mandate to send a letter of “information and enquiry” to the District Committee regarding the “disturbance of yesterday.” This letter was to be accompanied by another letter that had been read to the “Special Committee.” This second letter would be sent after appropriate “alterations and additions” had been made to it. Whatever the nature of the problem, the

130 The minutes of this meeting, held on 25 January 1871 are titled “Special Committee Meeting at Congleton,” “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1871, CCRO.

131 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1871, CCRO.
“Special Committee” believed that it affected the Circuit so deeply that it ordered the preparation of “sheets” for the members of the Congleton and Buglawton Chapels. The content of these “sheets” is unknown. However, it may have related to issues of loyalty as the Committee decided that Society members would sign them at a meeting to be held the following Tuesday.132

In the minutes of the “adjourned” Quarter Day meeting, several significant resolutions were adopted. First, the Committee voted to change itinerants. Second, they passed a motion stating “That in the opinion of this meeting Brother James Broad has done his duty as a Class Leader as far as practical.”133

This last statement provides the key to the conflict: James Broad. In the history of Congleton Chapel, there has perhaps not been any member as industrious and influential as Broad. In its 1891 obituary for him, the Primitive Methodist Magazine listed his contributions to the Connexion. Broad had been a local preacher and class leader for forty-seven years; a frequent delegate to District conferences and twice a delegate to general conferences; the treasurer of the Chapel and school in Congleton for thirty years reducing their debts by 900 pounds; and he had travelled during 1858 and 1859 raising £50 on behalf of the monumental chapel for Hugh Bourne on Mow Cop.134 Broad also had had influence in the wider community of Congleton. A 1968 article in the Congleton Chronicle that quoted a November 1888 obituary for Broad in its predecessor, the

132 “Minutes of A Special Committee Meeting Held Tuesday March 7th.” “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1871, CCRO.

133 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1871, CCRO.

134 PMM, 1991, 632, JRUL. Enthusiasm for the Memorial Chapel and Monument never seemed to be great in the Circuit. It may have been that Broad was responsible for the genesis of the idea. For Broad’s involvement, see also “Home Intelligence,” PMM (1858): 553-554, JRUL. The magazine stated that Broad’s work to raise funds for the project was begun with “his accustomed earnestness and energy.”
Congleton Mercury, stated that Broad was also involved in municipal affairs as a liberal member of the Tory-dominated Corporation.135

References to Broad in the Primitive Methodist Magazine portray him as intimately involved in Congleton Chapel matters as a leader and benefactor. Twice, in 1851 and 1852, the Primitive Methodist Magazine reported that at Congleton tea meetings, all the provision was supplied by Mr. James Broad “assisted by two or three friends.”136 A similar report published in 1857 stated that a Christmas Day Tea Meeting, at which 200 attended, raised about £10. After the meeting, an “exceedingly interesting meeting was held in the chapel” with “Short and pointed addresses” by four speakers including Broad. Charles Smallman, the Congleton itinerant and writer of the report noted that “Congleton chapel has long been a burden, but some of our friends are contemplating paying off 100 pounds of the debt.” Included in the benefactors was Broad whose contribution was £10.137 A report of an Annual Tea Meeting held on 26 December 1859 depicted Broad, “our esteemed friend,” as presiding. This highly successful meeting raised £40 for debt reduction.138 An obituary appearing in the Primitive Methodist Magazine in 1868 written by John Heath, the itinerant for Congleton at that time, described the tragic story of the death of seven people in a house fire. James Broad is found here too, delivering “a very appropriate and affecting address at the grave.”139

136 PMM (1851): 119 and 1852, 182, JRUL.
137 PMM (1857): 115, JRUL.
138 PMM (1860): 118, JRUL.
139 PMM (1868): 240-242, JRUL.
The extent and scope of Broad's power appears to have been augmented by a connection with Hugh Bourne that may have served to legitimate Broad's position. He was to be heeded because he was a close associate of the founder. Alcock found that, in an ordinary Census taken in 1851, the elderly Bourne was listed as staying with the Broad family in Congleton. The obituary for Broad published in 1891 by the Primitive Methodist Magazine remembered that Broad brought Bourne's last message to the Connexional Conference. John Cooper, the writer of this obituary, citing an earlier source, also stated that Broad was the last preacher to whom Bourne listened.

Not only did Broad possess the power to challenge the itinerant successfully, he may have already established a precedent for confrontation with clergy. At the 12 December 1859 Quarter Day meeting, a resolution passed calling for permission from General Conference to hire W. R. Foxlow as a second itinerant preacher. The Committee minutes listed Foxlow as the Secretary for this meeting. In spite of looming economic disaster, Circuit growth had been lively. Undoubtedly, the increasing demands on the lone itinerant made such a plan seem not only feasible but also necessary. However, four months later, at the 12 March 1860 meeting, a resolution passed that the Circuit Committee be "exonerated from all blame in the matter of Bro. Foxlow's examination."

This turn of events is all the more puzzling since the Committee explicitly stated that Foxlow's doctrinal examination had been satisfactory. Nine days later, on 21 March 1860, the minutes of the resumption of the adjourned 12 March meeting contain the statement

140 Alcock, 60.

141 PMM (1891): 632, JRUL. According to Cooper, Bourne’s last message was consistent with his growing preoccupation with children in his last years: “Tell them to take care of the children.” Also, see John Anderson, Kinsey Street, 12.
that Foxlow's behaviour is considered to be "censurable" toward "Mr. Hill," the senior itinerant. At the 11 June 1860 Quarter Day meeting, the Committee acknowledged that Foxlow had gone to Manchester and that he had resigned as itinerant but the members wondered if he had resigned as a Chapel member also. At a subsequent meeting held 27 June 1860, James Broad as President received £3, or six weeks salary, for Foxlow.

Nearly a year later, the impact of this matter was being felt still. At the 11 March 1861 meeting, the minutes noted that three had left the Circuit due to Mr. Hill's influence. This seems to show that at least some resentment was directed toward the senior itinerant. However, in the 1860 Annual Return, the Committee requested a third year for Hill in Congleton. Congleton had a heavy debt and Hill had been successful in reducing it by £90. The Committee wanted him to remain in order to reduce the debt further and to help raise funds for the Bourne Chapel.

It is difficult to determine the meaning of these ambiguous reports. Broad's role in the events is unclear. However, three interpretations are possible: Broad may have been acting in an official capacity conveying money to Foxlow as part of some severance agreement. Similarly, Foxlow may have extracted money from the Committee through coercion of some sort, and Broad served as an intermediary between the Committee and Foxlow. On the other hand, Broad may have been acting as Foxlow's defender in the context of a power struggle with Hill. The involvement of a layperson of the stature of Broad in such a partisan manner would have, most certainly, compromised Hill's position.142 These events may depict Broad not only as a prominent lay leader but also as an adversary of the clergy.

142 "Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings," D, 1860 and 1861, CCRO.
The 1870 conflict proved to be far more damaging to the Chapel and Circuit than that of 1859. Whatever the cause of this conflict that became so tempestuous following the Quarter Day meeting of 5 December 1870, the repercussions are obvious. The turmoil had an immediate effect on both the Circuit and the Chapel. The complete absence of both Circuit Annual Returns and Chapel Schedules for 1871 through 1873 shows the degree to which these events disturbed the equilibrium of both the Circuit and Chapel. The 1870 return, written in early 1871, included the terse comment that there had been one expulsion from the society for immoral conduct. This may represent the final decision concerning Matthew Henshall by James Broad’s victorious party. Most significantly, the 1874 Congleton Chapel Schedule shows that the membership of the Chapel had declined by almost fifty percent from 147 to seventy-six, a loss from which the Chapel never recovered. Even Broad appears to have been damaged by his actions. The *Primitive Methodist Magazine*, which featured so many comments concerning his activities in Congleton, is totally silent concerning Broad from 1868 until it published his obituary in 1891, three years after his death.

War

It becomes more difficult to find sources of “declines” after 1874 since the amount and quality of evidence diminished as time went on. However, scattered attributions do

---

143 The conflict arose in the same meeting as the reduction of penalty in the Matthew Henshall case. If Emma Broad was James Broad’s daughter, then it is probable that the discord arose because of the reaction of an enraged father who believed that the penalty was not just.

144 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1871, CCRO.

145 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1874. CCRO.

146 John Anderson stated that, in the late twentieth century, the maintenance of records appeared to diminish in importance to Methodists in the United Kingdom. John Anderson, Interview.
appear in the documents. During the war years from 1939 to 1945, for example, when a decline might have been expected, the Congleton Circuit maintained stasis in membership at least as recorded in its yearly reports. However, some doubt is cast on the veracity of these reports by the comments of itinerant John Wilson in 1940. On a new form in the yearly report called “Return of Information Required by the Connexional Class Leaders Committee,” question three read “Are there any indications of a renewal of vital religion in your Circuit?” Dejectedly, Wilson responded, “No. A generation of workers was lost in 1914-1918. The next generation which was just coming into activity has gone, or is going.” From Wilson’s perspective, the situation that had prevailed in Congleton and throughout the country, represented profound decline.

Local Conditions

Occasionally, during the long period of economic difficulty, itinerants made other attributions of blame in their reports. Unique local circumstances seemed to play at least some role in exacerbating “declines.” The 5 March 1866 Quarter Day meeting minutes, for example, included the resolution “That a day of humiliation and prayer be held in this station on the first Sunday of the new plan to implore the blessing of the Almighty upon us and our nation one Sermon shall be preached at each place upon the ‘Cattle Plague.’” The Circuit Annual Report for 1874 blamed the decline of Sunday School attendance in the Circuit from 700 to 629 on the state of trade in the Circuit and “Clerical Intolerance of

147 “Annual Returns,” D, 1940, CCRO.

148 “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 5 Mar. 1866, CCRO.
Landlord Desposesing . . . [sic]" Within one year, however, the latter problem had been resolved and Sunday School attendance had climbed to 729.149

**Accumulation of Debt**

In two episodes of decline inaugurated by capital expenditures, financial stress not initiated by distress in the social fabric of society in general appears to have played a prominent role in the onset of a decline. In the year that construction began on the new Chapel, the Chapel Schedule listed the Chapel’s debt at £15. In 1890, the debt stood at a gargantuan £1,100. Not until after 1896, when the debt had risen by a further £100, did the Chapel begin to lessen the stress of the accumulated financial burden. From 1889 to 1891, the Chapel experienced dramatic decline and that decline continued until 1896. By that year, the loss in membership had reached thirty-six percent.150

Early in the twentieth century, when the Chapel undertook to build a new organ, the debt had been reduced to £850. Also, the organ was underwritten almost in its totality by a Carnegie grant and other gifts so that it did not place another burden on the Chapel membership. However, membership declined from 1904 to 1905 by a further 21.5 percent, reaching a dangerous low of only fifty.151 This may indicate that although further financial stress was not placed on the membership, a lingering suspicion of economic decisions made by the leadership was nonetheless present in a membership that had become wary of large expenditures.

---

149 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1874 and 1875, CCRO.

150 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1889-1896, CCRO.

151 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1904 and 1905, CCRO.
Significantly, during the early 1890s, Chapel attendance actually increased in contrary motion to the declining membership. From 1889 to 1894, attendance almost doubled, rising from 160 to 300. This may indicate that for those on the periphery who were not deeply committed and so felt economic obligations less keenly, the accumulated debt was no barrier to involvement. However, it does not appear that those peripheral adherents deepened their commitment over time. For the members, the accumulated debt appears to have been a mechanism that led to disaffection and to withdrawal of commitment.

_Competition_

The 1874 report assigned blame to another factor that proved to be much more enduring than the “Cattle Plague” or an irascible landlord: competition with other denominations. The writer of the report blamed “our great want of day Schools . . .” without which it was difficult to cope with other “denominations.” Failure to match services or failure to provide them as effectively as competitors meant loss. Although there appears to have been some co-operation with others as time went on, especially the Wesleyans, Circuit reports include numerous references to defection from the Circuit’s Societies to other groups. A vivid example of the effect of competition on the life of a religious group is found in the 1895 Annual Report. The author noted that preaching places had declined in the past year from five to two and that the Circuit had lost the Wornish Nook Chapel because the Circuit had sold it to the Wesleyans. A poignant note

152 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1889-1894. CCRO.

153 “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1874, CCRO.

154 See, for example, Annual Report of the Circuit for 1848, the 5 March 1866 Quarter Day meeting minutes; and 2 December 1867 Quarter Day meeting minutes. “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1848, CCRO and “Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings,” D, 1866 and 1867, CCRO.
was included: the loss of preaching places occurred because “we had neither preaching houses, nor members, nor congregations, nor revival.”

**Union**

When, in 1932, union finally occurred with the Wesleyans after years of debate and negotiation, the two Congleton Circuits remained intact and their relationship appears to have experienced the tensions consistent with those found in many English Circuits after union. At union, the former Wesleyan Wagg Street Circuit became “Congleton # 1 Circuit” and the Kinsey Street Circuit became “Congleton # 2 Circuit.” During the Second World War, an attempt at co-operation can be seen in the introduction of a joint Circuit preaching plan with pulpit exchanges. However, following the war, this practice was discontinued.

Beginning in the 1960s, the Kinsey Street Chapel and its Circuit became objects of the Methodist Church’s attempts to rationalise services. Originally, a plan developed during that decade proposed the amalgamation of four chapels into one: Wagg Street, Kinsey Street, Queen Street, and Brook Street were to be combined with a new central building to be built on the Wagg Street site. That Kinsey Street and Wagg Street were separate Circuits complicated the plan. Kinsey Street refused to go forward with the strategy and, as John Anderson has stated, the Chapel maintained a slow pattern of decline

---

155 “Circuit Annual Reports and Schedules,” D, 1895, CCRO. According to John Sebire, the Congleton Chapel was at the height of its popularity from 1892 to 1896, under the leadership of Adam Glegg. He cited the Baptismal Register used from 1822 to the early 1990s as proof stating that during this time there were 126 baptisms from families related to the Congleton Chapel. In 1996, this register was missing. However, the issue is not baptisms but the number of baptisms in concert with all other membership information. Certainly, it appears that, in Glegg’s mind, this period was not a high point in the history of Chapel and Circuit. See John F. Sebire, “Kinsey Street Methodist Chapel, Congleton,” *Journal of the Congleton History Society* 6 (1985): 11-13.

156 Alcock, 62. See, also, Burgess.
thereafter until the ministry of Ralph Dale who came in the 1980s. Under his leadership, the Chapel began to experience growth, due, in Anderson’s opinion, to the establishment of an innovative Friday night Youth Club.\textsuperscript{157}

In 1969, a new plan for restructuring was introduced, focusing not on amalgamation of Chapels but of Circuits. The 20 June 1969 headline of the Congleton Chronicle read “Circuit Changes for Methodists.” After 134 years, the end of the Kinsey Street Circuit came with amalgamation of the Wagg Street and Kinsey Street Circuits to form two new Circuits: Congleton Circuit and Biddulph and Mow Cop Circuit. In an interview with the press, a Church official stated that the amalgamation would “enable the whole area to operate more effectively.”\textsuperscript{158}

The 12 February 1993 headline of the Congleton Chronicle heralded “Here a New Church Will Rise.” The story under the headline reported that a ceremony had celebrated the beginning of construction on a new site of a new Chapel to be known as “Wellspring Methodist Church.”\textsuperscript{159} With the building of a new Chapel for members of the old Kinsey Street Society, attempts at rationalisation of services came to an end. However, built only after considerable controversy involving both town authorities and residents, the new Chapel was, according to Anderson, expensive to build and in close proximity to Trinity Methodist Church, the successor to the old Wagg Street Chapel.\textsuperscript{160} At the end of the

\textsuperscript{157} John Anderson, Interview.


\textsuperscript{159} Congleton Chronicle, 12 February 1993.

\textsuperscript{160} Throughout 1992, the Congleton Chronicle reported the laborious process through which the Society went in order to win approval for the building of the new Church over objections of some Congleton residents. See, for example, “New Plan for Methodist Church,” 31 Jan. 1992, 13; “Church Plan Still in the
twentieth century, these two Chapels continued, distinguishable in piety, in Anderson’s opinion, only by their worship practices. Wellspring, according to Anderson, was generally less formal than Trinity as seen, for example, in its use of music groups.\textsuperscript{161}

The relationship between tensions caused by union and declines is difficult to ascertain. If Currie is correct in his assertion that union is itself a function of decline, then subfunctions of union such as Chapel and Circuit amalgamations can also be seen as symptomatic of ongoing decline. Certainly, the Kinsey Street Society did not appear to have reaped any substantial benefit from union. However, the exercise of caution is necessary given both the complexity of the Chapel’s historical process during this period and the presence of other sources of decline. Indeed, the fragmentary evidence that we have suggests that significant numerical decline did not reoccur until the 1960s long after union. Table 20 shows that class membership for example, did not decrease but grew steadily through the 1950s. While union may have been a response to decline, initially, union did not exacerbate decline.

Chapel membership also increased at least until 1956. From 1953 to 1956 alone, the membership grew by forty-two and stayed relatively constant through 1959. The last drastic decline began and appears to have continued throughout the 1960s, a period for which no Annual Returns are available.

\textsuperscript{161} Anderson, Interview.
Table 20. Class Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Dec. 1942</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Feb. 1943</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Dec. 1947</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 May 1949</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 Dec. 1949</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Dec. 1950</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 Nov. 1951</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Dec. 1952</td>
<td>94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Dec. 1953</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Sept. 1955</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The sources of the long period of decline that occurred from 1959 onward are even more difficult to ascertain since little evidence is available. In minutes of local preachers’ meetings held during the 1950s, only one expression of concern regarding the health of the Circuit can be found. The minutes show that Fred Howells, who later defected to the Pentecostals,

made a plea for more prayer meetings remarking, there was only on [sic] place on the Circuit where prayer was wont to be made. It was recognized that such meetings were a source of power and that we need to tap that source, if we desired to make progress in the winning of souls for the Kingdom.\(^{162}\)

Whether or not a lack of the spiritual discipline of prayer led to decline lies beyond the realm of history and so beyond the purview of this study. Undoubtedly, however, the social turbulence in Western societies that was characteristic of the 1960s, played a significant role as a source of decline as it did in many religious bodies on both sides of the

\(^{162}\) "Trustees’ Minutes,” D, Feb. 1939-Sept. 1955. CCRO.
Atlantic. However, in light of the dearth of evidence from this period, caution must be exercised in allocating responsibility.

The spectre of competition rose once again in the 1960s, ironically, through contact with another revival group, the Pentecostals. By 1949, leakage had been occurring with some regularity. In the 1949 report, the category of "removals" had been amended to include not only those who had gone to another Circuit but also those who had gone to other denominations. In the 1960s, Pentecostalism appears to have become a direct threat to Methodist stability in the Congleton area. John Anderson stated that while there was no large-scale defection of Kinsey Street Chapel members to the Pentecostals in the 1960s, several key leaders did desert. These defections apparently followed the introduction of Pentecostal elements into worship at the Kinsey Street Chapel, resulting in discomfort for some. In the tensions that followed, lay preachers Fred Howells and Peter Martin both left to become Pentecostal pastors. In the 1990s, Howells and Martin were separated by schism. The Assemblies of God in Congleton, under Howell's leadership, purchased the old Unitarian Church, while a schismatic group under Martin's leadership formed "New Life Christian Fellowship."

Pentecostals also affected other Societies in the area. Under Pentecostal influence, the Mow Cop Chapel experienced increased attendance in the 1960s. Led by John

---

163 "Primitive Methodist (Kinsey Street) Circuit: Minutes of Local Preachers Meetings: June 1953 - May 1968," D, CCRO. Howells' concern regarding the importance of prayer is consistent with Bourne's early conviction that prayer was crucial to the success of camp meetings.

164 "Annual Returns," D, 1949, CCRO. This is consistent with Alan Gilbert's idea of the development of a religious group into a "denomination" which is concerned with maintaining a market share, understanding itself as one alternative among a variety of equally valid alternatives rather than as a distinctive group possessing the truth. This sense of acceptance of others had its limits, however. The 1950 Annual Return complained that gambling had increased in the area because of a football pool run by St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church to aid its Day School. "Annual Returns," D, 1950, CCRO.
Comber[?]^bach whose family was from the Mow Cop Chapel, a “mass exodus” eventually took place and the Pentecostals began worshipping, in John Anderson’s words, in a “hut.” In the late 1970s or early 1980s, they built a new church. Ironically, in Kidsgrove, at the base of Mow Cop, Pentecostals purchased the Primitive Methodist Chapel that had been rebuilt in 1930.165

It is tempting to affirm that the effects of union combined with renewed competition to produce a decline. However, if this is true, then, undoubtedly, those factors worked in concert with the general social upheaval that Western society experienced during the 1960s.

_Loss of Distinctive Characteristics_

In piety, the Primitive Methodists resembled their many evangelical cousins on both sides of the Atlantic. Especially in the early years, they clearly maintained the four characteristics that David W. Bebbington has used to define “evangelicalism.”166 A description of an open air meeting in Congleton, published in the 1832 volume of _Primitive Methodist Magazine_, shows, for example, the crucicentric nature of Primitive Methodist theology. The magazine chose this event to offer editorial comment on the nature of preaching:

_The exhortations or the short preaching on such occasions, should be fully on the atonement, the great sacrifice offered once for all . . . . This must be the chief, main point . . . The speaker fixing his mind on the great atonement, must look fully for the continual descending of the grace of God, the pouring out of the heavenly_

---

165 John Anderson, Interview. The Kidsgrove experience parallels the selling of the Wornish Nook Chapel to the Wesleyans in 1895.

166 Perhaps Bebbington’s most succinct statement of his list of defining features of all evangelicals is found in his article “Evangelicalism in Its Settings: The British and American Movements since 1940,” in _Modern Christian Revivals_, 365-388. His list includes conversionism; activism; Biblicism; and crucicentrism. See, especially, 366.
baptism, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. This only can give success to the preaching and praying labours.\textsuperscript{167}

The Bibliocentricity of Primitive Methodism is demonstrated by the biography of Jane Foster, a local preacher and class leader from Congleton. The writer stated that she studied Scripture diligently and "her diligent perusal thereof increased her love for Primitive Methodism."\textsuperscript{168} An 1858 report in the \textit{Primitive Methodist Magazine} by the Congleton itinerant, Charles Smallman, affirmed the presence in Congleton Primitive Methodism of the conversionist and activist emphases of evangelicalism. Smallman reported that the Circuit was going well, especially at Mow Cop where "revival" had begun after a local preacher who was a miner had fallen down a shaft and drowned. Smallman stated that

we commenced our meetings, a revival broke out, which resulted in the conversion of about forty souls. From that time the cause has steadily advanced; and I have no doubt that a considerable impetus was given to it by the great Jubilee Camp Meeting, which was held at Mow, in May, 1857.

Later in the report, he rejoiced that "a few weeks ago" there had been 50 more conversions including "some of the vilest characters," resulting in a society that had "nearly 100 members."\textsuperscript{169}

Theologically, Primitive Methodists were evangelicals sharing a common matrix of beliefs with many others. Primitive Methodists appear to have had only one distinctive attribute, a characteristic that lay not in the realm of theology but in that of practice: an emphasis on preaching beyond regularly established settings of worship. This distinctive was, especially in Primitive Methodism's early days, expressed through outdoor Camp

\textsuperscript{167} "A Meeting in the Town of Congleton," \textit{PMM} (1832): 195. JRUL.

\textsuperscript{168} "Biographical Sketches," \textit{PMM} (1850): 385, JRUL.

\textsuperscript{169} "Home Intelligence -- Work of God," \textit{PMM} (1858): 553-554, JRUL.
Meetings. As time went on, this distinctive practice became expressed in more formal and ritualised settings.\textsuperscript{170} If this practice was the distinctive characteristic of Primitive Methodism, then decline can be measured through following its progressive loss.

In Congleton Circuit Returns, reference to planned “revivals,” “camp meetings,” and “protracted meetings,” can be found down through the decades. However, as time passed, a slow decline can be seen both in the frequency of these meetings and in the number of reports of their success.

Concern regarding Camp Meetings is evident by the 1880s. In 1885, the Connexion appeared to have a felt need to hold circuits accountable for maintaining the camp meeting tradition. On the 1885 Circuit Report form, itinerants were asked “What attention have you paid to the holding of open-air services and with what results?” Following union, the form for reporting results underwent a long process of change. In 1934, the form asked for comment regarding “Open-Air Work”; by 1937, a question was again used “What is being done to secure Open-Air Work in your Circuit”; in 1953, this question became subsumed under “Home Missions” as subsection “ii.”\textsuperscript{171}

The changes after union in 1933 give the impression of growing discomfort with the idea of camp meetings. This may be due, at least partially, to Wesleyan influence. What is certain is that the language in the reports shows a slow loss of enthusiasm for and

\textsuperscript{170} For the relationship between this stylisation of the “camp meeting” and institutionalisation, see Obelkevich, above n. 56. The distinctions among these kinds of meetings are expressed succinctly by John Anderson: In England, “Camp Meetings” were not overnight events as in the United States but, typically, one-day events. “Revival Meetings” were held indoors and were somehow different from “Camp Meetings” although the differences are hard to ascertain. “Protracted Meetings” were understood to be in-door “Camp Meetings” and may have featured different preaching stands throughout the Chapel.

\textsuperscript{171} “Annual Reports and Schedules,” D, 1934, 1937, and 1953, CCRO.
commitment to the distinctive practice of Primitive Methodism. The shift in nomenclature that occurred over time can be seen in Table 21.

Table 21. References to Open-Air “Revival” Activities in Circuit Returns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1885</td>
<td>“We have held open-air services at several places, especially in the towns, with encouraging results.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1898</td>
<td>“Camp Meetings have been held at most of our places, &amp; in some cases occasional open-air Services. Results in some cases have been very cheering.” [emphasis mine].</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1900</td>
<td>Q. 7: “Camp Meetings have been held at several places we trust with good results.” [emphasis mine] There is no mention of outdoor preaching.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>“We have held Camp Meetings and open air Missions with good results.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1902</td>
<td>“We have held Camp Meetings with good results.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>“Fair attention with encouraging results.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>“We have given increased attention to the holding of camp meetings . . . .”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>“The usual services have been held with gratifying Results.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>“Camp Meetings have been held at most of the places on the Circuit and they were nearly all wet ones.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>“Camp Meetings were arranged for the summer months at most of the places in the Circuit. Not many were held out of doors owing to weather conditions. Those that could be held were well-supported.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td>“Several Camp Meetings have been held with encouraging results.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1927</td>
<td>“Camp Meetings have been held at 4 places -- Large congregations assembled.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>“Camp Meetings have been held at several places, large congregations, good services.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1934</td>
<td>“Some Camp Meetings held during the summer.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>“We hold Camp Meetings and other open air services during summer.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 21 – *Continued*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1940</td>
<td>“CAMP MEETINGS AND OTHER OPEN-AIR SERVICES.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>“Camp Meetings.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>“Camp Meetings are held with great Success.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1948</td>
<td>Camp Meetings held in four locations with “good success.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>“Camp Meetings held in most places, and open air witness arranged.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Loss of commitment to the defining distinctive practice of the group raises a serious ontological problem. If Wellspring Methodist Church has surrendered its distinctive practice and is distinguishable from the Wesleyan Trinity Methodist Church only by a loosely defined informality of worship, then it could be said that Congleton Primitive Methodism has experienced not just a “decline” but has suffered final decline and has ceased-to-be.

The concept of “union” is fraught with implications. While the historical process of the Chapel did not cease, the Chapel and the Circuit appear to have surrendered much of their identity. With the establishment of the new Congleton and Biddulph and Mow Cop Circuits in 1969, the last vestiges of the Primitive Methodist heritage of the Kinsey Street Circuit were lost. When a group relinquishes essential attributes of identity, in a real sense, “ceasing-to-be” has occurred since the original entity no longer exists. In this context, union should be seen as a strategy that has become necessary because of

---

un arrested decline. In the face of continued, unabating decline, the impulse to survive appears to be so powerful that a group will become something new in order to continue in history. While the new has points of contact with the old, the new, nonetheless, represents an attempt to survive in the face of wider change in the world that made continuance of the old no longer tenable.

Conclusions

Crucial to understanding declines in the Congleton Chapel and Circuit is the role of lay leadership. The rise to a position of dominance in terms of wealth and power of one lay person can, without corresponding checks and balances, provide a lightning rod for conflict. This is seen most vividly in the role of James Broad over an extended period of time and most especially in the discord of 1871. The potency of this factor can be seen in the failure of the Kinsey Street Chapel to recover from the losses that ensued from the conflict between Broad and his party and those who supported the itinerant. That lay leadership became such a strong factor both in the development of the Chapel and Circuit and in their declines, points to an underlying foundational constituent of the very being of Congleton Primitive Methodism. Primitive Methodists in Congleton seem to have been imbued with the same values as those found in the general populace: independence of mind, the disposition of an outsider, and strength of will in the face of adversity. These values appear to have been crucial in the development of a basic character that has conditioned the entire, historical process of Congleton Primitive Methodism.

Failure to believe and to act in ways consistent with current social values appears to precipitate decline, especially when success came, originally, from responding to those values. John Andrew provided a cogent example of this: the value he placed on
"usefulness" (sic) found expression in public preaching by lay leaders. The loss of venues for outdoor preaching and a corresponding rise of professionalism in the clergy meant that laypersons like Andrew were deprived of ways to express their leadership skills and aspirations.

Discipline issues appear to have played a significant role as sources of decline in the Chapel and Circuit. Ironically, both failure to enforce discipline and, conversely, strong enforcement of discipline, seem to have precipitated decline. In the former instance, loss of credibility resulted from laxity; in the latter, strong discipline ran the risk of alienating members.

Economic distress played a major role as a source of declines especially following the calamitous collapse of the silk trade. However, the relationship between economic distress and "declines" in Congleton Primitive Methodism was complex. It appears that economic distress in the short term did not result in decline. The Circuit actually grew during the first four years after the collapse in 1860. Only after a prolonged period of distress, when no relief was apparent, did the economic circumstances begin to affect the Chapel and Circuit adversely.

Stress placed on membership through the acquisition of great debt appears to have provided another economic precipitant of decline. Evidence shows that Chapel membership declined significantly following the construction of the new Chapel in 1890, and that, at least until 1909 when Chapel membership ceased to be reported, recovery never occurred.

The acquisition of debt was not the only way in which financial expenditure appears to have influenced the life of the Chapel negatively as seen in the decline that
followed the purchase of the new organ. When the members had been traumatised by earlier financial policies, a residual effect appears to have been present for an indeterminate period of time.

Finally, the relationship of the loss of distinctive beliefs or practices to decline is difficult to measure but may nonetheless be significant. When a group has surrendered that which made it distinct from others, it has lost that which made it attractive to the segment of the population that made up its original constituency. The loss of distinctive characteristics forces the group to compete with a host of competitors for a limited constituency. When this occurs, the group is forced to rely on matters of style to win its market share, a circumstance that can only lead to a narrow circumscription of possibilities for growth.

Accompanying these major factors were others of varying intensity and kind: the debilitating effects of war, the pressures of dealing with competition, and unforeseen, transient local conditions.

Throughout the ongoing historical process of Congleton Primitive Methodism, a dynamic set of factors and their conjunctions served as the sources for declines. The factors that led to declines and the ways in which they interacted can be confirmed, clarified, and enlarged through reference to the historical process of St. Paul the Apostle Church in New York City.
CHAPTER 4

THE CHURCH OF ST. PAUL THE APOSTLE, MANHATTAN, NEW YORK

The origins of the Primitive Methodist Chapel in Congleton and of St. Paul the Apostle Roman Catholic Church in Manhattan were dramatically different. The Primitive Methodist Chapel, while situated in the heartland of Primitive Methodism, was established comparatively late in the formative years of the larger body of which it was a part, and, ecclesiastically, did not appear to occupy a place of prestige or singular honour in the life of the Connexion. The Church of St. Paul the Apostle, on the other hand, was intended to be, and understood to be, the mother Church of the Paulist Fathers and as such, to occupy a position of primacy in the religious group of which it was a part. In spite of such an obvious contrast, from their earliest moments, the two shared a driving concern: an evangelical compulsion to evangelise, to attract converts.

Origins: The Parish as "Perpetual Mission"

As stated in the original Rule and Constitution approved by Archbishop John Hughes of New York on 10 July 1858, the Paulists adopted the name "The Congregation of Missionary Priests of St. Paul the Apostle."¹ The overriding concern of these priests

---

¹ Due to residual feelings from the conflict regarding the status of Hecker and the others, Vatican officials pressed them not to use the title "Congregation" since the Vatican had not determined their status either as a Congregation or as a Society. Instead, they took the title "Institute." In 1929, the Paulists officially became a "Society" when the Vatican gave a ten-year approval of their new Constitutions. However, the weightier appellation of "Congregation" still remained in the popular abbreviation "CSP." McVann's unpublished history remains as perhaps the most detailed source both of Paulist history and of the history of the parish of St. Paul the Apostle. More recent writers such as Joseph Scott and Dolan rely on McVann extensively. McVann, x and xi. See also Joseph Scott, A Century and More of Reaching Out: An Historical Sketch of the Parish of St. Paul the Apostle (New York: The Missionary Society of St. Paul the Apostle in the State of New York, 1983) and Dolan, Catholic Revivalism.
who had chosen the name of St. Paul to describe their aims and aspirations was missionary activity in the United States. James A. McVann has stated in his history of the Society that "evangelism remained the sole stated purpose of the Community until 1967, when ecumenism was added to the ‘Nature and Purpose’ chapter of the Constitutions."²

When, in the earliest years of the Society’s history, its members decided to consent to an urgent request from Hughes for the establishment of a new parish under their direction, fears were evoked that parish involvement would inevitably cause the Paulist commitment to missions to suffer. Only months before, Hecker had written to the other members from Rome stating bluntly, “Parish work would be the grave of our little band.”³ However, Hecker, in the light of provisional approval from the Vatican and faced with the purely temporal need of a base for operations in America, was able to reconcile the two commitments. He came to view St. Paul the Apostle parish as an opportunity to institute a “perpetual mission” where the excellence of preaching and liturgy would have an ameliorating effect on Catholic life and would also attract non-Catholics.⁴

Increasingly, the notion of parish life as “perpetual mission” became important to the Paulists, perhaps as a way of dealing with the obvious pressures that parish ministry placed on missionary activity. However, the tension between the demands of parish life and the drive to evangelise was to be felt at least until the post-Vatican II period. A letter written in 1930 by Paulist Superior-General John B. Harney to Guy Quinan, a Paulist priest, demonstrates this clearly. Harney was writing with regard to the Paulist parish in

² McVann, x and xvi.
³ Scott, 13.
Portland, Oregon, where the archbishop had become dissatisfied with Quinan’s work as superior and pastor because he was “primarily engaged in mission work” to the detriment of his care of the parish. Harney wrote to Quinan acknowledging that Quinan’s heart was committed to evangelism through missions to the point that “so strong is that desire of yours, that you are willing, and would prefer to resign the Superiorship with which the Pastorate is bound up, rather than confine yourself to the parish and its activities.”

Hecker’s intent was not that a choice between pastoral care and evangelism would have to be made, but that Paulist parishes would be, both in evangelistic endeavour and in pastoral ministry, workshops in which the values and goals of the Society could be expressed on an ongoing basis. Through excellence in preaching, music, liturgy, and missionary fervour, St. Paul the Apostle Church would become the model for other parishes to follow.

Social Development in Midtown Manhattan

The social context into which the Paulists moved to establish their “perpetual mission” and the wholesale changes in that context over time, are crucial to understanding the historical process of the parish. Unlike Congleton, the ethnic and racial context in which the religious group lived changed dramatically. Socially, while both Congleton and Manhattan experienced the effects of common nineteenth- and twentieth-century processes

5 John B. Harney to Guy Quinan, ALS, 10 Jan. 1930, APF.

6 The towering sarcophagus of Isaac Hecker expressed his vision succinctly. Hecker’s desire to present an apologetic to American society that Catholic culture was superior to Protestant culture and indeed the only medium through which American culture could reach true fulfilment, fuelled his activities and can be seen, for example, in the establishment of the periodical The Catholic World in 1865. As Scott has stated, The Catholic World “strove to capture within its pages the best in Catholic thought, poetry, and literature, and even engaged successfully in a test of wits with Harper’s Weekly, the leading American Magazine of that day.” Scott, 9.
such as urbanisation and modernisation, the interplay of these factors was significantly different in each case.

The parish of St. Paul the Apostle as organized in 1858 was exceptionally large, with boundaries extending from Manhattan's West Fifty-second Street in the south, to West One Hundred and Ninth Street in the north, and from Seventh Avenue in the east, to the Hudson River in the West. As additional new parishes were organized in the second half of the nineteenth century, the parish progressively contracted. By the 1870s, the northern boundary had become West Seventy-fifth Street and the southern, West Fifty-fourth Street. In 1887, the boundaries again contracted: the northern boundary became West Sixty-fourth Street and the eastern boundary extended only to Central Park. This configuration of borders continued into the twentieth century.  

The new parish on the West Side of Manhattan Island, over which Hughes asked the Paulists to take leadership, became, in Dolan's words, the "favourite locale" of Catholic immigrants to New York City in the nineteenth century. The original constituency of the parish was first and second-generation Irish immigrants. A study of names in one of the few "Parish Notice Books" that are still extant shows that during the early years of the parish's life, the membership was overwhelmingly Irish. The 1866 "Parish Notice Book" recorded the names of parish members for whom the marriage banns were read, or who were married at the Church, or for whom prayers were offered either during times of sickness or following death. Of the 288 different names I found, all but a

---

7 Scott's expression of Hecker's vision for the parish is perhaps the best concise statement of Hecker's plans. Scott, 13-21.

8 Dolan has a brief description of the process of parish development in Catholic Revivalism, 116-118.

9 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 116.
few were names associated explicitly with the United Kingdom and the great majority of these were Irish. The following is a brief sample:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Middle Name</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ann Sheridan</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>Farrell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bridget Christy</td>
<td>Anna</td>
<td>Reed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Kirnan  &amp;</td>
<td>Ann</td>
<td>McCloskey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma Linskey</td>
<td>Edward</td>
<td>Mulhearn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Hagan</td>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>Duffy &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maria Hogan</td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Ann Logan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Donnell &amp;</td>
<td>Peter</td>
<td>Jansen &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mary Nelson</td>
<td>Margaret</td>
<td>Carlin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Flood &amp;</td>
<td>Joseph</td>
<td>Gunther &amp;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ellen Glynn</td>
<td>Frances</td>
<td>Delcer [?]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Barry</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>McMahon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Cavanagh</td>
<td>Mary</td>
<td>Dooley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Rickerfield</td>
<td>John</td>
<td>Morearty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Mulligan</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>Gerety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Matthew Cole &amp;</td>
<td>William</td>
<td>Egan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ann McMahon</td>
<td>Alfred</td>
<td>McMahon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Mahoney &amp;</td>
<td>Edward</td>
<td>Fagan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julia Bradley</td>
<td>Michael</td>
<td>O’Donnell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the late 1880s, a subtle demographic change had occurred. The parish was still predominantly Irish but many of the Irish families were now second-generation Americans. As shown in table 22, the Census of 1889, for example, gives the ethnic backgrounds of those resident in “Enumeration District 504,” one neighbourhood in the original parish. Table 23 provides a summary of the ethnic composition of this neighbourhood by tabulating the origins of eighty-seven individuals who lived in the District. In this neighbourhood, Irish hegemony is waning but still significant. Further north, in neighbourhoods closer to the Church, Irish dominance was more pronounced. Still, by 1889, the ethnic makeup of the West Side of Manhattan was still largely

---

10 “Parish Notice Book: 1866,” D, APF. The ampersand indicates marriage. The two non-Irish names, high-lighted in bold print, belonged to those marrying Irish parish members. A question mark indicates difficulty in discerning spelling with certainty, an entry not given, or an unrecognisable entry.
monochromatic; there were few immigrants from countries other than the United Kingdom and Germany.

These findings corroborate those of Jay Dolan. He also found that, originally, those who attended the Church were mainly Irish men and women but that, over time, the type of Irish had changed and, by the 1890s, many more second-generation Irish-Americans could be found in the parish. Dolan found that, in 1875, sixty-five per cent of the fathers of newborns were first-generation Irish immigrants but, by 1885, the number had decreased to forty-three per cent. Further, by 1890, families with mothers born in Ireland represented only thirty-seven per cent of the area’s population. Although the parish in the 1890s was still decidedly Irish, the proportion was shifting from Irish birth to American birth. Further, according to Dolan, as ethnicity did not change substantially, so the working-class nature of the parish did not change through the 1890s. Also, the least desirable circumstances, mainly below West Fifty-fourth Street, had the largest percentage of second-generation immigrants. American birth did not guarantee upward social mobility.

The change in the neighbourhood after another generation was remarkable: in the 1920 Census, “Enumeration District 799,” which covered a similar territory as District 504 in 1889, recorded only four first generation and eight second generation Irish immigrants. The decline of Irish dominance appears to be even more acute when the ethnic background of the 347 individuals recorded in that District is considered. The Irish component of the

---

11 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 124.

12 Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 125.
District had declined to only 3.5%. By this time, immigrants from Southern Europe, especially those of Italian descent, can be found in the neighbourhood.

Table 22. Manhattan Enumeration District 504

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>Father's Birth</th>
<th>Mother's Birth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Artist</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>PA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>England (?)</td>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>CT</td>
<td>CT</td>
<td>MA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchant</td>
<td>CT</td>
<td>MA</td>
<td>CT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Watchman</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dress Maker</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep House</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
<td>Hesse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook's Man</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>? Broker</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep House</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cotton Broker</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22 – Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Birth</th>
<th>Father’s Birth</th>
<th>Mother’s Birth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Keeper</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>House Keeper</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coachman</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housewife</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painter</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Delivery Clerk.</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep House</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conductor</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep House</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stable</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep House</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>? Goods</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep House</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brewer</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
<td>Wertenberg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chambermaid</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cook</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Waitress</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumber Merchant</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>ME</td>
<td>ME</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupation</td>
<td>Birth</td>
<td>Father’s Birth</td>
<td>Mother’s Birth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep House</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep House</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lumber</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>CA</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>?</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep House</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerk</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 At School</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Keep House</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At School</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>NY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Servant</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurse</td>
<td>NY</td>
<td>England</td>
<td>England</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although the neighbourhood changed ethnically, the Roman Catholic constituency of the Church may have retained its Irish flavour to a significant extent. In 1920, Joseph McSorley wrote to P. J. Ryan, the Provincial of the Christian Brothers of Ireland. In it, McSorley requested that the Brothers assume teaching duties at St. Paul the Apostle’s day

---

14 “Enumeration District 504,” National Archives Census Reports: Census Descriptions of Geographic Subdivisions and Enumeration Districts: 1830-1950, Roll 6, 1889, Vol. 3 and 4, 495, NARA. “District 504” was an area in the south of the original parish “bounded by and lying within W. 54th Street, Broadway, W. 53d St., 7th Ave., W. 52d St., and 8th Ave. . . . .” Further north, the neighbourhoods were more obviously first and second generation Irish in composition.
school. McSorley stated, "There are some 11,000 people in our parish, mainly of Irish race . . ." [sic]. The prestige that the Church had acquired in New York is seen in McSorley's comment "You are, I think, aware that our parish church is counted to be among the most important in the city . . ."  15

Table 23. Enumeration District 504: Ethnic Composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>First Generation</th>
<th>Second Generation</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>England</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scotland</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the 1930 Census, even the predominance of Irish immigrants in the "Census Tract Area" ("CTA") immediately surrounding the Church had begun to decline.  16 The new demographic unit of measurement in which the Church of St. Paul the Apostle was located was "Census Tract 151." Diagram 1 shows the boundaries that comprised the


  16 Shortly after the beginning of the twentieth century, efforts had begun to refine the manner in which Census information was collected. In 1907, the city came to an agreement with the Bureau of Census to "tract" the city. Each Census Tract was to be about forty acres in area and would be formulated according to units based on the idea of a "block." A "Block" was defined as "a self-contained entity . . . . A person who wished to observe, survey, or enumerate a block could, starting at any arbitrary point, walk the periphery of the entity without crossing any vehicular passage such as a street but excluding driveways or alleyways, and come back to the starting point." Benjamin P. Bowser, Evelyn S. Mann, and Martin Oling, Census Data With Maps For Small Areas of New York City: 1910-1960 (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1979), Reel 1, 15 and 24, New York City Public Library, (NYCPL) This study was an attempt to organise the copious amount of census information that was accumulating regarding New York City.
geographical limits of this Census Tract. St. Paul the Apostle Church was located at the southern end of the Tract's area. Of immigrants in this Census Tract, those who were first generation Irish and those with one or more parents of Irish birth ("mixed parentage"), made up only 29% of the white population of the entire Census Tract Area. Table 24 indicates that, in this CTA, combined immigration from the two southern European countries of Greece and Italy rivalled the influx of Irish immigrants.

Diagram 1. Boundaries of CTA 151

More striking is the dramatic racial change in Census Tract 151 as shown in table 25. In this CTA, a large immigration of blacks altered the demographics of the area completely.  

---

17 Bowser, Mann, and Oling, Reel 1, n. p., NYCPL.
18 Bowser, Mann, and Oling, Roll 4, 574, NYCPL.
Table 24. Foreign Born White Stock (Native White: Foreign or Mixed Parentage + Foreign Born White)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>574</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish Free State</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Germany</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 25. Race/Ethnicity – 1930.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Native White Parentage</th>
<th>Native White: Foreign or Mixed Parentage</th>
<th>Foreign Born White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>“Other Colored”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>223</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>2,889</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The next generation brought another shift as demonstrated by Ronald Conners’ demographic study in which he assessed the health needs of the constituency of Roosevelt hospital, which is situated directly across the street from St. Paul the Apostle Church. Covering a wide area of west midtown Manhattan, Conners’ work is also organised according to CTA’s. Conners found that CTA 31, which by 1970 had become the designation for the area around St. Paul the Apostle Church, was one of two CTA’s in his subject region that had the highest black population, one of four with the largest number of
Puerto Rican residents, and one of four with the highest geriatric population.\(^{19}\) Table 26 shows the racial and gender composition of CTA 31. His results for the entire area showed a major shift: Hispanics, mainly Puerto Rican, now made up a significant proportion of the population.

Results from the landmark study by Benjamin Bowser, Evelyn Mann, and Martin Oling confirm Conners' findings, as seen in table 27. This table shows a strong rise in Puerto Rican residents; in 1960, blacks and whites were almost equally represented in CTA 151 and Puerto Ricans made up 27% of the population.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>19,930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>2,925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rican</td>
<td>1,550</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10,748</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12,815</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{19}\) In 1970, CTA 31 ran from W. 58th St. to W. 94th St., and 10th Ave. to 12th Ave. Ronald B. Conners, *Manhattan's West Side: A Demographic Study* (New York: The Roosevelt Hospital, 1974), 33, 35, and 41. Conners defined "geriatric" as those individuals aged sixty years or more. The shifting boundaries of CTA's over time tend to confuse attempts to follow trends. However, with care, meaningful observations can be made.

\(^{20}\) Conners, 42. Also, the rising geriatric population constituted a shift from earlier generations when the age of the average resident was much lower.
Table 27. Tract 151: 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Pop.</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Born Puerto Rican</th>
<th>Of Puerto Rican Heritage</th>
<th>Black</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5,598</td>
<td>2,960</td>
<td>969</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>2,611</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the 1990s, another major shift had occurred, a precursor of which can be seen in Walter Laidlaw's study of demographic patterns in New York from 1890 to 1930, as shown in table 28. While the Irish population of Manhattan declined steadily from 1890 to 1930, that of the southern European constituency rose dramatically and the Asian population, while still small, grew consistently. A study in 1992 by the New York City Department of City Planning shows the acceleration of Asian immigration in the previous decade. Table 29 presents their findings for "Manhattan Community District 7," which included St. Paul the Apostle Church.

Table 28. Samples of Native and Foreign Born Population, By Color: 1890-1930: Manhattan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1890</th>
<th>1900</th>
<th>1910</th>
<th>1920</th>
<th>1930</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>South Eastern Europe</td>
<td>166,387</td>
<td>470,438</td>
<td>1,152,595</td>
<td>1,331,179</td>
<td>1,479,902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>275,156</td>
<td>275,102</td>
<td>252,672</td>
<td>203,450</td>
<td>192,810</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>3,205</td>
<td>7,566</td>
<td>11,493</td>
<td>18,877</td>
<td>37,245</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

21 Bowser, Mann, and Oling, Reel 1:123, NYPL.

22 Walter Laidlaw, ed. and comp. Population of the City of New York: 1890 - 1930 (New York City: 1932), NYCPL, and Bowser, Mann, and Oling, 4:247, NYPL. Laidlaw was a well-respected pioneer of
Table 29. Manhattan Community District 7: 1990 Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>% Increase/Decrease from 1980</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>141,129</td>
<td>66.8</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>22,965</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>-16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>38,737</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>-6.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerto Rican</td>
<td>16,678</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>-14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>7,452</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>+55.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Along with Manhattan generally, St. Paul the Apostle Church experienced an influx of Asian immigrants. In 1998, Charles Kullmann, the pastor of the St. Paul the Apostle Church, stated that the Asian influx into the area since the 1980s had been felt at the Church primarily in the addition of Filipino doctors and nurses that had come to work at Roosevelt hospital.²⁴

Demographic shift in terms of ethnicity and race was also accompanied by first, a long process of population growth and then loss. Dolan found that the population of the

---

Census interpretation. His work appears both by itself in book form, and as an inclusion in the microfilm edition of the Bowser, Mann, and Oling study. In this study, I have used both publications. In each citation, I will make clear the source with which I am working.

²³ Department of City Planning, Demographic Profiles: A Portrait of New York City’s Community Districts From the 1980 and 1990 Census of Population and Housing (New York: City of New York, 1992), 165, 190-193. NYCPL. “Manhattan Community District 7” is the area bounded by W. 59th Street in the south, the Cathedral Parkway in the north, Central Park in the east, and the Hudson River in the west.

parish steadily increased from 16,105 in 1864 between West Fiftieth Street and West Eighty-sixth Street, to 28,860 in 1890 and 39,120 in 1900. Ward 22, the ward in which the Church is located, also increased dramatically in population from 61,725 in 1860 to 153,877 in 1890. However, Dolan does not go further. Laidlaw found that Manhattan as a whole had begun to decline in population from about 1910. St. Paul the Apostle’s ward declined in population by 22% from 1900 to 1930 and as table 30 shows, CTA 151 itself declined steadily throughout the first decades of the twentieth century. Not only was decline experienced in terms of overall population during these years, but also the Roman Catholic proportion of the population declined. The Roman Catholic loss was accompanied by a rise in the percentage of Protestants in the population as shown by table 31. In twenty years, from 1910-1930, the percentages of Roman Catholics as compared to Protestants became reversed.

Table 30. Population Decline in CTA 151

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>4,562</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>4,814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>4,706</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>5,169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1925</td>
<td>3,025</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


26 Laidlaw in Bowser, Mann, and Oling, 4:52, NYCPL.
Table 31. Distribution By Boroughs of Roman Catholic, Protestant, Eastern Orthodox, and Jewish Populations 1900-1930 (Manhattan)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Roman Catholics</th>
<th>Protestants</th>
<th>RC % of Population</th>
<th>Protestant % of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>2,331,542</td>
<td>858,765</td>
<td>725,569</td>
<td>36.8</td>
<td>31.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>2,284,103</td>
<td>856,673</td>
<td>725,288</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>31.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1930</td>
<td>1,867,312</td>
<td>596,523</td>
<td>799,045</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>42.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Economically as well as socially, major shifts have occurred in west midtown Manhattan during the course of the parish’s life. However, attempts to gauge the extent of economic change in the neighbourhood surrounding St. Paul the Apostle Church are hampered because of disagreement among historians concerning the nature of the circumstances into which the Paulists entered. That this new region of Manhattan was growing, often in a haphazard manner, and that it was populated by a large contingent of poor and working class families, is indisputable. Joseph Scott, for example, stated that the parish was situated in “the youngest part of this city that was growing rapidly but by no means orderly; in a manner often dirty, sometimes violent; yet always marked with vitality.”

Called “Shanty-town” in the 1850s, Hecker, consistent with his romantic tendencies, renamed it “Shantyopolis.” Dolan has stated that, in 1864, it was estimated that, while most lived in two room tenements, there were 552 one-room shanties in the

---

27 Laidlaw. 275, NYCPL.
28 Scott, 5.
29 Scott, 31 and Dolan, 122.
parish. However, in contrast to Scott and Dolan, McVann refers to the parish as “a pleasant suburb” until the 1870s.\(^{30}\) Perhaps the discrepancy can be explained in the disorderly growth of the area in this period. In 1858, the parish was situated on the outskirts in the newest area of the city. Dependent on where one was in the parish, it could have appeared to be either a “shantyopolis” or “a pleasant suburb.” If so, then efforts to generalise concerning the economic well-being of the parish during the 1860s are compromised.

According to Dolan, many of the male residents of the area were day-labourers employed in New York’s transportation industry. These would have included workers involved with road construction, the railroad, and stable labour. Further, Dolan stated that in the parish there was “a large class of mechanics, and tailors and shoemakers, and many of those engaged in retail business on the avenues . . . .”\(^{31}\) Scott has stated that most of the workers were unskilled as the area was “flooded” with “Irish mechanics” and day labourers.\(^{32}\)

Even McVann has stated that by the mid-1870s the “pleasant suburb” had become a “crowded neighborhood.” His descriptions of this period indicate that while there was both population and industrial growth, the social effect was disastrous. He wrote, “Into the area came working-men’s flats, more street-car lines, the ‘El,’ railroad yards, gas-storage

\(^{30}\) McVann, 226.


\(^{32}\) Scott, 31.
tanks, docks, and Eastman's slaughterhouse . . ."\textsuperscript{33} McVann cited two of these developments as specific "threats" to the well-being of the area and to St. Paul the Apostle Church in particular: the "El" and the slaughterhouse. Father Alfred Young from the parish, along with a representative from Roosevelt Hospital, went, with the support of the mayor and 5,000 signatures, to the state legislature in Albany for three weeks to lobby for abandonment of the slaughterhouse proposal. According to McVann, Young feared that the proposed meat factory, which was to cover five city blocks and supply half the meat for New York City, would "depreciate the neighbourhood, foul the air, send wagons rattling through the streets day and night, and make it too unhealthy to think of having a mother house on 59\textsuperscript{th} Street."\textsuperscript{34} The Greenwich Elevated Railroad, or the "El" as it was popularly called, planned a new station at Ninth Avenue and West Fifty-ninth Street and negotiated to acquire the next city block for cars and equipment. The railroad and the abattoir stand as symbols of the transformation of the parish into an industrial neighbourhood. This industrial growth appears to have proceeded out of social necessity as the city struggled with population growth. Hence, these industrial developments are probably best understood as coping mechanisms for dealing with increased population, and not as evidence for economic expansion leading necessarily to prosperity. Generally, economic depression marred much of the 1870s and affected negatively the lives of many New Yorkers.

According to Dolan, in the decade following 1880, demographic movement shifted from the East side to the West side of Manhattan and "the neighbourhood acquired a new

\textsuperscript{33} McVann, 226.

\textsuperscript{34} McVann, 199-200 and 226.
The social mobility that began in this period can be noted in census information from 1889. Of the 187 names disclosed on the report for Tract 131, all are included in table 32 except for students, housewives, retired persons, and entries that are ambiguous or illegible. By 1889, while the neighbourhood was still predominantly working-class, skilled labour in the trades and a few professionals could be found in the neighbourhood. The use of this area for lodging by the entertainment industry can also be seen to have begun. For the sake of comparison with later census reports, table 33 refines the classifications of table 32 into categories consistent with those adopted by the Bureau of Census.

Table 32. Occupations: CTA 131: 1889

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Servants(^{36})</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerks(^{37})</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchants</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dressmakers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturers</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artists</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborer, Watchman, Bookkeeper, Coachman, Painter, Conductor, Brewer, Waitress, Lumber Man, Teacher, Stable Man, Rail Road Man, Doctor, Barber, Carpenter, Watchmaker, Salesman, Bar Keeper, Brick Mason, Dock Man, Silk Lady</td>
<td>1 each</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

\(^{35}\) Dolan, 123.

\(^{36}\) "Servants" includes "housekeepers" and "Chambermaids."

\(^{37}\) "Clerks" includes clerical positions of a variety of descriptions i.e., "grocer clerk," "railroad clerk," and "delivery clerk."
Table 33. Occupations: CTA 131: 1889 – Bureau of Census Classifications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>No.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Technical, and kindred workers</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Mgrs., offs., and Propr's, incl. farm.&quot;</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical and kindred workers</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales workers</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives and kindred workers</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private household workers</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service workers except private household workers</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railroad</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers except miners</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other transportation</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1960, when urban renewal in the area had just begun, the report for CTA 151 shows that the shift that began after 1880 had continued: while the neighbourhood was still in some measure working-class, a decidedly middle-class element was evident. This can be clearly seen in table 34. The middle-class component in the area was more pronounced.

---

38 "Census Enumeration District Descriptions: ED 799: Tract 131," NARA.
than CTA 151 would indicate, however, since this CTA had far less professional and technical workers resident in it than other similar CTA's in the district.\textsuperscript{39}

Table 34. Employment in CTA 151: 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professional, Technical, and kindred workers</td>
<td>1,105</td>
<td>512</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Mgrs., Offs., and Propr's, incl. Farm.&quot;</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clerical and kindred workers</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sales workers</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred workers</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operatives and kindred workers</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Private household workers</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service workers except private household workers</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laborers except miners</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miners</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>367$^{40}$</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Railroad</td>
<td>42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Transportation</td>
<td>155</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not reported</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{39} It should be noted that CTA 131 is five blocks further south than CTA 151 that included the Church. However, the general direction of demographic development in Manhattan's West Side can still be seen by comparing the results of these two CTA's.

\textsuperscript{40} Male and female categories were not supplied.

\textsuperscript{41} Bowser, Mann, and Oling. 1:617. NYPL.
The social and economic transformation of the parish that began after 1880 continued into the 1890s when immigration reached its summit. Widespread construction worked to crowd out the shanties: by 1893, Ward 22 had 4,146 tenements, an increase of 3,150 since 1864. "Shantyopolis" was no more. Housing during this period moved toward the paradigm of tenement construction as an efficient way to house large numbers of people in as small a space as possible. The tenement became the dominant housing structure for almost a century in the area surrounding the Church. As table 35 indicates, Bowser, Mann, and Oling found that as late as 1960 the majority of housing units were still in the form of multi-unit tenements owned by absentee landlords:

Table 35. Housing 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Units</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All housing units</td>
<td>1,474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner occupied</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner – white</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner – non-white</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter occupied</td>
<td>1,455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter – white</td>
<td>701</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Renter – non-white</td>
<td>754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of units:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 or more in structure</td>
<td>1,469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-9 in structure</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

42 Dolan, 123.
Table 36 shows that tenement construction was so successful a method of dealing with large population increases that it had enjoyed a second wave of popularity in the 1940s.

Table 36. Tenement Construction Until 1960

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Built</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1950 – March 1960</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940 – 1949</td>
<td>1,065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1929 or earlier</td>
<td>405</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the late 1950s, in close proximity to the Church, construction began on the New York Coliseum, beginning a period of massive urban re-engineering in West midtown Manhattan. The culmination of the upheaval caused by this undertaking came with the completion of the enormous Lincoln Centre complex. A feature article in the New York Herald Tribune spoke of the effects of the project: “The West Side presents in microcosm the torment that is wracking the heart of most major cities today. Old communities have disintegrated, leaving behind the elderly, the infirm, and the fearful, whose children now live in the suburbs or more fashionable parts of the city.” Jerome Zukosky stated that the development had greatly affected Puerto Ricans, the newest immigrants to the area, who had established a “portal for entry into the city on the West Side after World War II, finding their homes first in these tenements and former family brownstones which the

---

43 Bowser, Mann, and Oling. 1:852. NYPL. The socially oppressive conditions of life in the New York tenement system were thoroughly and vividly documented by Lawrence Veiller in the first decade of the twentieth century. See Robert W. Deforest and Lawrence Veiller, eds. The Tenement House Problem (reprint, New York: Arno Press, 1970).
middle-class left to be cut up into one-room hovels.” While Zukosky undoubtedly is correct in his assertions that Puerto Ricans came to the area in great numbers in the post-war period and that they took over residences that previously had been the homes of the middle-class, he overstates his case. Table 32 shows that in 1960 the middle class was still a significant segment of the population. Taken as a whole, those living in the area represented a combination of poor tenement dwellers and middle class families.

In the 1990s, a final immigration began: affluent “yuppies” with no children but with the financial resources needed for what was rapidly becoming an expensive area in which to live, started to arrive in the neighbourhood because of its strategic location. The impact of “yuppies” in West midtown Manhattan was being felt at St. Paul the Apostle Church. Charles Kullmann stated that, in 1998, while “yuppies” were not the majority in the parish, they were probably the most active group.

The social composition of the Church’s membership at the end of the twentieth century was vastly different from its original monochromatic Irish make-up. In 1998, “yuppies” represented probably about one third of those who attended weekend mass. The remaining two thirds were diverse in ethnic and social characteristics. Kullman stated that, using a “rough generalisation,” about forty per cent “of the surnames of the Church” were Hispanic; eight to nine per cent of the members were black; a significant number came from the gay and lesbian population; and a few elderly Irish still remained from the time when the parish was largely Irish and poor. In the late 1990s, the idea of “parish” was also

---

44 Jerome Zukosky, “Today’s Living: Reclamation in Dante’s Domain,” Herald Tribune, “Today’s Living,” September 1962, 12-14. Zukosky cited the 1960 Census to show the degree to which Puerto Rican immigration had changed the character of Manhattan’s West Side: the total population in 1960 was 299,155 of which 52,538 were Puerto Rican and 38,211 were black.

45 Kullmann.
being lost as members came from many locations. According to Kullmann, some of those who attended from beyond the traditional boundaries of the parish were attracted to the Church because of prior experience with a Paulist parish or by some aspect of the Church’s style: its preaching, its heritage of fine music, or the beauty of the architecture.46

In 1983, Scott wrote that the one constant in the changes of the parish was that in every generation the parish had been comprised mainly of immigrants. For the most part, they have been poor.47 However, the new affluent immigrants of the late 1990s may pose a new kind of challenge to the parish.

St. Paul the Apostle Church: “Coming-to be”

Not only are the changes in the social and economic landscape of the parish crucial to understanding the historical process of St. Paul the Apostle Church, but also changes in the religious context of the parish are significant. When the Paulists established the Church in 1859, New York was a hotbed of Protestant revivalism.48 The so-called “Laymen’s Revival” of 1858 and 1859 had created an awareness of “revival” piety throughout the city. When the Paulists arrived on the West Side of Manhattan in 1858, they came to a city that was well aware of revival preachers and revival practices. However, they came to a locale that was predominantly Roman Catholic. Consequently, this context proved to be one that was prepared for revival but unsympathetic to the Protestant version of it. Orestes Brownson tried to contrast true revival which, he argued, could only be found in Roman Catholicism, with the counterfeit version found in the

46 Kullmann.

47 Scott. 4.

Protestant churches. Comparing the statistics given for the Protestant revival in New York with the huge numbers that had attended New York parish missions, Brownson argued that Roman Catholic revivals far outstripped comparable Protestant meetings. Brownson stated that, during a six-year period contemporaneous with the establishment of St. Paul the Apostle Church, parish missions were held at St. Patrick’s Cathedral, and in the parishes of St. Joseph, St. Peter, St. Mary and St. Stephen. All these missions had been crowded and packed to their utmost capacity every night for two weeks. St. Mary’s church, for example, with a capacity of between 3,000 and 3,500 was crowded for services each day at 5:00 AM, 9:00 AM, and in the evening. Total communions for its parish mission were 7,000.  

St. Paul the Apostle Church began in an atmosphere in which “revivals” were well-known and to which the people were positively disposed.

From the inception of the parish until the urban renewal projects of the 1950s and 1960s, the district around the Church remained inhabited predominantly by Roman Catholics. So many were the Roman Catholic immigrants that poured into the parish that Archbishop McCloskey, John Hughes’ successor, authorised the establishment of Holy Name parish in 1868 to the north of St. Paul the Apostle Church, and then, in 1874, constituted Sacred Heart parish to the south.

In a government guide to the “Vital Statistics” of New York, the early development of the parish is stated tersely. Incorporated 25 March 1870, the church held services in a

---

building at 149 West Sixtieth Street and in a frame church on West Sixtieth between
Columbus and Tenth Avenue until 25 January 1876 when the new church was dedicated. 50

The “coming-to-be” of the parish of St. Paul the Apostle, however, was a longer
and more arduous process than this brief notation would suggest. The beginning of the
process is usually traced to 1858 when Hecker and the others accepted Hughes’ invitation.
By late 1859, the five Paulists were in New York and making the first tentative steps
toward establishing a parish infrastructure. They decided to build a red brick convent and
Church far back on West Fifty-ninth Street to leave room for a more permanent building
that would be constructed after sufficient funds had been raised. Ground was broken in
February 1860 and, on 18 June, the archbishop laid the cornerstone in front of a crowd of
between ten and twelve thousand. The size of the crowd alone testified to the need for the
new parish. David O’Brien stated that local newspapers “estimated the cost at twenty
thousand dollars and foresaw a great future for the parish as municipal transportation
moved up Eighth and Ninth Avenue toward Central Park.” 51

The original five, along with their first recruit, Robert T. Tillotson, moved
deliberately and quickly. Within a few months of the Church’s opening, Hecker reported
that he had founded both a St. Vincent de Paul Society of twenty-two members and a
women’s sewing group to provide for the poor. Hewit, assisted by several laymen,
established a Sunday School in 1861; in 1864, a lending library for children opened. 52

50 United States Works Progress Administration, New York City Guide to Vital Statistics in the City
of New York. Churches (New York: Historical Records Survey, 1941), vol. 2, Roman Catholic Church:
Archdiocese of New York, 64, NYPL.

51 O’Brien, 185. He offers no documentation for the newspaper accounts. O’Brien does provide a
brief but helpful description of the earliest years of the parish, 185-187.

52 O’Brien, 186.
Michael Connolly has argued that the three most dominant personalities of the six, Hewit, Hecker, and Deshon, should be understood typologically. Hecker represented an antebellum character. He was, according to Connolly, “all over the place” in his expression of a sweeping romantic vision. Often, the problem faced by commentators becomes identification of which “vision” Hecker is espousing at a given time: lecturing on the intellectual Lyceum circuit; establishing a European house; starting new Catholic publications, and so on.\textsuperscript{53} By contrast, Hewit and Deshon are both “post-bellum” types: Deshon, a graduate of West Point and classmate of Ulysses Grant, was the organiser. Known as the Paulist “Quarter-master,” Deshon was devoted to parish ministry. Hewit was the aristocratic academician. Interested in educational pursuits, as early as the 1870s Hewit was musing about the establishment of a Catholic University.\textsuperscript{54}

In the early days of the parish, as the Paulists worked to maintain both foci of their ministry, parish life and missions, the “revival” preachers were Baker, Walworth, and Hewit. In contrast, Hecker adopted a more cerebral approach toward ministry. Consequently, he and Deshon generally confined themselves to giving “Instructions” during parish missions. In the administration of the parish, Hecker, assisted by Tillotson, assumed leadership.

\textsuperscript{53} Perhaps as a precursor of the development of non-Catholic missions by Walter Elliott, Hecker enjoyed giving lectures in universities. The parish mission “Chronicles,” for example, record an account of a lecture that Hecker gave at the “Methodist meeting house” in Ann Arbor, Michigan, attended by “nearly all” the students from the University of Michigan who numbered about 700. According to the account, at the beginning of the lecture, the students applauded the name of Luther when Hecker introduced his topic, “Luther and the Reformation.” However, by the end of the lecture they “bestowed it (their applause) upon sentiments in praise of the Church, and condemnatory of Luther. Hundreds of applications for lectures poured in from all parts of the United States.” This is the “stuff” of legend; either Hecker was an orator of great power or else here we have a myth in the making. “Chronicles of the Missions Given by the Missionary Priests of St. Paul the Apostle.” 2:44.

\textsuperscript{54} Michael Connolly, Curator, Archives of the Paulist Fathers, interview by John W. Stephenson. 19 June 1997 and Michael Connolly, interview by John W. Stephenson. 23 June 1997.
Even during the formative years, the Paulists and St. Paul the Apostle parish experienced setbacks. In volume two of the Paulist parish mission "Chronicles," there is a leap of six years, from 1865 to 1871, in which there are no records of parish missions. During this period, the Paulists suspended the very activity that was so central to their identity. The reduction of activity in terms of parish missions did not, however, mean inactivity. Hecker, perhaps as an expression of restless energy, visited Europe twice in these years of suspended missions. In 1867, he went to make connections with publishing houses and to attend the Catholic Congress of Malives, with the hope of beginning a similar event in America for "learned and devout laymen." In 1869, he went again to attend Vatican I. There, he received permission from the Pope to start a new organisation in the parish called "The Christian Doctrine Society" with the hope that other parishes might form similar societies affiliated with it.

Hecker maintained an abiding interest in publishing. His first foray into this realm had come in April 1865 when the order began The Catholic World as a monthly periodical of literature. Also, in 1865, Hecker established a Tract and Book association, the "Catholic Publication Society." Although prior to its inception very little support had been found, the Society was begun and sustained, according to the "Chronicles," through the "munificence" of Hecker’s brother, George.

The Architecture of St. Paul the Apostle Church as an Interpretative Key

An understanding of the church that Isaac Hecker decided to build is necessary to any attempt to comprehend Hecker and the Paulists since its architecture was a forceful

55 "Chronicles," 2, 44-45, APF.
56 "Chronicles," 2, 45-46, APF.
expression of the Paulist vision. Although the parish began ministry in 1859, the final structure that became the well-known landmark in New York City was not completed for decades. McVann recorded that by late 1869 Hecker was engaged in planning the new Church. In that year, on yet another visit to Europe, Hecker “collected engravings and photographs of various churches, and on January 26, 1870, wrote Hewit that he would visit one or two of the leading architects of France.” Hecker’s vision for the Church continued to develop when, in a quest for better health, he undertook an extended visit to the continent from 1873-1875. Back home, however, the order’s general chapter decided to act in Hecker’s absence. Father Alfred Young, one of the Paulists’ new priests, was appointed assistant superior, pastor of the parish, and later, “superintendent of building operations.” After negotiations with several architects, on 23 July 1874 the Society chose the plans of Jeremiah O’Rourke, a renowned New York architect.

The building of the new Church was a long process filled with tensions and conflicts. For a year, nothing happened except the excavation of the foundation which served only, in McVann’s words, to destroy “the handsome garden and walks between 9th Avenue and the Old Community House.” By July of 1875, America was in the grip of economic depression. Malloy, in his description of the interior of the final building, wrote that, in the 1860s, “times were prosperous and considerable sums of money were promised by parishioners and other friends. However, before work was started, the country was in the throes of the great Depression of 1872-1879, and there were some who felt that the project might have to be abandoned, or at least postponed.” In the end, the dream of

---

57 McVann, 197, APF.
building a grand church did not go unfulfilled, but O'Rourke's first "pretentious plans" were rejected.\textsuperscript{58}

O'Rourke's second design called for an exterior that gave, in his words, the impression of "massive strength." Guided by their vision of a "perpetual mission," the Paulists advised O'Rourke that the building must be "large enough for great numbers of people to worship, to receive the sacraments, and hear the divine word." Not only was the Church to be eminently functional, it would also have to be of stunning beauty.\textsuperscript{59} The completed Church, when finished, accommodated, according to Dolan, between 3,500 and 4,000 including standing room.\textsuperscript{60} Michael Corrigan, the Bishop of Newark, laid the cornerstone on Sunday, 4 June 1876.

Although the cornerstone was laid, construction proceeded only in fits and starts and was compounded by lengthy delays. The wooden church, measuring one hundred feet square, was erected on a separate lot on West Sixtieth Street during the interim. For two years during the depression, all work ceased. In 1882, when the walls were ready, finally, for the roof, O'Rourke and Deshon disagreed so intensely that O'Rourke withdrew from the project.\textsuperscript{61} Several more years passed before, on 25 January 1885, Corrigan, by then the

\textsuperscript{58} Joseph I. Malloy, \textit{The Church of St. Paul the Apostle in New York} (New York: Paulist Press. n. d.), 5 and McVann, 199, APF. The proposals to build the huge slaughterhouse and the "El" in the vicinity of the Church also were factors serving to dampen the appetite for building.

\textsuperscript{59} McVann, 202-203. APF.

\textsuperscript{60} Dolan, 121.

\textsuperscript{61} Deshon took an active role in the construction. For example, he procured waste granite from the demolition of a Manhattan aqueduct to serve as the stone for the Church, resulting in dramatic savings. O'Brien argued that Deshon was involved in squabbles concerning the construction project for years, first with Young as early as 1876 and then with O'Rourke. Shortly after the laying of the cornerstone, O'Rourke complained that Deshon was interfering to such an extent that specifications were not being met. O'Brien, 364. It was perhaps only a matter of time until the conflict between Deshon, the West Point engineer, and O'Rourke, the renowned architect, would prove irreparable. The final breach with O'Rourke came over Deshon's innovative plan for a wooden truss for the roof. McVann, 207, APF.
Coadjutor Archbishop of New York, could dedicate the completed Church. Major work continued on the interior until as late as 1898.62

When the dream of a massive Church in the basilica style was realised, the original Paulists were already old. They had succeeded, however, in the creation of a building that was at once beautiful and expressive of great power. A New York Times article in 1956 stated that the church was rated as one of the most beautiful in New York after, perhaps, St. Patrick’s Cathedral and the Cathedral of St. John the Divine. The article reported that, originally planned as a thirteenth-century Gothic church, the structure reflected Deshon’s military training in its style, having some aspects of a fortress.63 With the cleaning of the exterior and the renovation of the interior, which was completed in the mid-1990s, the Church still exudes a combination of beauty and strength along with a sense of age.

“Perpetual Mission”: Parish Missions

Catholic Missions

Evidence documenting the history of St. Paul the Apostle parish is largely anecdotal. Unlike the Primitive Methodists of Congleton who, like their Wesleyan cousins, placed a high premium on maintenance of records, the priests of the parish of St. Paul the Apostle did not record the processes of growth and decline that occurred during every-day parish life. However, glimpses of these processes can be seen through the activities that they believed to be of such importance that they maintained detailed records documenting them: parish missions.

62 For a discussion of the artwork of the interior of the Church, see Malloy. For a description of the building process and the interior’s appointments, see McVann, 197-215. APF.

63 “About New York: A Rare Crypt Burial takes Place in Tower of Church of St. Paul the Apostle.” New York Times, 30 July 1956. APF.
Accounts of parish missions, housed at the Paulist Archives at St. Paul’s College in Washington, DC, record that the Paulists held sixteen parish missions in the parish from 1858 until 1921. This is not to say that parish missions ceased in 1921, either generally or at St. Paul the Apostle Church in particular. However, formal “Chronicles” of all parish missions conducted by the Paulists were maintained only until 1929 and while fragmentary evidence exists of later missions, records were not maintained in any orderly manner. Consequently, the bulk of information concerning the nature of parish missions comes from the “Chronicles.”

From their inception until the last record of 1921, parish missions at St. Paul’s appear to have been a major force in attracting marginal Catholics to the Church. The emphasis of the missions was evangelistic, seeking to call the wayward and the uninvolved back to the faith. Accordingly, a common pattern of themes can be found in mission sermons. The themes of human sinfulness and the requisite judgement that would inevitably follow were juxtaposed with the themes of the mercy and grace of God and the salvation that was available through the merits of Christ’s death. In thematic content, these sermons mirrored the conversionist emphases of the Primitive Methodists and evangelical Protestants in general. As time went on, the Paulists refined these topics, but the Paulists always maintained the general shape of mission preaching as the sermon schedules for the first parish mission at St. Paul the Apostle Church in 1858 and the one held in 1913 illustrate, as seen in tables 37 and 38.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sermon Topic</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Preacher</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Sun. Dec. 18</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>10:30 AM.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation</td>
<td>Sun. Dec. 18</td>
<td>Hewit</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mortal Sin</td>
<td>Mon. Dec. 19</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death</td>
<td>Tues. Dec. 20</td>
<td>Hewit</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penance</td>
<td>Wed. Dec. 21</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judgement</td>
<td>Thurs. Dec. 22</td>
<td>Hewit</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy of God</td>
<td>Fri. Dec. 23</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasions of Sin</td>
<td>Sat. Dec. 24</td>
<td>Hewit</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Closing in Baptism&quot;</td>
<td>Sun. Dec. 25</td>
<td>Hewit</td>
<td>7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sermon Topic</th>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>Week 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Kennedy</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation</td>
<td>Cartwright</td>
<td>Tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sin</td>
<td>Kennedy</td>
<td>Harney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Death</td>
<td>Devine</td>
<td>Tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hell</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Duties</td>
<td>Kennedy</td>
<td>-----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intemperance</td>
<td>Cartwright</td>
<td>Harney</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occasions of Sin</td>
<td>-----</td>
<td>Conway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mercy</td>
<td>Devine</td>
<td>Sullivan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Mass</td>
<td>Conway</td>
<td>Tower</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Blessed Sacrament)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close</td>
<td>Cartwright (W. J.) [?]</td>
<td>Conway</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Dramatic growth that occurred from the first parish mission in 1858 to the second in 1873 shows that the Church had established both visibility and credibility among local Roman Catholics. That the Paulists understood the potential of parish missions to bring large numbers into contact with parish ministry, is demonstrated by the increased frequency of the missions after 1873. From the 1870s until 1908, St. Paul the Apostle Church averaged three parish missions a decade, as can be seen by table 39.

\[ \text{---} \]

65 "Chronicles," 7:311. APF
Table 39. Parish Missions at St. Paul the Apostle Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Confessions/Communions</th>
<th>Converts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>18-25 Dec. 1858</td>
<td>800</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1a</td>
<td>24-28? Mar. 1859</td>
<td>950</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>16-30 Mar. 1873</td>
<td>5,500</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6-27 Jan. 1878</td>
<td>6,200</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>30 Nov.-18 Dec. 1879</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>31 Dec.-28 Jan. 1883</td>
<td>6,825</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1-15 Feb. 1885</td>
<td>6,950</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>29 Jan.-12 Feb. 1888</td>
<td>8,396</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4 Jan.-1 Feb. 1891</td>
<td>11,650</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6 Jan.-3 Feb. 1895</td>
<td>10,520</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>9 Jan.-6 Feb. 1898</td>
<td>12,850</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10a</td>
<td>8-29 Jan. 1899</td>
<td>8,650</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>5 Jan.-9 Feb. 1902</td>
<td>10,710</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>8 Jan.-5 Feb. 1905</td>
<td>9,813</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>12 Jan.-16 Feb. 1908</td>
<td>9,250</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>23 Nov.-21 Dec. 1913</td>
<td>8,672</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>11 Jan.-1 Feb. 1920</td>
<td>7,600</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>9-30 Oct. 1921</td>
<td>8,767</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Throughout the mission reports, evidence is plentiful that the Paulists were continually seeking new methods to enhance the missions' effectiveness. Innovation was

always valued. For example, to use the missions to maximum advantage, the Paulists experimented with the idea of a “renewal,” a shorter version of a parish mission designed to consolidate the gains of an earlier mission. Such renewals were held in 1859 (Table 39, “1a” above), in 1899 (Table 39, “10a” above) and in 1904. That the Paulists were self-consciously incorporating an innovation into their methodology, can be seen in the title of the account of the first “renewal” in 1859: “Renewal at the Church of St. Paul the Apostle.” The report stated that it “was attended to the perfect satisfaction of the Fathers . . . .” As tables 40 and 41 show, a review of the 1904 “renewal” sermon titles indicates that it focused more on teaching the faithful and less on the evangelistic themes of the missions.

Table 40. Renewal Morning Instructions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Preacher</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How to make the Easter Communion</td>
<td>Mon. Mar. 26</td>
<td>Hecker</td>
<td>5:30 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2d. Commandment</td>
<td>Tues. Mar. 27</td>
<td>Deshon</td>
<td>5:30 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3d. Commandment</td>
<td>Wed. Mar. 28</td>
<td>Hecker</td>
<td>5:30 AM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1918 – May 1920”; “Folder – Mission Record: May 1920 – May 1922.” APF. After the conclusion of volume 7, parish mission records were maintained in loose file folders.

67 The 1904 renewal lasted only one week, from 3 to 10 January. In the “Mission Chronicles,” the event received only a cursory half page report that contained no statistical information.

68 In the report, it is unclear if Hecker’s topic was meant as a general theme for the renewal or only the topic for that day’s teaching.
Table 41. Renewal Sermons

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Preacher</th>
<th>Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“The Two Precepts of Annual Confession, and Paschal Communion”</td>
<td>Hewit</td>
<td>Sun. 10:30 AM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danger of Relapse</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>Sun. 7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Impenitence</td>
<td>Hewit</td>
<td>Mon. 7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hell</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>Tues. 7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heaven</td>
<td>Hewit</td>
<td>Wed. 7:30 PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Paulists found satisfaction in the realisation that the work accomplished at the mission was “still bearing much fruit.” The report noted that “it was especially gratifying to find how the young men of the Congregation had persevered. Many who had been only aroused at the Mission, now made their submission to Divine grace.” This notation indicates that the “renewal” served to consolidate gains made at earlier parish missions.

Another innovation introduced by the Paulists was to increase the length of the mission so that emphasis could be given to four constituencies: single females, married females, single males, and married males. Later, they introduced the idea of a mission designed specifically for children. Not only were the constituencies of the mission carefully delineated, the aims of the missions were subtly refocused.

While the number of confessions and communions was still the principal goal of the missions, over time, increased membership in parish societies also became a highly valued objective. This was a natural next step: membership in a society could be another

---

69 "Chronicles," 1:255-256, APF.

70 "Chronicles," 1:255-256, APF.
efficacious way through which to ensure that the gains reaped in the missions would not be lost. Of these societies, the temperance society came to have a pre-eminent place, a development fraught with political overtones for Catholic society during that period. Tables 42 and 43 show the cumulative effect of the innovations introduced over time by the Paulists.

Parish revivals were not limited in appeal to only one segment of the parish membership. While many married couples attended and participated, the numbers of single females and males that received communion at the culmination of the missions consistently were even greater than their married counterparts.

While participation remained high, numerical declines began to occur. In the case of females, declines occurred in the total number in 1898, 1899, and from 1902 to 1921. The number of single females also declined consistently from 1902 to 1921. The total number of males receiving communion at parish missions declined from 1902 to 1921 as well, and the number of both single and married males declined at least from 1902 to 1913.

These declines, however, should not be allowed to mask the overall success of the parish missions. Even taking these declines into account, the innovation of dividing the mission into separate groups resulted in sustained notable growth. For example, following a protracted period of decreasing success, the total number of females taking communion in 1921 was still greater than in 1888, the last mission before separation. The total number of males receiving communion in 1921 was only 249 less than in 1888, a decline rate of less than nine per cent.
### Table 42. Parish Mission Confessions at St. Paul the Apostle Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Single Females</th>
<th>Married Females</th>
<th>Single Males</th>
<th>Married Males</th>
<th>Children</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>31 Dec.-28 Jan. 1883</td>
<td>1,791</td>
<td>1,645</td>
<td>1,918</td>
<td>1,321</td>
<td>150 1st communion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1-15 Feb. 1885</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>2,750</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>29 Jan.-12 Feb. 1888</td>
<td>4,375</td>
<td>3,021</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>4 Jan.-1 Feb. 1891</td>
<td>3,610</td>
<td>2,840</td>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>2,250</td>
<td>650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>6 Jan.-3 Feb. 1895</td>
<td>3,300</td>
<td>2,220</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>9 Jan.-6 Feb. 1898</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>3,450</td>
<td>2,600</td>
<td>2,400</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10a</td>
<td>8-29 Jan. 1899</td>
<td>3,250</td>
<td>2,000</td>
<td>3,400</td>
<td>--</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>5 Jan.-9 Feb. 1902</td>
<td>3,570</td>
<td>2,660</td>
<td>2,010</td>
<td>1,950</td>
<td>580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>8 Jan.-5 Feb. 1905</td>
<td>3,100</td>
<td>2,300</td>
<td>1,930</td>
<td>1,338</td>
<td>1,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>12 Jan.-16 Feb. 1908</td>
<td>3,040</td>
<td>2,240</td>
<td>1,730</td>
<td>1,360</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>23 Nov.-21 Dec. 1913</td>
<td>2,440</td>
<td>1,900</td>
<td>1,661</td>
<td>1,177</td>
<td>1,494</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>11 Jan.-1 Feb. 1920</td>
<td>3,900</td>
<td>2,100</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>9-30 Oct. 1921</td>
<td>2,228</td>
<td>2,167</td>
<td>2,772</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Table 43. Society Growth in Parish Mission Reports

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>“the Sodality”</th>
<th>BVM Sodality</th>
<th>Young Men’s Society</th>
<th>Rosary Sodality</th>
<th>Young Women Society</th>
<th>Temp. Cards</th>
<th>Holy Name Soc.</th>
<th>Sacred Heart Soc.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>1,068</td>
<td>400</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>600-700</td>
<td>200+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>“greatly increased in membership”</td>
<td></td>
<td>“greatly increased in membership”</td>
<td>2,561</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3,000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>850</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>225</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>400</td>
<td>403</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>320</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As tables 42 and 43 show, parish missions were not a female phenomenon; attendance was strong in all four categories. Dolan stated that the percentage of those who were female at the missions varied from fifty-three to fifty-nine per cent with an average of fifty-seven per cent. However, in terms of mission confirmations, the records indicate that more males were receiving the sacrament than females in a proportion of two to one.\(^{72}\)

\(^{72}\) Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 121. The “mission confirmation” was a special event designed for adults who had delayed being confirmed. However, Dolan found that men confirmed in this way represented only a small percentage of the males who attended: 1891: 2.19%; 1895: 2.4%; 1898: 1.6%. Dolan, Catholic Revivalism, 128.
**Non-Catholic Missions**

The most important innovation to the parish mission developed by the Paulists and used extensively at St. Paul the Apostle Church was the parish mission directed explicitly to non-Catholics. Through the careful nurture of Walter Elliott, the non-Catholic mission was perhaps the most complete expression of the Paulist spirit.

Elliott breathed new life into parish missions, conducting 217 missions for Catholics from 1872 to 1893 and inaugurating the new emphasis on non-Catholic missions. He was a colourful figure: trained in law, he had fought in the Civil war; had been captured by the army of Confederate General “Stonewall” Jackson; and, following his release, had been a veteran of a variety of battles including Gettysburg. He became a Paulist after hearing Hecker lecture in his native Detroit. McVann has stressed the oratorical power of Elliott, concluding that “he quickly surpassed his masters, Young and Deshon, in eloquence.”

Elliott’s legacy, however, is found not so much in his considerable rhetorical abilities but in his work as the pioneer of non-Catholic missions. From the first non-Catholic mission in 1874, Elliott worked to hone the non-Catholic mission to a high level of sophistication and sought to encourage the bishops to establish mission bands in every diocese. Arguably, the culmination of Elliott’s vision and work was the opening of the “Apostolic Mission House” in 1902, an institution devoted to training preachers for evangelism.  

---

73 McVann, 298.

74 See McVann’s extensive treatment of Elliott’s life and work, 294-323.
Table 44 documents the results of the thirteen non-Catholic missions held at St. Paul the Apostle Church.

Table 44. Non-Catholic Missions at St. Paul the Apostle Church

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Converts Baptized</th>
<th>&quot;Under Instruction&quot;</th>
<th>Confessions</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>4-18 Jan. 1903</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>18 (&quot;and more&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>10-31 Jan. 1904</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>1,400</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>14-21 Jan. 1905</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>13 and 8 &quot;regained after being raised as Protestants.&quot;</td>
<td>1,525 Catholics; 240 non-Catholics.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>20-27 Jan. 1907</td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10-31 Jan. 1909</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>9-23 Jan. 1910</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>31-Jan.-14 Feb. 1915</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>59 and 4 &quot;Received.&quot;</td>
<td>6,400 Catholic; 1,500 non-Catholics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>12-26 Mar. 1916</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,500 Catholics; 2,500 non-Catholics (&quot;estimate&quot;)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10-24 Feb. 1918</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>2-23 Mar. 1919</td>
<td>85</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>17 Apr.-1 May 1921</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;fairly well attended course&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>11-25 Apr. 1925</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
<td>6,500</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>16-30 Oct. 1927</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;many inquirers&quot;</td>
<td>3,000+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It cannot be asserted unequivocally whether or not all the innovations introduced by the Paulists were responsible for the continued success of the missions. However, what is known is that the parish missions remained strong throughout the years in which these innovations were introduced until the “Mission Chronicles” end in 1929.76

“Perpetual Mission”: Parish Ministry

The drive and ability to introduce new and innovative methodologies can be discerned not only with regard to parish missions but also in the ongoing life of the parish. Perhaps the most important development came with the opening of a day school. The 1941 New York Guide to Vital Statistics stated that the parish organised a school in 1886 on the property at 124 West Sixtieth Street. This report gave the attendance at the school in 1941 as 621 boys and 684 girls with a teaching staff supplied by The Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Cross (Province of the East).77 A press release dated 7 October 1964, announcing the appointment of a laywoman, Dr. Ann Wallace, as principal, stated that St. Paul the Apostle School was founded in 1885 as a boys’ primary school. According to the press release, in 1899 a kindergarten and a girls’ primary department had been added and staffed by laity until 1904 when the Holy Cross Sisters took control.78

Declines at St. Paul the Apostle Church

When discussing the on-going life of St. Paul the Apostle Church, “declines” can be identified according to four kinds:

1. declines that appear to have taken place in parish life immediately following parish missions;

---

76 I recognise that it could be argued that non-Catholic missions were not an “innovation” added to the idea of parish missions but a new practice in its own right.

77 New York City Guide to Vital Statistics, 64, NYCPL.

2. declines that occurred in parish life during the interim periods of years between parish missions;
3. declines in the effectiveness of parish missions themselves;
4. Paulist institutional declines as seen through events at St. Paul the Apostle Church.

Although little statistical documentation remains concerning the ongoing life of the Church, since the Paulists valued parish missions so highly, significant anecdotal evidence is available in the parish mission "Chronicles" that gives insight into all four kinds of "decline." Also, the presidential papers of the Superiors-General of the Paulists provide considerable help, especially concerning Paulist institutional decline.

The Paulist Definition of "Revival"

To understand the manner in which the Paulists defined "decline," the definitions of "revival" and "renewal" as found in the parish mission "Chronicles" must be explained. In the anecdotal account of the first parish mission at St. Paul the Apostle Church in December 1858, the author articulated the standard for revival. In his written comments, three criteria for success can be discerned and these criteria are affirmed repeatedly throughout the reports found in the "Chronicles." The writer, who, as in all other reports, is not identified, stated that "the purpose of the mission was to give a start to the new congregation attending our church, and the success was all that we could desire." The mission was successful because it attracted large numbers especially of Catholics on the periphery or outside the regular ministry of the Church. The account of the parish mission held 6 January to 3 February 1895, for example, stated, "during the whole four weeks the church was crowded never once did the interest of the people abate but rather seemed to go increasing." [sic] This statement indicated that not only was attendance an important

---

\[79 "Chronicles." 5:108. APF.\]
criterion for success, also, along with it, perceived interest in the message of the priests was crucial. Most important, however, were not just that they came and that they listened, but that, by the end of the parish mission, they received the sacraments: “There was scarcely any person in the parish capable of receiving the sacraments who did we receive them.”[sic]80 This enthusiastic rhetoric became a regular feature of reports.

A second criterion for success is evident in the 1858 parish mission report: “A great many (young men) [added as an emendation] received communion for the first time during the mission, and many that came not sufficiently instructed came afterwards for instruction and made their communion in a week or so.” The awakening of faith in the hearts of those who, while nominally Catholic had never received the sacraments was understood to be a significant sign of revival.

A third criterion that could enable the Paulists to proclaim a mission a success was observable social amelioration. The writer of the first parish mission account reported the “infrequency” of drunkenness following the mission. He observed that “the order and quiet prevailing in certain localities which before had been scenes of riot and dissipation were a subject of common remark and furnished the best evidence of the efficacy of the mission.” The closing comment in the report stated that “the people deserved a great deal of credit for their attendance, for the weather was very bad, and the mud even for New York was prodigious.”81 Antisocial behaviour could be curbed and personal discipline enhanced by a successful parish mission.

80 “Chronicles.” 1:238, APF.

81 “Chronicles.” 1:238. The first Paulist mission “Chronicle” in 1851 was more than five pages in length and contained a good deal of anecdotal comment. The pattern of including substantial comment is followed consistently and, usually, reports included a section for comment titled “Incidents.” The report of the first mission at St. Paul’s is both brief and terse which seems odd. Occasionally, there are other brief reports. Perhaps this is due to individual writing styles as styles change throughout. Since authors are never
The report of the mission held two months earlier at St. Mary's Church in New York City provided yet another characteristic of a successful parish mission: significant displays of emotion. The account of that mission stated that "this was perhaps the most thoroughly satisfactory mission we have ever given. The impression [...] produced was most profound. The men were moved to tears." Perhaps lapsing into hyperbole, the report stressed the impact that missions could have on the emotions of parishioners:

The church was crowded in the morning early, the same as at night. The women were in a great state of excitement at being excluded from the church and were clamorous in demanding a mission for themselves. In order to appease them somewhat Father Tillotson preached to them the last Sunday at the High Mass, but this only increased their desire for a mission the more, and in the afternoon they besieged the house and completely surrounded Father Hecker, who had need of all his address and ingenuity to effect his escape.82

Accompanying the emphasis on emotion was an affirmation of the theme of moral reformation.

Sailors and others who though living in the immediate vicinity of the church had neglected their duties were reclaimed. Several junk dealers and grog dealers renounced their business. A great number of young men approached [...] the sacraments, and with the best dispositions, having prepared themselves carefully by attending all the instructions.

While the Paulists valued strong emotional response as a mark of "revival," that valuation must be qualified: even though emotional manifestations at parish missions, especially in the early years of missions at St. Paul the Apostle Church, were significant, they were not of the same order as those in early Primitive Methodism and in early given. it is difficult to tell whether or not the brief reports were just a function of the style of one writer. However, the two reports written immediately prior to the first St. Paul's report were written in the same hand as the report for St. Paul's, and yet they both have more detail. See, for example, the report concerning the parish mission at St. Mary's Church, New York City from 16 October - 23 October. Under "Incidents" was an article from a newspaper and the report of the parish mission at St. James' Church, Bridgeport CN. "Chronicles." 1:230-233 and 1:234-236, APF.

82 "Chronicles," 1:231. APF.
Pentecostalism. A sense of the extent of emotional display found at parish missions both at St. Paul the Apostle Church and elsewhere, can be seen in the report of the mission held at St. Paul the Apostle Church from 31 December 1882 to 28 January 1883. The writer commented that "in other places we may have had more lively demonstrations of sorrow, such as weeping but nowhere perhaps a more real conviction of sin and a firmer determination to avoid it." Dramatic physical motor phenomena, tongue-speaking, and miraculous signs were not a part of Paulist parish missions either at St. Paul the Apostle Church or elsewhere.

Finally, outreach to non-Catholics was always a primary goal and the attainment of that goal was always an indicator of success. The report of the first attempt to conduct a non-Catholic mission at St. Paul the Apostle Church, in 1895, stated that "large crowds attended" and thirty-five "put themselves under instruction . . . ." The report of the mission to non-Catholics that was held as an adjunct to the parish mission of 9 January to 6 February 1898 stated that over 1,000 non-Catholics attended each night for a week. The outcome was that the "Class of Inquiry," formed as result of the mission, had "started off with exceptionally large numbers."

The marks of "revival" as found in the parish mission "Chronicles" can be stated concisely:

1. attendance of and interest shown by a considerable number, especially of lapsed or peripheral Catholics;
2. reception of the sacraments by many;
3. moral reformation;

---

83 "Chronicles." 3:19. APF.
84 "Chronicles." 5:108. APF.
85 "Chronicles." 5:261. APF.
4. observable affective response;
5. attendance and conversion of non-Catholics.

Definitions and Sources of "Declines"

Decline as Attendance Loss

As fulfilment of these criteria indicated success, so failure to achieve these goals meant "decline." The first obvious reference to "decline" in the parish came in the report of the fourth parish mission held at St. Paul the Apostle Church from 30 November until 18 December 1879. The writer began with a statement affirming the success of the mission to women: "The Women’s mission was enthusiastic fervent & exceedingly well attended." Following this statement however, he reported that "the men’s mission may be described in the same terms except that after Sunday the attendance in the evening began to slacken." The author commented hopefully that "this may be accounted for partly by the presence of many men every evening in the basement at the confessionals."

Decline as the Result of the Pressures of the World

If the above had been the total expression of the author’s concern, it might be overlooked. However, the writer’s concern that decline had set in and his fear regarding the efficacy of the parish mission were underscored by a long paragraph that followed his introductory statements:

It is not yet two years since the last mission in our church and yet this one reveals a lamentable state of things. Iniquity abounds in this city to a frightful extent. Drunkenness & lust run wild among the men - young & old. Hundreds in this parish never go to Mass. Hundreds more have not received the Sacts for years — The causes of this distressing and disheartening condition of the people are to be found in 1 The Hard times, which threw so many out of work & into idleness, the fruitful mother of every vice; causing the men and grown boys to spend their time loafing about the street corners & in bar rooms, coming into contact with the worst company. 2 The increase of prostitution by the same cause. 3 the want of decent clothes to go to church in. 4 The miserable system of tenement house dwelling, no man owning a house, families crowded in large numbers into the same building,
destroying the peace and quiet of home life, mingling too much the sexes, causing frequent removals & consequent lack of attachment to any particular Church or priest. 5 Our own parish greatly changed & not for the better by the shipping, grain handling & butchering recently introduced at the foot of 59th. & 60th. [sic]

The writer's statement ended with the observation that "hundreds made this mission who had been last to the Sacraments only at the last Mission many of whom had since then scarcely heard mass once. -- May God have mercy on us & on the people whom he has committed to our charge."86 From this report, two characteristics of "decline" can be delineated:

1. increased sinfulness especially in terms of moral laxity;
2. return of Catholics to the periphery if not their outright loss.

This "decline" had occurred in a relatively brief period of time, less than two years since the last parish mission that had been characterised by the pithy description: "an immense attendance from the start, great fervor, and excellent dispositions" in the Confessions.87

The comments in the report of the 1879 parish mission not only stated the constituent elements in a "decline," they also attributed sources for it. Based on those comments, it is evident that sources of "decline" were:

1. economic hardship;
2. human sinfulness;
3. deleterious social conditions;
4. unique local circumstances.

By 1879, the depression of the 1870s had made an impact on Manhattan in general and on the parish in particular. Unemployment, one consequence of economic distress, had provided a social context that led to the expression of human sinfulness in explicit terms. This situation became exacerbated by the conditions of life in tenement housing. Also, the

---

86 "Chronicles," 2:362. APF.
87 "Chronicles," 2:205, APF.
social context was damaged further by the introduction of industrial growth in the parish. That social conditions could destroy or at least damage significantly the amelioration process inaugurated by the previous parish mission, demonstrates the vulnerability of “revival” in particular and of parish life in general.

The only other major economic downturn that had substantial social implications for the parish was the depression that occurred in the 1930s. Its impact on the Society as a whole, and on St. Paul the Apostle Church in particular, is difficult to ascertain. However, correspondence from John Burke to John Harney at the beginning of Harney’s tenure as Superior-General, shows that economic hardship nearly caused a deep crisis during the early years of the depression. Burke wrote:

A brief review of our works and their needs would reveal a condition of financial stringency which prevents growth of every kind. In fact, Fr. Devine has told me that were it not for the Gillander gift the Paulists would be on the verge of bankruptcy.

Burke proposed a solution that reinforces the connection between the Paulists and American values: investment in American blue-chip stocks, those “whose future is identified with the growth of the country.”

There does not appear to be any evidence describing the effects of financial stringency during this period. However, that Paulist finances were in such a precarious state is indicative that some financial loss had occurred. Since financial difficulty meant, potentially, the curtailment of the Society’s ministry, such economic loss can be considered a source of decline.

If poverty furthered decline, then prosperity appears to have arrested it. Almost a decade after the pessimistic report of 1879, the report of the parish mission held from 29 January to 12 February 1888 provides a stark contrast with the earlier account. The 1888

---

88 Fr. John E. Burke to John B. Harney, L. 1 Aug. 1930, APF.
report is filled with expressions of satisfaction with the success of the mission: the Rosary Society and "the Sodality" "were greatly increased in membership"; the "school question" had been discussed; a sermon preached on schools; a collection taken to which the people contributed "quite liberally"; and the temperance card was introduced with the result that the "unusual number" of 2,561 individuals had signed cards. Such a great number of signed cards would itself hold out the promise of substantial monetary gain for the parish.89 The author of the account reported that "a great and successful mission with plenty of hard work was the verdict of all the Fathers at the close." The writer speculated that it could have been made into a four-week mission and, if it had been extended, "the work also would have been more thoroughly done." The writer noted enthusiastically that each night "the big church was filled to repletion." The most important statement in the report is the observation that "it was remarked by some engaged in the mission that during the past few years a better class of Catholics has come into the parish. There was less of the material part of man with its low coarse vices at this mission than at the previous ones given in the parish." It is unclear whether the author's comment about "the material part of man" was in reference to social, economic, or spiritual issues. However, significant increases both in monetary giving and in religious commitment that occurred as a result of the 1888 parish mission were understood to be, at least in part, a consequence of the mitigation of injurious

89 "Chronicles." 3:297-298, APF. The cards were given to the collector of the "Debt-paying Society." Calculation was made of the amount that would be given to the Society if each person paid a tithe of the money they saved through abstinence. Such gifts would "materially push things along." That this campaign was having some effect, is indicated by the comment, "One saloon keeper remarked that never were his receipts so small, as during and since the mission." Elsewhere in this volume, a sample card was pasted to a page. On the front, in large block letters are the words "Total Abstinence Promise" followed by, in small letters, "Given at"; then, in larger, all capitalised letters, appears "Mission of the Paulist Fathers." Next, the place and date are given followed by a written promise: "For the love of JESUS CHRIST and with the Grace of GOD, I Promise to Abstain from All Intoxicating Drinks." Lastly, a place appears for the name and address of the cardholder. On the reverse, ten reasons for the pledge are stated.
social factors in the parish. Prosperity appears to provide an environment conducive to revival whereas poverty predisposes a parish to decline.

**Decline as Loss of Commitment and Fervour**

Often, the writers of the “Chronicles” framed their understanding of decline in numerical categories. Decline was found, for example, in decreasing numbers in terms of attendance and sacramental participation. However, a perceived diminution of religious fervour was also significant in their attributions of decline. The “Young Men’s Mission,” for example, held from 6 January to 27 January 1878 at St. Paul the Apostle Church, gave cause for concern:

> Various causes led us to apprehend a diminution of fervor in this part of the mission. New York young men subjected to the 1,000 dangers of our city, deprived of many human motives of a good life, caught up in crowded tenements present a distressing negation to religious enthusiasm.

Also, the writer stated that “this was the season for parties and balls . . .” A loss of fervour was symptomatic of decline, and the source of decline, again, was poverty and worldly temptation.

In the account of the parish mission held from 16 March to 30 March 1873, the author gave an example of “decline” understood as decreased attendance. In this report, further insight can be gleaned concerning the Paulist understanding of the sources of decline.

---

90 “Chronicles.” 3:297-199, APF.

91 “Chronicles.” 3:19, APF. The process of routinisation in parish missions is a tangent that might prove fruitful in future study. Passing comments such as that found in a letter to Superior-General John Hanney indicate that loss in the affective realm and routinisation may be related: “There is not much about our fall missions (in Wyoming and Colorado and Utah) which will be of interest to Paulist News readers . . . Nothing remarkable happened in any one of them.” Fr. J. Murphy to John B. Harney, L. 21 Nov. 1939.
We consider this mission as a satisfactory one but, although we made more than usual effort to bring in the lame the blind and the halt, by placarding the fences with notices of the mission, distributing a tract written for the purpose, and having public prayers said after Mass for many weeks before, the results proved the necessity of a thorough visitation of the parish before beginning extraordinary spiritual exercises of this kind. In a city like New York it is very difficult to excite that general and popular enthusiasm comparatively easy in country parishes. [sic]

Included in this statement is a further attribution of a source of decline: the exigencies of urban life compared with those in a rural setting. The same polemic against urban life can be seen in the report of a mission at St. Patrick's Church in Chicago from 13 until 21 November 1881. The author of the report suggested that one reason for a lack of success was “the unusual activity of business, the influx of such a concourse from all parts, the fast mode of life, the variety and parade of sinful occasions, certain it is that Chicago in great measure deserves its reputation of being ‘the place nearest hell.’”

For the Paulists, success and failure were tied also to a suprahistorical issue: their effectiveness in dealing with the demonic. In the report of the 1878 parish mission at St. Paul the Apostle Church, the same hand that authored the account added, probably at a later date since a different pen was used, the terse comment, “Everybody sick or half sick.” This emendation was made to a section of the report that stated, “Either Divine Providence was trying the Missionaries or the Devil was trying to thwart them in their labors for we never had so many drawbacks as on this Mission as far as health was concerned.”

The same sentiment appears elsewhere. For example, the author of the report of the 1881 St. Patrick’s parish mission in Chicago, stated, “It is almost superfluous to say the fathers had

---

92 “Chronicles.” 2:66, APF.
93 “Chronicles.” 2:426, APF.
94 “Chronicles.” 2:205, APF.
the consciousness of a hand-to-hand conflict with the great enemies of souls and a proportionate sense of joy at being able to do good to so many needy and well-nigh vanquished brethren."95

The Relationship of "MPR" to Decline

The 1890s have been called the high point of the parish's life. However, if the "MPR" is taken into account, the growth pattern of the parish, at least as far as parish missions are concerned, indicates a circumstance of at best stasis if not outright decline. While the parish missions of 1891, 1895, and 1898 all had a higher attendance than any previous parish missions, they did not keep pace with the growth of population in the area. Although the boundaries of the parish steadily shrank, the population of the parish soared. Dolan found that in 1864, 16,105 lived between West Fiftieth and West Eighty-sixth Streets, an estimate that Dolan acknowledged may be, perhaps, low, but nonetheless accurate in its depiction of the parish as sparsely populated. By 1890, the population of this area was 28,860 and, by 1900, it was 39,120. In its entirety, Ward 22 grew from 61,725 in 1860 to 153,877 in 1890.96

Decline as Constituency Loss

The most documented period of decline occurred from the late 1950s through the 1970s in conjunction with the massive urban renewal projects undertaken on Manhattan's West side. The effect on the parish was so profound that reference to the project seems to appear in every documented discussion concerning St. Paul the Apostle Church, whether written or oral. With urban development came the final and wholesale destruction of many

95 "Chronicles." 2:424-425. APF.

96 Dolan. 118.
tenements in the area that had been the home for generations to members of St. Paul the Apostle parish. Scott stated, for example, that the Coliseum project “left no room for hundreds of St. Paul’s parishioners, who simply left the neighborhood, and the parish.” Problems were compounded by the transportation difficulties that this development caused: the old “El” was no longer in use and the new Coliseum “effectively cut off St. Paul’s from crosstown traffic and isolated it from mass transit lines.” Since the Church was situated near the Coliseum and adjacent to the Lincoln Centre complex, the parish bore much of the brunt of the urban renewal scheme. As Zukosky has stated, it was the Puerto Rican families that had bolstered the parish significantly in the years following the Second World War who were lost to the neighbourhood as the renewal progressed.

Prior to the construction of the Coliseum, the Lincoln Centre complex, and other subsequent projects, the parish had been on the northern edge of “Hell’s Kitchen.” The urban renewal of the late 1950s and 1960s marked the beginning of a shift from a tenement neighbourhood to the fashionable trendy district that was the social reality of this area in the late 1990s. On account of this shift, the parish suffered greatly.

The years preceding the Coliseum project appear to have been prosperous for the parish. A press release in 1953 celebrating the tenth anniversary of the opening of the

---

97 Scott. 52.

98 Scott. 52.

99 Zukosky. 12-14.

100 The relationship of the Church to “Hell’s Kitchen” is a matter of debate. Father Charles Kullmann would locate it in the northern reaches of “Hell’s Kitchen” prior to the 1960s. Kullmann. Dolan, however, speaking in the context of the 1890s, understood the northern boundary of “Hell’s Kitchen” to be W. 54th Street, five blocks to the south. Above West 54th Street, Dolan argued, was a more “respectable” area. Dolan, Catholic Revivalism. 125. A current travel guide refers to “Hell’s Kitchen” as extending from W. 34th Street to W. 59th Street. At any rate, in recent years “Hell’s Kitchen,” too, has experienced considerable social amelioration. See Kevin Murphy ed., Let’s Go: the Budget Guide to New York: 1997 (St. Martins’ Press, 1997), 85 and 168.
“Paulist Information Center” in the parish stated that in ten years, more than 6,000 people had taken “the regular instruction course” given at the centre with the outcome that over 1,000 non-Catholics had joined the church while “many fallen-away Catholics . . . returned to the practice of their faith . . . .” Kullmann has stated that the parish during this time, densely populated with “huge blocks of tenements,” had remained a very Catholic neighbourhood. He reported that some of the older Fathers refer to the 1950s as the “golden age” of the parish. Mass would be so well attended that the crowds would be crammed into the pews of which there were twice the number as found in the Church in 1998. In addition, people would be sitting around the perimeter and standing outside. Simultaneously, mass would be celebrated downstairs in the Crypt.

By the late 1960s, a different set of circumstances pertained. A 1967 report in the World Journal Tribune, in reference to a recent attack on the Church, painted a picture of decline:

St. Paul the Apostle stands in a changing neighborhood. Thousands of its former parishioners have had to move to make way for new developments -- apartment houses, hospitals, schools, theatres and parking lots. The great nave, which will hold 5,000 people, is not often full. Signs at the rear of the church request worshipers kindly to move to the front.

Zukosky, in his description of the conditions caused by the urban renewal projects, argued, optimistically, that the area still had great potential: the great museums still remained along with major institutions such as Columbia University, Union Theological Seminary, Fordham University, and the Julliard School of Music. Along with these resources were

---

102 Kullmann.
parks and "older, but well-kept apartments." However, for the parish of St. Paul the Apostle, the loss was devastating: much of its constituency had vanished.

The stress placed on the ongoing ministry of the parish by the urban development going on all around it can be seen in a variety of publications from the period. For example, a weekly leaflet from 1974 highlighted the precarious nature of the parish’s economic state:

Developments during the past week have brought Saint Paul the Apostle Parish and School into a very serious situation involving these consequences:

1. Our property redevelopment plan is not presently marketable . . . .
2. As everyone knows from previous financial reports, the parish has been operating at an increasing deficit for the past five years. There are no reserves and our redevelopment plan cannot be put into operation at this time. This means that drastic economics are a must.
3. The parish has not been able to support the school for the past five years . . . .

A newspaper article clarifies the financial straits in which the parish found itself. The Fordham Ram reported that the parish had a deficit of about $175,000. In the article, the parish School was singled out as the biggest drain on the finances: in 1972, the parish deficit was $167,000 of which $146,000 had been accrued by the school. The paper reported a proposed plan to demolish the Church and to build a middle-income apartment building together with a smaller Church. The parish had lost many of the 8,000 to 10,000 weekly worshippers and, according to the Ram, in 1973 only about 1,000 attended Sunday Mass. Since no new low or middle-income housing had been built to replace that which

---

104 Zukosky, 12-14.
105 "The Paulist Church at Lincoln Center," D. Church Leaflet. 11 Aug. 1974. APF.
had been torn down and none was contemplated, the parish, as constituted, was seen to be no longer viable.\textsuperscript{106}

An anonymous five-page typescript from this period gave the Paulist perspective on the predicament of the parish: “St. Paul the Apostle parish, as all Paulists know, has been in steady decline at least since the construction of Lincoln Center. Our people were displaced in large numbers and forced to move elsewhere.” According to the author, the total population of the parish, based on the 1970 Census, was 22,000. While the estimated Catholic population of the parish was still 5,000, the writer lamented that most were not church-goers. The writer’s estimate of attendance at weekend Masses was only marginally more optimistic than that of the \textit{Fordham Ram} reporter: the average total attendance at seven Sunday masses and one Saturday mass was 1,200 to 1,300 and, in the summer, it dropped “well below” 1,000.\textsuperscript{107} Kullmann has stated, perhaps most succinctly, the consequences of the social change in the parish during this period: it “very nearly collapsed.”\textsuperscript{108}

In response to the dire situation that pertained in the early 1970s, the parish developed a plan to tear down the Church and the other buildings on the site and to build a low-income or middle-income housing complex. Along with this project, the church planned to erect a smaller building to house both the Church and the School. Since it involved housing units, the proposal was to have been realised with public money from a


\textsuperscript{107} “Reflections From the Parish Staff At 59th Street Re The Property Proposal.” \textit{sic}. D. stamped 23 July 1973. The Catholic population of 5,000 in the parish, reported here, represents a dramatic decline from earlier generations.

\textsuperscript{108} Kullmann.
New York State loan program. However, the New York State legislature, which set the interest rates for such loans, raised the rate by one per cent which effectively “killed the deal.” Two days later, the school, which at that time still had about 500 students, closed.

With the failure of the initial plan, the crisis deepened. The Society had no choice but to keep the Church. According to Kullmann, the nine or ten years that followed were most difficult for the parish as no new finances came in until the mid-1980s. The crisis claimed one final casualty: historical record keeping. Kullmann stated that after the crisis of the 1970s, not much was kept; little effort was expended to save documents.

The decline was reversed and “revival” began, according to Kullmann, for three reasons:

1. the stock market recovered, boosting the economy of the city.
2. the west side became “very hot” in terms of real estate, a circumstance that led to a significant influx of new residents.
3. the music, preaching, and beauty of the Church still had the power to attract parishioners.

Also, central to the work of restoring health to the parish appears to have been the leadership of Father Frank de Siano. De Siano, who been raised in the Amsterdam housing projects, became pastor of the parish after the collapse. During his nine-year tenure as pastor, he “engineered” the sale of the property on which the school stood and the air rights over the Church in a “concerted effort to develop” the property. The income from these sales was shared between the Society and the parish. This long-needed influx of money served to revive the parish.

---

109 Kullmann.
110 Kullmann.
111 Kullmann.
The “revival” of the parish that began with the sale of the property continued throughout the 1990s. Because of the influx of money, the front of the Church, which had probably never been cleaned and which had been greatly marred by the smoke of the “El,” was restored. In the early 1990s, informal discussions began concerning renovating the interior of the Church and this renovation was completed by the middle of that decade.

The final stages of recovery were ongoing in 1998. Part of the same project as the sale of the property in the 1980s was an attempt to sell the parking lot situated on Church land. However, negotiations became prolonged and the window of opportunity closed. Only fifteen years later did the property sell and construction begin. The original plan for the parking lot site included a 19,000 square foot ministry building that would include a half-gymnasium and a weekday mass chapel. However, in response to changing needs, both the gymnasium and the chapel were cancelled. The building that was finally constructed was a three-story office and classroom facility.¹¹²

The Relationship of Parish Decline to Institutional Decline

Only marginal help in understanding declines at St. Paul the Apostle Church can be found through a study of the records of the Society. Some records documenting numerical growth, for example, are ambiguous. However, given the unique relationship between the Society and the parish, it is tempting to see some parallels since, as Scott has stated, “for almost the first half-century of the Paulist fathers’ existence, the Church of St. Paul the Apostle was the only Paulist foundation.”¹¹³ In probing these parallels, at least a measure

¹¹² Kullmann.

¹¹³ Scott, 15.
of help can be found in the Registers of the Society. Although only a few of these Registers are still available, they do give some insight into the Society’s growth pattern.

The Registers portray a picture of either stasis or modest growth in the Society from 1871 through 1997. The number of members formally received shows that stability in recruitment was maintained throughout most of the Society’s history, with the exception of the 1930s through to the early 1960s when a sustained burst of modest growth occurred. As tables 45 and 46 indicate, this burst of growth was irregular within itself with several peaks of growth in 1934, 1950 to 1954, 1956, and 1961 to 1962.

Two periods represent episodes of difficulty in terms of recruitment. From 1876 to 1879, when the parish was experiencing the effects of economic depression, the Society received no new members. Also, after the reception of an exceptionally large number of new members in 1962, the recruitment rate fell dramatically and, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, had yet to recover. Based on recruitment rates, the 1960s and 1970s appear to represent a period of difficulty both for the parish and for the Society.

When the overall membership of the Society is taken into account, however, the relationship between declines in the Society and in the parish is less clear. In contrast to the decline in reception of new members, the total number of members actually increased from 1876 to 1879. Further, significant growth in membership occurred from 1963 to 1980, the crucial years of parish difficulty. Then, during the years of parish recovery, the Society declined dramatically in total membership. This decline, which was still ongoing at the end of the twentieth century, may be traced to social factors that have been active in North American Christianity since the 1980s. In light of this unclear picture, available
numerical evidence does not permit any firm conclusions concerning the relationship of institutional declines to parish declines.

Table 45. Members Received

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1904</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1905</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1883</td>
<td>2.0?</td>
<td>1906</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1907</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1908</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1909</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1910</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1911</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1915</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1916</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1918</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1919</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1874</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1875</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1944</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1876</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1945</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1877</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1946</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1947</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1903</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A final attribution of decline in the Society may be significant: a 1940 letter hints at the possibility of decline understood in terms of loss of spiritual strength. At the end of his term as Superior-General, John Harney responded to comments from a Paulist priest who was concerned for the spirituality of students who were about to be ordained. Harney replied, “In my personal judgment, the Community as a whole has left pretty far behind the traditional ideas of religious poverty, not only in this business of ordination expenses and celebrations, but in practically every department of our lives.” Harney stated that he had

---

114 The “Number Received” does not include “students.”

not been willing to struggle against this loss for several reasons. He concluded: "I fear that it will take more than any Superior or even a General Chapter to stem the tide of worldliness in our society." This line of thought appears not to have been developed by later writers.

Table 46. Total Number of Members

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>4(^{117})</td>
<td>1873</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1888</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1874</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1889</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1860</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1875</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1890</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1876</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1891</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1862</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1877</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1892</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1863</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1878</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1893</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1879</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1894</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1865</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1880</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1866</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1881</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1896</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1867</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1882</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1897</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1868</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1883</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1898</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1869</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1884</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>1899</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1870</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1885</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1900</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1886</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1901</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1872</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1887</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1902</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^{116}\) John B. Harney to Fr. Burggraff, L. 11 Jan. 1940. APF.

\(^{117}\)Totals vary since some postulants would leave before ordination. This may have been a greater problem in more recent years. For example, an unknown hand in the 1963 register has stroked out the names of eighteen of the twenty-eight who were received that year. Either they left prior to ordination, or the 1963 Register was owned by someone who much later stroked out the names of those who were deceased. However, it is unlikely that so many of the original twenty-eight would have died by 1997.
Table 46 – Continued

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1903</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1904</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1905</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>1939</td>
<td>128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1906</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1907</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>1941</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1908</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>1942</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1909</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>82</td>
<td>1943</td>
<td>148 + 41&lt;sup&gt;118&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>1949</td>
<td>172 + 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>92</td>
<td>1954</td>
<td>235 + 82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1912</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>1963</td>
<td>255 + 65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>376 + 27 + 13&lt;sup&gt;119&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1914</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>1991</td>
<td>231 + 17 + 4&lt;sup&gt;120&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1915</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>1997</td>
<td>203 + 14 + 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1916</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>97</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1917</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1934</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1919</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>108</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<sup>118</sup> In 1943, the Registers began to list the number of postulants as an addition to the number of fathers.

<sup>119</sup> In 1980, “Novices” were included as third category of membership.

<sup>120</sup> In 1991, the nomenclature shifted from “postulants” to “students.”
Decline as Loss of Distinctive Characteristics

If a relationship can be found between institutional decline and parish decline, it may be in the realm of a loss of emphasis concerning Paulist distinctives. The distinctive characteristic of Paulists, and by extension of St. Paul the Apostle parish, appears to have been, like the Primitive Methodists, not a matter of theology but of practice: the parish mission and later, with Walter Elliott’s efforts, the non-Catholic mission.

Charles Kullmann would disagree. He would find the distinctive characteristic of the Paulists elsewhere, observing that parish missions conducted by appointed missionaries were not unique to Paulists: Franciscans, Passionists, Redemptorists and others also conducted and still conduct similar missions.

Kullmann would find the distinctive characteristic of the Paulists and of St. Paul the Apostle parish, not in parish missions but in less tangible realms. If a distinctive is to be found, Kullmann believes that it may be located in the manner in which the parish and Society have remained true to the values of Hecker. According to Kullmann, at the end of the twentieth century the ministry of the Church of St. Paul the Apostle was consistent with Hecker’s values in several ways. First, there was a strong sense of welcoming at the church. In Kullmann’s words, for New York at least, there was a friendly spirit at the church; all were welcomed, Catholic and non-Catholic, straight and gay, black, hispanic and white. Second, the church still valued excellence in liturgical celebration including high quality music and preaching. Finally, Kullmann believed that concern for “outreach”

121 Kullmann.

122 Kullmann.
or evangelism at St. Paul the Apostle Church was consistent with Hecker's vision.

Although outreach was not always conducted on a programmatic basis, according to Kullmann it was still seen in the sense of the style of the Church, in the ways people were received, and in the ways in which the Church approached people. An expression of evangelism that was consistent with Hecker’s and Elliott’s goals was ministry to non-Catholics. The parish still had an RCIA (“Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults”) program and although numbers were not large, there were still those who did come.¹²³ I saw an example of the effectiveness of this outreach the morning I attended mass at St. Paul the Apostle Church on 31 May 1998. During the mass, two who had just been confirmed gave a word of greeting or testimony to the congregation that reflected the twin emphases of the Paulists: one was a converted Methodist and the other had been a lapsed Catholic.

To be convinced that Kullmann is correct, one must deal with the importance of parish missions throughout the life of the parish and especially with the feelings and decisions surrounding their demise at St. Paul the Apostle Church. Although the parish mission “Chronicles” end in 1929, parish missions continued to be held at St. Paul the Apostle Church at least until the mid-twentieth century. McVann recorded, for example, that “regular” parish missions were held in 1947 and 1948 with a Spanish mission following the 1948 mission. By 1998, however, parish missions were no longer conducted at the church. This is not to say that parish missions had disappeared from Paulist practice. While, by the late 1990s, no parish missions were held at St. Paul the Apostle Church and no Paulist mission bands existed, parish missions were still held in some places. Paulist missionaries devoted to parish missions still lived in the community housed at St. Paul the

¹²³ Kullmann.
Apostle Church. However, they functioned not as a band but rather as independents, or, in Kullmann's words, as "lone rangers" who travelled around the country keeping their own schedule. In 1998, one was in such demand that he travelled world-wide.\textsuperscript{124} The ministry of parish missions carried on by these "independents" had become directed solely to Roman Catholics; no non-Catholic missions were being held. Although parish missions were still to be found as these last independents demonstrate, the highly developed ecclesiastical structure that once administrated parish missions was gone. In light of these circumstances, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that the Paulist commitment to parish missions was only a shadow of its former self.

In the presidential papers of the Paulists, a long colloquy regarding the role and health of parish missions is played out through the successive administrations of the Superiors-General. The intensity of this discussion and the anxiety manifested in it grew over time. In 1919, the new Superior-General, Thomas F. Burke, sent a questionnaire to the Fathers asking questions concerning satisfaction with current appointments and preferences for future ones. The replies indicate consistently that the Paulists still believed in the centrality of parish missions to their ministry, and they show the desire of individual Paulists to continue them. In July 1919, for example, David Kennedy wrote to Burke: "I am quite content with mission work and although I have had twenty one years of it, and at times find it a little [?], I feel that it is what God wants me to do, so long as I am able to do it."\textsuperscript{125}

\textsuperscript{124} Kullmann.

\textsuperscript{125} David Kennedy to Thomas F. Burke, L, 10 July 1919, APF.
The satisfaction that Paulists found in parish missions is underscored in James Gillis’ reply to Burke written in the same month: “Permit to say that personally I am happiest when engaged in the missions, and most especially, the missions to non-Catholics. I shall consider myself favored by God and by my superiors, if I am permitted to engage in the apostolate to non-Catholics as long as my health and strength shall last.” [sic]126

That parish missions were still effective can be seen in testimonials that appear in the presidential papers. A letter written in 1920 by Patrick Turner from St. Peter’s Church in Montgomery, Alabama, spoke of the “splendid work that has been accomplished” through the mission conducted by Fr. N. O’Connor. Turner had seen several missions during his career as a priest “but never have I seen a man more earnest and devoted in his work than Fr. O’Connor has been in his Mission here.” In his letter, Turner indicated his wish to book another mission for the following Lent.127

Accounts of successful parish missions can be found not only in records of Catholic missions but of non-Catholic ones as well. Another 1920 letter to Burke written by J. Clinton Allard reported on the progress of southern missions. Allard wrote, concerning non-Catholic missions, that “in another year I hope to have our missions down here in such fine shape and such a demand for us that you will really be proud of us.” Allard’s letter provides evidence that, although other orders were still holding parish missions, the Paulists had the reputation of being the experts in the field. Allard reported that “several of

126 James Gillis to Thomas F. Burke, L, July. 1919. APF.
127 Patrick Turner, St. Peter’s Church, Montgomery. AL to Thomas F. Burke, L, 9 April 1920. APF.
the pastors have told us that they received letters from other orders asking for missions but that they want the Paulists."\textsuperscript{128}

Perhaps the first indication that parish missions were in difficulty may be found in a letter from Superior-General John B. Harney to Archbishop Neil McNeil of Toronto. Harney apologised for removing the missionaries stationed at the Paulist parish in Toronto but averred that

I have also been compelled by circumstances to bring the missionaries who were at St. Peter's last year, to New York to bolster up our failing mission band. We had here a very large and fine list of mission engagements for the whole of the fall season, and since no applications had been received at our house in Toronto to give missions anywhere in Canada, I felt that for the present I should use them where there is work for them to do.\textsuperscript{129}

Less than six months later, Harney had to deal with a dissatisfied archbishop as he was compelled to confront the Quinan situation in Portland. Quinan's circumstance emphasised the tension that still existed between parish ministry and the impulse for parish missions. These two situations are significant in three ways: first, the letter to Toronto indicated that parish missions were beginning to fail as even the most important Paulist parish was struggling to sustain its complement of evangelists; second, fears that originated much earlier were proving to be justified as pastoral work was perceived to crowd out missions; and third, there were still Paulists who were passionately devoted to parish missions.\textsuperscript{130}

\textsuperscript{128} J. Clinton Allard, Memphis, TN, to Thomas F. Burke, L. 20 April 1920. APF.

\textsuperscript{129} John B. Harney to Archbishop Neil McNeil in Toronto, L. 28 August 1929. APF.

\textsuperscript{130} The timing of these letters may be important. Michael Connolly believes that one reason for the decline of parish missions in the consciousness of the Paulists was the death in 1928 of Walter Elliott. Michael Connolly, interview by John Stephenson, 25 June 1997.
The zeal of individual Paulists for parish missions runs like a thread through the correspondence of the Superiors-General. One telegram’s terse message to Harney in 1930 gives succinct expression to this passion: “I have always wanted to give missions stop fear if I stay in parish work much longer may lose that desire stop . . .”\(^{131}\) In late 1939, another letter expressed a Paulist’s desire to do missionary work anywhere in the United States, Canada, or Africa to any group, but especially to non-Catholics.\(^{132}\)

Late in Harney’s incumbency he wrote to another priest in a fashion that illustrates Harney’s understanding of the cruciality of parish missions to the Paulist identity. Harney looked to the future with optimism in light of membership growth and new technology that had been given to the Society:

> Among many things that I have at heart, our missionary activities for the conversion of non-Catholics, stands first. . . . That desire is the tap root of our Society. Conditions and circumstances beyond our control have often limited and checked but have never brought to a complete stop our efforts to make that desire fruitful. Of late they have become more favorable. Winter has passed; another Spring has come. With new and better equipment than that of the past we are increasingly active in that field.\(^{133}\)

In spite of Harney’s optimism, by the late 1950s \textit{angst} concerning the future of parish missions in the Society appears to have increased dramatically as demonstrated by a binder in the Paulist Archives that contains a detailed plan for re-establishing parish missions as the central focus of Paulist endeavours. Walter Sullivan, who appears to have been the author or editor of the plan, stressed that his proposals were confidential until the

\(^{131}\) Fr. McNab to John B. Harney, D, telegram, 3 June 1930. APF.

\(^{132}\) Fr. Philip O’Hern to John B. Harney, L, 9 Oct. 1939. APF.

\(^{133}\) John B. Harney to William P. McDonald, L, 12 Jan. 1940, APF.
Chapter could be convened. In this plan, the decline of parish missions was documented. Beginning with a reference back to the vision of Hecker, the plan declared:

Our holy founder stated that parish work is not the Society's principal or chief work, yet today statistics show that we have:

- 18 parishes
- 14 mission bases
- 8 information centers
- 14 Newman Foundation bases

This situation may have developed because of a misconception that parishes are a practical necessity for the stability of Paulist activity in any area, and because of a failure to realise that if we must always begin with a parish, manpower must be consumed in parochial activity . . . .

Sullivan stated that, given the circumstances, “it is in order, to warn that the prestige of the Society is imperilled by the relatively minute size of some of our regional mission operations.” He observed, for example, that only two missionaries were active in the South where the Paulists had enjoyed a strong reputation. Also, he provided a catalogue of the current deployment of Paulist missionaries: in New York, there were only six missionaries left; in San Francisco, only four; in Tennessee, two; in Chicago, three; in Canada, two; and in Minneapolis, two. He concluded by stating “After 100 years in North America we have no more than 35 fully active missionaries there . . .” and that in only three of their twenty-seven houses “do missionaries constitute as much as 50% of the personnel . . . .”

Later in the plan, Sullivan analysed the growth patterns of the society since 1943. He found that two new mission houses had been opened compared with sixteen new non-mission houses. Further, while in 1943, thirty-three out of 145 regular Paulists were

---

134 Walter Sullivan, “The Expansion and Improvement of the Paulist Mission Program. D. 1957. Accompanying the plan was a letter from Sullivan to J. A. Farrell. L. 2 December 1957. APF.

135 Sullivan, 25, paragraph E-134.
missionaries, by 1958 the number had risen only to thirty-six of 216. Also, in 1943, 112 of 145 were non-missionaries. By 1958, the number had risen to 180 out of 216. ¹³⁷ Reflecting on these statistics, Sullivan asked rhetorically, “Why has this decay of the Paulist mission program come to pass? Intelligent youth will want to know. Is this a sign of over-all decadence within the Society? Is it a sign that Paulists are characterised by flightiness or by a propensity to weariness and defeatism?”¹³⁸

Sullivan’s plan contained a number of proposals, some consisting of a general call for reform along with others of a more specific nature. He included, for example, the resolution “IT IS THEREFORE decreed that now in the latter half of the 20th century more than ever the Paulist Community must greatly expand and greatly improve its mission and retreat program.”¹³⁹ Sullivan recommended that “for many parishes a mission should be held at least every two years . . .” Also, he called for adoption of the principle that “the Paulist Community shall maintain vigilantly the original, authentic and authoritatively established tradition of giving to our mission program undisputed priority.”¹⁴⁰

I do not know the final disposition of Sullivan’s plan. However, after 1957, a brief period of renewed emphasis on parish missions seems to have ensued. A Paulist missionary convention, for example, at which the total focus was on parish missions was held in 1959. In 1967, a preaching conference centred on the theme “The Parish Mission

¹³⁷ Sullivan, 121. par. I-304.
¹³⁸ Sullivan, 122. par. I-304.
¹³⁹ Sullivan, 16. par. E-121.
¹⁴⁰ Sullivan, 17. par. E-123.
in a Time of Transition." These conferences may have been regular events in the Paulist calendar. An earlier report sent to the Superior-General documenting a December 1966 preaching conference also outlined a variety of proposals relating to parish missions. 

By the late 1960s, however, the mood among many Paulists appears to have become grim: the metaphor of death began to appear in discussions of parish missions. Alvin Illig, in a response to a talk given in December 1967 perhaps as part of the preaching conference, stated boldly:

Modify or kill. If after genuine efforts at upgrading and modifying programs, still not effective, kill them. Death is only solution to some problems: death and then resurrection. Paulist Press killed printing division after some 60 years, and now Press is healthier than ever.

Later in the same document, he called for outright suspension of mission bands and gave a list of reasons for his proposal:

- many older missionaries simply incapable of updating themselves
- some missionaries are often worst enemies of missions because of personal habits
- most young pastors have lost interest in traditional missions by traditional missionaries
- some superiors have effectively lost interest in missions as is evidenced in hierarchy of values exercised in the appointment of men over past 10 years
- most young Paulists simply not interested in becoming missionaries
- people are not coming in large numbers to our missions
- traditional missions preached by traditional missionaries is dead.

Time to bury it so that the effective spoken word can rise in its place. 

In a similar way, Henry D. Noyes, in 1968, wrote to an unnamed recipient, presumably John J. Fitzgerald the Superior-General, to make a report concerning a meeting of Paulists


\[\text{\textsuperscript{142}} \text{ "Report of Fr. John Reynolds, Coordinator of Missions, Concerning Resolutions Submitted by the Paulist Preaching Institute December 1966 To Be Considered By The Superior General and His Council." D. n.d., APF.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{143}} \text{ "Discussion Notes On a Talk Delivered to the Paulists Fathers Preaching Apostolate by Alvin Illig, CSP., on December 13, 1967, at St. Paul's College," D. n. d., APF.}\]
who were assigned to the preaching apostolate. In the course of the letter, Noyes commented that "the diocesan missions bands in Chicago and New York have recently ceased to exist." Also, he noted that the LaSalette Fathers, The Redemptorists, and the Holy Cross Fathers had all disbanded some or all of their mission bands. Noyes concluded by stating, "These are among the signs pointing to the fact that unless we renew we are dead." The metaphor of death is expressed in more coarse terms in a 1970 letter in which the writer laconically remarked, "I think the Apostolate has possibilities if realistic steps are taken. Otherwise, I think we should be candid enough to bury a dying horse." The same metaphor shifted to the economic realm in another 1970 letter. Emery Layton asserted that the current state of the mission work

markedly resembles the declining years of a formerly successful business. The foundations are strong and deep but the format of the business is out of touch with the times. New needs have arisen, and the management has not been able to properly evaluate these needs and adjust to them. Business will be "drummed-up" for a few more years, along the lines of the requirements of yesterday, -- but the end is inevitable.

Not all voices in this period called for abandonment of parish missions. The resiliency of the missions and the depth to which they were imprinted on the character of the Paulists can be seen in statements that are contrary to the prevailing tide. In response to another survey, in 1970, regarding missions, for example, Tom Marshall from the Paulist Church in Toronto, stated, "I find the present state of the preaching apostolate better than I have ever known it in my 8 yrs. First of all I have a waiting list of future assignments. Second, parish priests are becoming more conscious of the value of

---

144 Henry D. Noyes, to ?, L. 5 January 1968, APF.

145 Pete Shea (?), Minneapolis to L. McD. [Lawrence V. McDonnell?], L. 16 February 1970, APF.

146 Emery Layton, Utah to L. McD. [Lawrence V. McDonnell?], L. 17 February 1970, APF.
persuasive and hopeful preaching."\textsuperscript{147} Similarly, Vincent J. Sampietro also referred to the state of the preaching apostolate in optimistic terms: "Harold Foye and I are booked almost completely even for the coming year. There are a few openings which we shall not find it very difficult to fill."\textsuperscript{148} Perhaps a balanced interpretation appears in another letter from a Paulist in Toronto. Owen Weitzel observed that "the closing of our Mission house in Detroit (our only independent band), plus the lack of interest in our few young men makes the present mood bad." However, Weitzel nonetheless affirmed that the preaching apostolate "is healthy in potential," although "sick in morale."\textsuperscript{149}

Kullmann’s knowledge of the spirit of Paulist piety is that of a participant and leader in the Society; his conclusions are both perceptive and valuable. However, his assertion that parish missions were not the distinctive practice of the Paulists is not satisfying since, arguably, Paulists throughout their history understood parish missions as the \textit{sine qua non} of their ethos. Hecker’s vision for St. Paul the Apostle Church was that it should be "a perpetual mission." Walter Elliott’s driving motivation was his belief in the importance of non-Catholic missions and the call to Paulists to foster such missions. Generations of Paulists maintained a strong commitment to missions. The conclusion that appears to be most appropriate in light of evidence that demonstrates both the decline of parish missions and the attachment to them in the hearts of many Paulists is that parish missions were indeed the distinctive practice of the Society.

\textsuperscript{147} Tom Marshall, St. Peter’s Church, Toronto to “Larry” [Lawrence V. McDonnell?], L. 16 Mar. 1970. APF.

\textsuperscript{148} Vincent J. Sampietro, CSP, Portland, OR to L. McD. [Lawrence V. McDonnell?], L. 14 Feb. 1970. APF.

\textsuperscript{149} Owen Weitzel, St. Peter’s Church, Toronto to L. McD. [Lawrence V. McDonnell?], L. 11 Mar. 1970. APF.
Another explanation is possible, however: parish missions were the distinctive practice of the Paulists but over time not only was the distinctive lost, the Society itself became something new with its own new distinctive practice or theological commitment that it was compelled to express. Ironically, "renewal" in the Roman Catholic tradition may have been the cause of the final loss of parish missions as a viable widely practised ministry, and the accompanying change in the very identity of the Paulists. In response to my comment that the earliest Paulists did not want to be involved in parish ministry believing that it would detract from their primary call to be missionaries, Kullmann responded that the early Paulists certainly saw themselves as priests who went about giving lectures to Protestants and conducting parish missions and converting people. He stated, however, that Vatican II called all this into question by reintroducing an older Roman Catholic theology of eucharistic community in which the community converts those on the outside, not the priest. In this theology, the ministry of the entire parish membership is crucial both to healthy Christian devotion and to missions. According to Kullmann, evangelisation, understood in a post-Vatican II manner, is all about inviting people into community, and a community centred on the Eucharist. Kullmann acknowledged that not all Paulists would agree with this Vatican II shift. Opinions seem to be age determined. Another 1970 survey response demonstrates the manner in which the Paulists struggled to deal with the death blow that Vatican II dealt to parish missions. A priest from New York, identified only as "Lionel," stated that

\footnote{150 Kullmann.}
the Preaching Apostolate as conducted now will not be very applicable to parishes
that are very active and modern . . . . It seems that such parishes are pretty much
covering the same ground as ourselves. In other words a parish that has grasped
the spirit of Vatican II has all the benefits of a Renewal . . . .”

An undated leaflet from St. Paul the Apostle Church that in language and content appears
to indicate that it was written after Vatican II advertises a “Paulist Parish Renewal.” The
term “mission” has been omitted; “renewal” has been added. The writer of the leaflet
explained that “the missioners of the Paulist Fathers New York Preaching Apostolate . . .
are attempting to answer some of the questions and solve some of the problems raised by
Renewal -- at the level of the parish mission.” Later, the writer continued that, in order to
bring about “renewal” and to explain its implications, the Paulists have developed the
“Parish Mission Renewal, . . . a flexible program which might include Preaching,
Devotional Services, Retreats, Home Masses, Community Forums, Personal Counseling or
Ecumenical Programs.” The language of the leaflet appears to represent a transition
moment as parish missions became tools of “renewal” as understood by Vatican II. By
1998, the transition was complete: Paulists had developed a theological understanding of
renewal and the relationship of their vocation to it.

Arresting Decline

Attempts by Paulists to adapt to the ecclesiological shift caused by Vatican II
forces me to revisit Kullmann’s thesis concerning distinctiveness. Kullmann believes that
the Paulists did have a central belief about their distinctiveness. He noted that the 1978
Paulist mission statement formally established their mission: evangelisation, reconciliation,
and ecumenism. However, Kullmann observed that these are not unique to Paulists but

152 “New Dimensions For the Parish Mission, and Response Card,” D. n. d., APF.
are, rather, the work of the entire Church. The uniqueness of Paulists, Kullmann believes, is found not in substantive issues but found quintessentially in matters of “style.” He argued that Paulists foster a great sense of openness and freedom, values cherished by Americans. Paulists are pragmatic, responsive to needs, and approach religion with a “North American flair.” Consequently, Kullmann maintained that a typical Paulist attitude is “This doesn’t work; let’s try something else.” Paulists in the 1990s were, Kullmann argued, less pious, less clerical, less formal, less otherworldly, focusing the gospel more on the here and now than other priests. In terms of theological issues, Kullmann asserted that Paulists were “all over the map,” an observation that precludes any attempts to find a theological basis for distinctive attributes.\textsuperscript{153}

If Kullmann is correct and Paulist distinctives should be discovered in the in the affective or conative realms, then a single thread can be followed throughout their history. Earlier, I noted the consistent stream of innovations that the Paulists introduced to parish missions to keep them fresh and alive. This same high valuation of pragmatic American gusto coupled with both a desire and ability to respond to the needs of the moment can be traced throughout the movement in general, and at St. Paul the Apostle Church in particular. These impulses can be found both in institutional objectives and personal initiatives. Paulist projects in the realm of education provide a good example: they began with the establishment of day schools, progressed through the founding of information centres, and appear to have finally found some degree of permanence with Newman clubs on university campuses. The 1997 Paulist register listed four educational institutions, five

\textsuperscript{153} Kullmann.
Catholic Information Centers, ten Newman clubs, and nineteen parishes of which five were "University parishes."\textsuperscript{154}

Similarly, the use of both print and broadcast media demonstrates a long process of development characterised by ingenuity and initiative. In terms of the print media, Hecker, in 1865 began the process with the inaugural issue of \textit{The Catholic World} and the founding of the Catholic Publication Society.\textsuperscript{155} In the late 1990s, the legacy of these initiatives, the Paulist Press, operated from its own location in New Jersey and consisted of a highly differentiated organisation with multiple divisions.\textsuperscript{156} In the broadcast media, Paulists have experimented with radio, television, and film. From 1925 to 1938, for example, radio station WLWL operated from St. Paul the Apostle Church. Similarly, even in the 1940s, the Paulists could be found taking first tentative steps into the film medium. Benjamin Franklin Bowling, who hosted a radio program called "Catholic Answers" in the 1940s, also served as technical advisor in the making of the movie "Going My Way." By 1997, the broadcast media outreach of the Paulists was, like its print ministry, highly differentiated. ITP-Paulist Communications operated as “a full service communications ministry involved with radio broadcasting and television in its many forms,” working with “digital media, computers, on-line services, and the internet . . . .” Paulist Productions/Paulist Pictures was described as a ministry that “seeks to use television and

\textsuperscript{154} "Register of the Society," D. 1997. APF.

\textsuperscript{155} "Mission Chronicles." 2:45. APF.

\textsuperscript{156} In 1998, the Press was situated in a new modern building about 10 years old, in Mahwah, New Jersey, a drive of between forty minutes and an hour from St. Paul the Apostle Church. The “Divisions” of the Press, in 1998, were Electronics. General Trade Book, Textbook, Pastoral Services, Bookstore, and Distribution Services. Kullmann, and “Register of the Society.” D. 1997.
motion pictures to share the Good News of God’s loving concern with the American viewing public, especially its non-believing segment.\textsuperscript{157}

I feel a certain ambivalence regarding Paulist distinctive characteristics: while it may be affirmed that the Paulist disposition appears to have been the distinctive characteristic of the Society, the role and importance of parish missions cannot be easily dismissed. Paulist commitment to them indicates a deep psychological attachment. They seem to have functioned, for an extended period, as a \textit{de facto} distinctive. If so, then it must be affirmed that decline did indeed occur both institutionally and in the life of St. Paul the Apostle Church. More exactly, if Kullmann is correct, it could be said that the Paulists themselves misunderstood their own nature: for a time, they mistook their commitment to parish missions as their \textit{raison d’être} when, in reality, it only served the deeper purpose of the truly Pauline commitment to become, as the apostle Paul stated in his first letter to the Corinthians, “all things to all people . . . .”\textsuperscript{158} On the other hand, if parish missions were central to the identity of the Paulists, then, while the historical process of the Paulists and of St. Paul the Apostle Church continued, their identity changed. They became something that they were formerly not. If identity has been lost or essentially changed, the question must be asked: did the group experience final decline and is it continuing its history as something else?

\textbf{Conclusions}

Table 7 delineated “declines” in Primitive Methodism and Pentecostalism, table 47 outlines “declines” in Paulist revivalism. Sifting through the evidence that we have both of


\textsuperscript{158} \textit{The Holy Bible: New International Version} (Grand Rapids, Zondervan, 1996).
St. Paul the Apostle Church and of the Paulists in general, it is possible to discern declines in that context. Table 47 shows the changes in the "gestalt switch" when Paulists are the subject and the metaphor is "decline." When attention is turned to the parish specifically, elements that could be included in a typology of decline are also discernible. Many of these elements are consistent with those found in Congleton.

Table 47. "Decline": The "Gestalt Switch" Occasioned by Using "Paulists" as the Subject.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Verb</th>
<th>Predicate</th>
<th>Alternate Predicates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paulists</td>
<td>experienced</td>
<td>a decline.</td>
<td>numerical decreases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>economic difficulty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a failure to recruit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>a loss of:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>clergy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>spiritual strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>worldliness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>its distinctive practice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Symptoms of decline, as perceived by participants, were similar in the Manhattan experience to that of Congleton. Numerical considerations were significant indicators of decline. However, the caveat should be added immediately that statistical data must be handled with great care by the observer. Often, an understanding of a historical process can become confused if all the relevant information has not been dealt with. The apparent growth that occurred in parish missions in the 1890s, for example, is placed in a different light when the "MPR" is considered. On occasion, statistical analysis can lead to a reticence to make aggressive claims as a study of the Paulist "Registers" indicates. Other indicators of decline at St. Paul the Apostle Church that were similar to those in Congleton
were the perception of increased sinfulness especially in terms of moral laxity, a diminution of fervour, and a loss of spiritual strength.

In contrast with Congleton, as the Roman Catholic understanding of revival was unique with its emphasis on reception of the sacraments as the appropriate culmination of revival, so the Roman Catholic understanding of decline was unique. "Decline" occurred when those who had been brought into the regular sacramental life of the parish through a mission returned to the periphery of Catholic life or were lost altogether.

The sources of decline at St. Paul the Apostle parish were strikingly similar to those at Kinsey Street Primitive Methodist Chapel. Undoubtedly, economic and social distress, often working in tandem, were leading precipitants. At the same time, however, as in Congleton, it must be affirmed that the relationship of economic and social distress to decline is not a facile one. In Manhattan, for example, chronic social distress actually contributed to the health of the Church. The overcrowded conditions of tenement housing provided, for an extended period, a large constituency for the parish. "Decline" at St. Paul the Apostle Church occurred with the coming of urban "renewal" that brought an end to tenement housing. Ironically, decline in one realm could be caused by development in others. As St. Paul the Apostle Church was sent reeling into deep decline by the urban development projects of the 1960s and 1970s, so also the religious "renewal" initiated by the reforms of Vatican II meant, necessarily, the decline of parish missions, the crucial Paulist practice.

The precise relationship of economic decline to the decline of religion is also unclear. While the report of the 1879 parish mission clearly shows a relationship between
the two as perceived by an eyewitness, a paucity of evidence during another period of economic depression in the 1930s, robs attributions of influence of certainty.

Unlike Congleton, demographic considerations played a very significant role in the life of St. Paul the Apostle Church. However, loss of the original constituency did not necessarily provoke the onset of decline. Rather, the Church appears to have had a history of successful adaptation to demographic shifts. The relationship of such shifts to decline appears only in the case of dramatic and sudden demographic change. In the case of St. Paul the Apostle Church, decline was induced by change that represented, not a replacement of one constituency with another, but the loss of the constituency without any replacement.

Also, in contrast with Congleton Primitive Methodism, decline initiated by challenges issuing from strong lay leadership has not been a factor in the history of St. Paul the Apostle Church. The clergy appear to have dominated parish life completely.

Of greater importance in Manhattan than was the case in Congleton, seems to have been the role of local conditions in decline. In the mid-nineteenth century, the construction of the “El” and Eastman’s slaughterhouse affected the health of the parish; in the twentieth-century, urban development in the immediate vicinity of St. Paul the Apostle Church dealt a crushing blow. The importance of such local conditions means that general theories that fail to take into account the unique circumstances that can pertain in local settings must be viewed with suspicion.

The loss of a distinctive practice was a crucial factor in the life of the Society in general and in the life of St. Paul the Apostle Church in particular. However, in the final analysis, the best way to understand the relationship of the decline of parish missions vis a
vis declines in Society and Church may not be that of "decline" or even a loss of identity. Rather, the loss of parish missions may indicate a course correction, a realisation that parish missions were not the Paulist distinctive practice but only a means, albeit a well-loved one, to a greater end. As such, this means could be abandoned or at least relegated to a place of lesser importance without a loss of identity.

When the experience of a third site, London Gospel Temple in Ontario, is considered, the nature and patterning of declines that have been seen in Congleton and Manhattan, can be clarified even further.
CHAPTER 5

LONDON GOSPEL TEMPLE, LONDON ONTARIO

London Gospel Temple sits on a slight elevation on the south-east corner of Commissioner's Road and Andover Drive in London, Ontario. Its location offers mute testimony to the social process through which the Church has passed. The building that housed the assembly in 2000, a large yellow brick edifice styled according to late twentieth century tastes, fitted well into the surrounding affluence. Only thirty years before the construction of that building, the congregation had been driven from its humble setting in east London by the noise and odour of a neighbouring dairy. In a letter written by June Deacon, a long-time member of the assembly, to Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada archivist Douglas Rudd, Deacon gave a graphic description of the assembly’s early location at “555,” the affectionate abbreviation for the site on Dundas Street East. According to Deacon, the church had been “a rectangular, box-like, red-brick structure built next to a local milk-delivery service which kept a barn full of cows and flies.”¹ The intervening years before the construction of the new building in 1981 were spent in a large facility in old south London that, for its time, was considered to be fashionable and also fitted well into its surrounding context, that of an older established middle class neighbourhood.

Commissioners’ Road used to mark the southern boundary of London but the city has sprawled far past it with large-scale development both to the south and the west. As

¹ June Deacon to Douglas Rudd, TLS, n. d., Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Archives (PAOCAR). Many others have commented on the lowly circumstances of the early building as well as its nondescript architecture.
one proceeds west along Commissioner's Road, past the busy intersection of Commissioners' and Wharncliffe Roads, the apartments and single dwelling homes speak of a neighbourhood that is lower middle class and at least a generation old. London Gospel Temple stands at a corner where the demographic feel changes. To travel south from the Church or to continue west on Commissioners' Road is to find a new social reality. With the exception of a few older stately homes of wealth on Commissioners' Road, one enters a new neighbourhood of expensive homes and shopping malls. The Church is at home in the new environment. At its rear is a large parking lot for the vehicles belonging to the congregation, most of whom are commuters. A substantial seniors' apartment complex, controlled by the Church, occupies the southernmost border of the expansive property.

On Sundays, four services in the spacious sanctuary are necessary to accommodate the crowds. The congregation is mainly middle-class. However, the well-to-do, the educated, and the powerful, also feel welcome: the mayor attends regularly as does one of her political opponents. Also, one of Canada’s most celebrated surgeons is a long-time adherent of the Church and a leading research physiologist at the University of Western Ontario is a member of the Board of Deacons. While the congregation is predominantly white, scattered but visible signs of colour are present.

Clearly, London Gospel Temple is not in decline. Ken Raymer, the Church’s “executive pastor,” stated in late 1998 that the Church had 3,200 adherents served by eight pastors and eight support staff. The Church’s financial goal for that fiscal year was $1,737,355. However, in the process leading from very humble beginnings to its current

---

2 Ken Raymer to John Stephenson. TLS. 30 November 1998.

prosperity, the assembly has experienced moments of dangerous decline. In order to explain these episodes, I will give a brief survey of the church's history.

London Gospel Temple is one of the oldest and most influential congregations in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (PAOC). However, as the research for this study progressed, I found that much of its history has been obliterated by the apparently inadvertent destruction of source materials by the local Church, the District administration, and the denominational headquarters. The national office destroyed all congregational records prior to 1988 when it moved its location, and the District office decided only in the late 1990s to establish archives. Also, London Gospel Temple has lost all records except for one ledger of Board of Deacons' meeting minutes covering a twelve-year span in the 1940s and 1950s. This paucity of sources has forced me to rely on anecdotal sources such as newspaper and journal accounts, letters, assorted reminiscences, and interviews.

The Origins of Pentecostalism in London

The genesis of the assembly is found in the rapid spread of Pentecostalism in the earliest months that followed the 1906 outbreak of tongue-speaking at the Azusa Street Mission in Los Angeles. The earliest reference to Pentecostal activity in London may be a 1909 report found in The Promise, the magazine published by the Hebden Mission in Toronto: "The Lord has been pleased to begin Pentecostal Work at 886 Elias St., the home of Bro. and Sister Armstrong." To allow those who came to these meetings to attend their

---

4 I use the term "denomination" regularly in this chapter. In using it, I do so carefully. To many in the PAOC, this is an issue of some sensitivity. They have argued that the PAOC is a "movement" or a "fellowship" not a "denomination." Rarely however, do they use that nomenclature in conscious reference to Troeltschian categories. Rather, "movement," "fellowship," and "denomination" all seem to have loosely defined connotative meanings in Pentecostal circles. "Movement" is used to imply such virtues as freedom, elasticity, and local independence, while "denomination" is understood to connote rigidity, coldness, and
regular Church services on Sunday morning, the meetings were held on Thursday and Sunday evenings.  

More salutary for understanding the emergence of Pentecostalism in London was a notation under the nondescript heading of "ITEMS," found in the October 1909 issue of The Promise. It stated that "Brother Hebden had the opportunity of spending a week in Chicago at the convention held at Brother Durham's." This Toronto contact with William Durham, the architect of "Finished Work" Pentecostalism, had profound implications for London Pentecostalism. The March 1910 issue of The Promise contained a long report of a "convention" held in Toronto the previous February. In the course of the report, the unnamed author noted that "Brother and sister Semple broke away from the London meetings with Bro. Durham, who remained in London, where a great wave of baptismal power had swept . . . ." Durham arrived in Toronto shortly thereafter. Here is evidence that Pentecostalism took shape in London through the work of two who were in the forefront during the early years of the Pentecostal movement: Durham and Aimee Semple, who, using the name of her second husband, would later achieve national fame and notoriety as Aimee Semple McPherson.  

---

bureaucratic control from a ruling elite. However, technically, the term "denomination" as defined by Alan Gilbert, is a more accurate description of the present reality in the PAOC. See Gilbert, 138-142.  


6 "ITEMS," The Promise 14 (October, 1909): 1. The Hebden Mission continues to be a source of fascination to historians of Pentecostalism. A hotbed of Pentecostal activity from 1906 onward, it appears to have begun independent of influence from either Azusa Street or Charles Fox Parham. At the turn of the twenty-first century, historians continued to debate its significance for Canadian Pentecostal history.  

7 "God Appointed Convention," The Promise 14 (October, 1909): 1-2. The combined emotional power of Durham and Semple together can only be imagined. The writer in The Promise stated, for example, that "Brother Durham can only be fully appreciated to be seen and heard . . . . This man inspired
Durham’s own account of his Canadian tour during the winter of 1910 focuses on his London experience. According to Durham, in early January he and the Semples had joined a “convention” in progress in Berlin, now Kitchener. At the encouragement of Robert Semple, who had been in contact with unnamed persons in London, Durham agreed to go to London “for a few meetings.” Durham reported that by the third day, “the interest was intense, the power was mighty.” Such was the intensity of the services that the meetings “continued night and day for twenty days.” The result of these meetings was that “thirty-two persons were baptized in the Holy Spirit and spoke in tongues . . . .”

Durham held his London meetings at 546 Dundas Street in the home of William H. Wortman, a class leader at Dundas Centre Methodist Episcopal Church. Edward F. Towe, a class leader from First Methodist Church and those from his prayer circle, along with an unidentified “number of other people,” joined Wortman and those from his prayer circle. Aimee S. McPherson, in her autobiographical work This Is That, tied the Armstrong meetings to those held in Wortman’s home with her brief comment that the meetings were moved to the Wortman home when the meetings grew too large for the Armstrong

---

8 “Our Canadian Tour,” Pentecostal Testimony 1:5 (1 July 1910): 5-6. For unknown reasons, the London account occupied the greatest amount of space in Durham’s report of his Canadian trip. His London remarks extended over three pages. By way of contrast, Durham dismissed his time at the Hebden Mission with one brief paragraph.

9 Dundas Street is the major east-west artery in the city. Its importance can be seen in that it runs all the way to and through Toronto. The Wortman home was out of the downtown core on the eastern periphery of the city. Originally, London, as surveyed in the late eighteenth century, included a plot of land conforming roughly to Wellington Street in the east, Queens Avenue in the north and the forks of the Thames River in the south and west. See Douglas Lorne Flanders, “Urban Church Redundancy. 1914-1975: Case Studies in London, Ontario and the Parkdale District, Toronto” (MA thesis, University of Western Ontario. 1977), 6. The Wortman residence was a long four blocks east of that area.

10 “Our Canadian Tour,” 5.
accommodations. According to George Augustus Chambers, the first General-Superintendent of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, the interest of Wortman and others from London may have been kindled by their attendance at the Pentecostal camp meetings held at Jordan Station, Ontario in 1908.12

Wortman and those associated with him became the centre of early Pentecostal activity in London. The Methodist flavour of the early Pentecostal constituency in London would have predisposed the London Pentecostals to the "Holiness" stream of Pentecostalism. That the London Pentecostals found a home a decade later in the "Finished Work" Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada may demonstrate the triumph of experience over doctrine. Searching for something more, they were prepared to accept the package of doctrine that was handed to them by Durham and his followers even if it meant a denial of their Methodist orthodoxy, if that package were tied to the experience that resolved their search.

The Wortmans appear to be among several notable exceptions to the general characterisation of early North American Pentecostals as poor and uneducated.13 Two unidentified newspaper articles have given details of the family business. They owned a

11 Aimee Semple McPherson. This is That: Personal Experiences, Sermons, and Writings (Los Angeles, Echo Park Evangelistic Assoc., 1923), 55-56. McPherson stated that they had come to London from Stratford.

12 George A. Chambers. Fifty Years in the Service of the King (Toronto: The Testimony Press, 1950), 19-20. These meetings were among the first Pentecostal camp meetings in Canada. Jordan Station is about five miles from Vineland, Ontario, on the Niagara escarpment.

13 See, for example, Robert Mapes Anderson's characterization of early Pentecostal leaders. Robert Mapes Anderson, Vision Of the Disinherited (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 114-136. Another major exception in Canada was A. H. Argue, a real estate developer in Winnipeg. Argue's grandson, Robert Smith, is the current senior Pastor of London Gospel Temple. The Armstrongs appear to have been financially well off too. McPherson stated that the Armstrong home was "beautiful" and the meetings were held in the "parlors" of the home. McPherson, 55.
large factory at the south-west corner of York and William Street behind which ran the Grand Trunk Railroad line. Wortman, who had emigrated from Illinois, had originally established his business in 1879, along with John Morrow, a resident of London. In 1882, when Morrow retired, Wortman established a partnership with Frank Ward. Ward, a native of Mercer County, Pennsylvania, and a veteran of the American Civil War, appears to have been Wortman’s brother-in-law. In 1886, Ward left the business solely in the hands of Wortman. The business was successful. One of the two articles stated that “at present,” thirty-five employees worked at the factory making “iron pumps, horse and hay forks, barrel churns, wagon scones, and general iron casting,” and the business’s dealings “may be said to extend from ocean to ocean, from Halifax to British Columbia.”

Durham’s account of the first Pentecostal meetings in London indicates that some measure of success could be reported from the earliest moments. He stated that by the third day “the large drawing rooms of the Wortman home would no longer hold the people and other rooms of the house were thrown open and filled with people eager to hear. And nearly all who came staid [sic] to the after service to seek God.” The meetings appear not to have had any prescribed form with the exception that they all ended with behaviours that the participants interpreted as manifestations of God’s Presence.

No pen can describe these meetings. Sometimes they were quiet and the people listened attentively to the Word of God; again the glory and power of God would rest upon us in such a measure that we could not proceed with any regular order of service, but would simply yield to God and allow Him to work in His own way. Scarcely a service would end without definite results, and sometimes two or three would be filled with the Spirit and speak in tongues in a single service. It was surprising at times when the power of God worked so mightily that a people unaccustomed to seeing real manifestations of power were so calm in the midst of it. People would fall and lie as dead under the power. Others would be shaken

mightily, and some would be praying, some singing in the Spirit, some speaking in
tongues, yet all seemed to be praising God in perfect harmony.¹⁵

Not only were manifestations of God’s Presence expected in terms of physical motor
phenomena, but also the Pentecostals’ indebtedness to North American healing evangelists
is apparent in Durham’s accounts of his London meetings. In a second article in
Pentecostal Testimony, Durham, for example, related the story of Mabel Sipes, a fourteen-
year-old girl from Ingersoll, a few miles east of London, who had suffered from
tuberculosis. Durham reported that, at first, “she seemed somewhat reluctant to begin to
seek . . . . Some other girls about her age used all their influence to bring her to the point of
yielding.” Over time, Mabel began to respond: “The power of God was so mightily upon
the meetings that it was easy for anyone who would seek to find the Lord. Mabel was soon
an earnest seeker.” Eventually, Sipes and another girl were “slain in the Spirit.” According
to Durham, several days later Sipes was healed.¹⁶

If these comments by Durham can be interpreted as establishing a taxonomy of the
desired and necessary marks of “revival,” one central element is missing: an emphasis on
conversion. In Durham’s reports, incidents of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit accompanied
by tongue-speaking, physical collapse, heightened praise, and healings, were the signs that
demonstrated to the participants that revival had come. However, Hilda Ozard’s sources
indicate that the conversion emphasis was present. Ozard claimed that between forty and

¹⁵ “Our Canadian Tour.” 6.

¹⁶ “The Miraculous, Instantaneous Healing of Mabel Sipes, From Consumption,” Pentecostal
seventy were converted and baptised in the Holy Spirit during Durham’s meetings. Ozard added that all the growth came within one to two weeks.

Durham’s reports also indicate that, as elsewhere, there was an egalitarian edge to the Pentecostal meetings in London. He stated that

God demonstrated clearly that He was no respecter of persons as all classes were dealt with, and dealt with alike. There were practical and successful business men, capable teachers in the schools, rich and poor, learned and unlearned alike went down under the mighty power of God and came up filled with the Spirit, speaking in tongues and magnifying God.

A significant absence in Durham’s description of those who were affected by the meetings is reference to ethnic and racial diversity. Durham’s description and this notable absence raises key questions: into what kind of social context did Pentecostalism come, how did the social reality of London change after 1909, and did the changes within Pentecostalism reflect those in the broader society of London?

**Early Social Development in London**

The development of London must be understood in the context of its relationship to Toronto. By the twentieth century, Toronto had come to dominate Hamilton and eventually all other Lake Ontario cities including its early rivals of Kingston and Niagara. By the late 1990s, the same could be said for the interior of south central Ontario as

---

17 Ozard was a member of London Gospel Temple for many years. Her records can be found at Royal View Pentecostal Church in London. Ozard’s materials are cited in an extended research paper written by students at Eastern Pentecostal Bible College as part of a local history project. The paper did not define the nature of these “materials.” See Daphne Bradbury, ed., “London Gospel Temple,” Peterborough, Ontario: Eastern Pentecostal Bible College, 1989) in Local Church Histories, comp. John W. Stephenson. 10. The lower number may be more accurate. Kulbeck as well as Durham, refers to forty who were baptized in the Holy Spirit. Kulbeck, 111.

18 Bradbury, 10.

Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, and Guelph all had become subordinated to the power of the provincial capital. However, Toronto could not completely dominate the south-western Ontario peninsula, raising the possibility of the development of a regional centre that could establish dominance over that region. According to Frederick Armstrong and Daniel Brock, by 1974, London had assumed that role, becoming the "unrivalled centre" of the region.

Armstrong and Brock studied the process that allowed London to gain pre-eminence over Toronto as well as over other rivals, both those that appeared early in London's history and those that came to the fore during later stages of development. Armstrong and Brock explained this process by a typology of development that featured three factors: geography, luck, and human initiative.

Armstrong and Brock argued that only one of the three factors was crucial to London's growth. They stated that, geographically, London did not possess many significant advantages over its early competitors, St. Thomas, Stratford, Woodstock, Vittoria, and Delaware. Also, although they argued that certain of the key events that governed London's growth were "purely fortuitous," for them, the most crucial factor in the establishment of London as the centre of the region appears to have been the human component. They affirmed that "passers-by," those who immigrated to the town and upon


21 Armstrong and Brock, 81-83.

22 Armstrong and Brock, 83, 87.
arrival affected its growth in momentous ways, were especially significant to the city’s growth.

The importance of “passers-by” began with the appointment, in 1791, of John Graves Simcoe as Lieutenant-Governor of the new province of Upper Canada. Simcoe envisioned Upper Canada as the strong core of British holdings in North America and London as Upper Canada’s capital. In Armstrong and Brock’s words, London was to be the “fortress and metropolis of this bastion of civilisation.” Toward this goal, Simcoe began a road from the present-day town of Dundas at the head of Lake Ontario, a road that was to end at the forks of the Thames River in London. Also, Simcoe surveyed a large tract of land, including the forks of the Thames, that he had purchased from the Chippewa Indians.

Following Simcoe, the earliest immigration into London included many, both in business and religion, who were individuals of vision, initiative, and ability. The active careers of the first generation of Londoners, from the mid-1820s to 1880, were almost coterminal with a period of critical growth and consolidation in the city.

Armstrong and Brock have suggested three dates that marked turning-points in the development of London as an important regional city. All of these took place during the extended first generation: 1826, 1838, and 1853. On 30 January 1826, a statute received royal assent that made the forks of the Thames River the administrative and legal centre of the London District, the new administrative region established for the governance of the eastern half of the peninsula. According to Armstrong and Brock, by this time, London’s

---

23 Armstrong and Brock, 85.
population was slightly more than 1,100. As District officials began to assemble around the forks, streets were laid out and a courthouse erected. Rapid expansion had begun.

In the wake of the radical rebellion in the region during 1838, and in the face of renewed threat from the United States, London’s entrepreneurial civic leaders, in contrast to the leadership in other villages in the area, eagerly embraced the British government’s desire to establish a garrison in the centre of the peninsula. From this time onward, the British maintained a garrison in London continuously until 1869, with the exception of a break from 1853 to 1861, when London’s troops were deployed to the Crimean war.

Douglas Flanders’ estimate of the population of London prior to the deployment of troops in the city is lower than Armstrong and Brock’s calculations. Flanders stated that, by 1832, London’s population was only 400. However, Flanders, like Armstrong and Brock, affirmed that after 1832, the population rose sharply, fuelled by the establishment of the garrison.

By 1848, London was large enough to warrant incorporation as a town. The boundaries became Huron Street in the north, Trafalgar Street in the south, and Adelaide Street in the east. On 1 January 1855, with a population of 10,000, it was incorporated as a city.

---

24 Armstrong and Brock, 87.
25 Armstrong and Brock, 88.
26 Armstrong and Brock, 90.
27 Flanders, 6.
28 Flanders, 6. The Wortman house was just within the eastern border of these town limits.
29 Flanders, 7.
That to which Armstrong and Brock only hinted, Orlo Miller made explicit: the establishment of the garrison not only brought about an influx of new immigrants to the village, it transformed London society. The life of the village came to revolve around the huge military complex established in the northern part of the village and, in the process, the social make-up of the village was altered in a most significant way. In his usual evocative manner, Miller explained the dramatic social shift brought about by the presence of the garrison:

Prior to the Rebellion the commonest accent heard in London was Yankee. Even some of the leading figures of the Anglican Establishment read the Prayer Book responses with a New England twang. Now, quite suddenly, the voices reading the lessons had the plummy accents of Oxford and Cambridge, while on the streets one commonly heard the grating consonants and the fluting vowels of a dozen different English counties.

This change appears to have been determinative: even with the demographic shifts in Canada during the last decades of the twentieth century, the British hegemony in London established in the garrison period appeared to have remained, demographically, politically, and financially.

By 1912, the city had annexed large tracts of land in the east and south, amassing steadily a land base that in 1914 was about ten square miles in area and housed a population of 55,026. As the city developed, it became segregated into distinct residential areas governed by income levels. Flanders noted that


except for a crescent along the river in south London, upper income groups tended to cluster in parts of central and north London. Middle income groups were spread over London centre and south while lower income levels located in east and west London.

The large Wortman home, located on the eastern boundary of central London, may have been anomalous. The social status of the Wortman family is unclear; while they had money, their location on the east side of the city may have meant that they were only on the fringe of the higher strata of London society.

The demographic development of London was monochromatic. Flanders reported that by the second decade of the twentieth century, London's population was still "almost exclusively white, Anglo-Saxon, and to a large extent Protestant." Subsequent Censuses show that Anglo-Saxon hegemony has remained constant throughout the city's history. Data in the 1971 Canadian Census, for example, highlight this, as shown by table 48.

The third chronological turning-point, according to Armstrong and Brock, was the completion of a rail line from Hamilton to London in 1853. Further rail lines that were built in the next twenty-five years served to consolidate the benefits that rail brought to London. Armstrong and Brock stated that "with the coming of the railways the urban pattern of Canada West/Ontario was set for a century . . . ." As time passed, the establishment of other media of communication such as the telegraph and a vibrant local press augmented the benefits that accrued to London because of the rail lines.33

32 Flanders. 10.

33 Armstrong and Brock, 92. The telegraph began to operate in 1947. The Canadian Free Press that later became the nationally prominent London Free Press (LFP), began publishing in 1849; the Advertiser published from 1863 to 1936.
Table 48. Ethnicity in London

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Background</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1971</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>46,300</td>
<td>71,148</td>
<td>286,010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Isles (1971)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>207,950</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>24,060</td>
<td>39,297</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>9,900</td>
<td>12,179</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>7,818</td>
<td>11,986</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>9,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austrian (1911 - Austro-Hungarian)</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>11,330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>1,561</td>
<td>1,862</td>
<td>16,145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech. And Slovak</td>
<td></td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>571</td>
<td>683</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian (1931 and 1971)</td>
<td></td>
<td>83</td>
<td>2,215</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>418</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>6,880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>688</td>
<td>4,750</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
<td>3,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandinavia</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>304</td>
<td>2,416</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese and Japanese (Asian - 1911)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>3,310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian and Eskimo</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>65</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swiss (1911)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greek (1911)</td>
<td>51</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black (1911)</td>
<td>213</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Unspecified and Others”</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>356</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

34 "Religions of the People," 1911 Census of Canada, vol. 2, Religions, Origins, Birthplace, Citizenship, Literacy and Infirmities, By Provinces, Districts, and Sub-Districts (Ottawa: C. H. Parmalee.)
By the 1860s, London, as the centre of trade for the region, had achieved a high level of prosperity. The London Prototype, as quoted by Armstrong and Brock, stated that the city had become “a place of resort for a wealthy and growing farming community for the disposal of produce and purchase of necessaries or luxuries, as the case may be.”35 Over time, as profits from business provided excess revenue, Londoners began to establish financial institutions. The prosperity of the city can be seen in those institutions that originated during this period and that have survived: London Life (1875), The Huron and Erie Savings and Loan Corporation that became Canada Trust (1864), and The Ontario Loan and Debenture Corporation that became part of Royal Trust (1979).

London continued to develop and prosper in succeeding generations both economically and socially. In the early years of the twentieth century, several events occurred that illustrate the city’s continued growth: in September 1901, a new opera house, described by Miller as “palatial,” opened on Richmond Street; on 23 May 1912, Beckwith Havens of the Glenn Curtiss factory arrived in London with the first airplane to reach the city; and, in the same year, the Governor-General, the Duke of Connaught, visited London.36

Although prosperity continued, life for Londoners was still punctuated by moments of tragedy that stressed the ambiguities and uncertainties of life. As specific events could be said to illustrate the prosperity of this time, so other events underscored the perils of life for

---

35 Armstrong and Flanders, 89.
London's citizens. The tragedy that was perhaps most vivid and close at hand for Londoners occurred on Monday, 3 January 1898. A crowd had gathered in the second floor auditorium of the London City Hall to celebrate the mayoralty victory of Doctor John D. Wilson that night. Without warning, the floor gave way, plunging 250 people to the first floor. A few seconds later a 500-pound safe fell through the hole, crushing the hapless victims below. The final toll was twenty-three dead and one hundred and fifty injured.

Similarly, in 1907, improper alterations to the “Crystal Hall” on Dundas Street caused an end-wall to collapse dragging a neighbouring property with it, resulting in seven deaths.

Also, in 1908 the upper stories of a building on Dundas Street housing Westman's hardware store collapsed during a fire, killing the fire chief and two of his men.37

Not only did the loss of life remind Londoners of the precariousness of existence, labour strife also made a lasting impression on London society. In 1895, the London Street Railway sold its horses and converted to electricity. With the establishment of electric cars as the mode of municipal transportation, trade unionism quickly followed. In 1899, the motormen staged two strikes, the second of which became bitter and protracted. The damage done to Railway property was so great that constables with loaded revolvers had to guard strike-breaking crews on their daily rounds. The strike reached a climax on Saturday, 8 July. At midnight, after a day of violence, mayor Wilson ordered the militia to restore order.38 London was developing, but life and the values of civilisation could not be taken for granted.

36 O. Miller, 172 and 177.

37 O. Miller, 176.

38 O. Miller, 169-171.
The Relationship of Early Pentecostal Development to the Social Context

The relationship of London's social development to the establishment and growth of a Pentecostal assembly can now be delineated. Both Durham in 1909 and R. E. McAlister, the assembly's first pastor in 1922, arrived to find a society that, by virtue of its history and character, both limited possibilities for growth and established parameters for its achievement. First, London was financially prosperous and the Pentecostals appealed primarily to the poor. London was a city that had experienced strong economic and numerical growth. While there were those in the city who were poor, the general direction of London society was toward prosperity.

Second, Pentecostals came to a society dominated, in every way, by those from a British background. As tables 49 and 50 indicate, the Pentecostal assembly remained a British Church for much of its history as very few inroads were made into the small immigrant population of the city. Several "snapshots" of ethnicity in census information pertaining to London show that Pentecostalism grew in a way that was consistent with the ethnic patterns that dominated the city's growth. Pentecostals did not make significant inroads into the small but nonetheless existent ethnic minorities in London. Those who were social outsiders, experiencing a reality that, it might be thought, could make them more open to the message of religious outsiders, were not attracted to the Pentecostal faith.
### Table 49. Ethnicity in London and in the Pentecostal Community

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Origin</th>
<th>London 1931</th>
<th>Pentecostals 1941</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>71,148</td>
<td>838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>39,297</td>
<td>482</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Irish</td>
<td>12,179</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scottish</td>
<td>11,986</td>
<td>131</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other British Isles</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>830</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austrian</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belgian</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>676</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>1,862</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech. And Slovak</td>
<td>46</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>683</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>83</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>688</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>121</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ukrainian</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scandinavia</td>
<td>304</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese and Japanese</td>
<td>148</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian and Eskimo</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Unspecified and Others&quot;</td>
<td>356</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Table 50. Percentage of London’s Population and the Pentecostal Population From the United Kingdom

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>London 1911</th>
<th>London 1931</th>
<th>London 1971</th>
<th>Pentecostals 1941</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>90.2</td>
<td>89.2</td>
<td>72.7</td>
<td>89.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third, Pentecostals came to a culture that valued and gave room for “passers-by,” individuals who came to an arena in which they were free to act with strength and personal initiative. London valued the entrepreneur who could catch the attention of the people. For Pentecostals to make inroads into London society, they would need strong charismatic leadership.

Fourth, Pentecostals came to an important centre in Canadian political and social life. As a large city, London had the population to sustain a minority group like the Pentecostals. In the early years of organisation, Pentecostals themselves would have seen a city in the heartland of Ontario such as London as a necessary target of evangelism.

The Importance of Ministerial Leadership to Growth

*Coming-to-be*

Perhaps the best way to discuss the historical process through which London Gospel Temple has passed, is to organise the discussion around the tenures of those who served as ministers of the Church. The assembly’s first resident minister, R. E. McAlister, was a “passer-by” of vision, ability, and remarkable energy. At various times in the history of London Gospel Temple, the assembly has had pastors who were of similar character as McAlister. Consistent with the ethos of London, in times of exceptional strength of ministerial leadership, the Church has grown; at other times, the assembly has barely been
able to maintain the *status quo* or has fallen into decline. The arrangement of the discussion according to pastoral leadership also suits the individualistic nature of Pentecostalism.

Little is known of the struggling band of Pentecostals during the period from the Wortman meetings in 1910 to the calling of McAlister as the first full-time pastor. The Pentecostal movement in London was either too small to attract attention, or was so marginalised that the local press ignored it. In both local papers, *The London Free Press* and *The Advertiser*, there is not a mention of Durham’s meetings following his arrival in the city. For over a decade, the local press appears to be silent concerning the Pentecostals.

The lack of reference to Pentecostal revival activity, however, does not mean that the press ignored revivalist religion. An article in the *Free Press* in October 1910, for example, reported that “Trinity Methodist Church, Wheatley circuit, has been visited by a very gracious revival. . . . Twenty-six young people have professed faith in Christ, and the work is still being continued. . . . The meetings were quiet, impressive and deeply spiritual.”40 Nor were the accounts of revivals limited to evangelical Protestantism. Earlier that same year, *The Free Press* had reported the opening of a mission at St. Mary’s Church. Bishop Fallon told the reporter that “it (the mission) is good for the negligent, as it will make them more fervent, and it will be an unspeakable good for those living sinful lives.”41

In these early years, the Pentecostals were very much on the underside of history. However, the tiny band of believers appears to have soldiered on, serviced by itinerant Pentecostal preachers that passed through the city. Earl Kulbeck has stated, for example,

40 “Revival at Wheatley,” *LFP*, 29 Oct. 1910, 13, LPL.

41 “Mission Opens In St. Mary’s Church,” *LFP*, Monday 7 Nov. 1910, 3, LPL.
that from 1910 to 1922, visiting evangelists cared for the assembly. 42 According to Victor Brown, care of ongoing pastoral needs in the small congregation during this period came from within, from the assembly's members. 43 Only Chambers has referred to a "pastor" at the London assembly in this period. Chambers stated that he conducted a camp meeting in London at the request of "R. Sternall," the "pastor." According to Chambers, violence marred these meetings: "The Roman Catholics in that area had tried to break up the services by coming in and attacking us with physical force. The police were summoned. A number were arrested and fined . . . ." 44 However, in the absence of corroboration of such attacks by the secular press, and a general silence in Pentecostal sources concerning "pastors" for the assembly before 1922, Chambers' account appears to be in error.

During the years prior to McAlister's arrival, perhaps aided by the resources of the Wortman family, the Pentecostals were able to move out of the Wortman home. In 1912, they relocated to 557 Dundas Street on the same block. Gloria Kulbeck recorded that the London Pentecostals erected on the new site a small mission hall that could seat only one hundred. 45 Sources collected by Ozard suggest, however, that a building already stood on


43 Victor G. Brown, Fifty Years of Pentecostal History: 1933-1983 (Burlington, ON: Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada -- Western Ontario District, 1983), 82.

44 Chambers. 22. Sternall was one of the charter ministers of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. It is significant that, with one exception, no other sources record that he was the "pastor" of the London assembly early in its history. The only other reference may be in Thomas Miller's study. Miller stated that Sternall began his professional ministerial career in 1911 in Kitchener. However, without any explanation, Miller did state "Following their ministry at London . . . ." This reference is confusing since no reference to such a ministry can be found in Miller. T. Miller, 54.

45 Gloria Kulbeck, What God Has Wrought (Toronto, PAOC: 1958), 112.
the property and that services began after that building had been renovated. According to a hand-written anonymous manuscript at the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Archives, when McAlister arrived a full decade later as the first full-time pastor of the Church, the assembly in London “consisted of a small group of praying people who worshipped in a little hall on Dundas Street [the building at 557 Dundas Street].” That the group had some measure of social cohesion and monetary means can be seen in the notation that “these were also a missionary-minded people . . . .” Even at this time, they were sponsoring five overseas missionaries: William Wortman’s son and his wife and Dr. and Mrs. C. M. Wortman in Argentina, and Lettie Ward in South China. However, that the account could still refer to them as “a small group,” indicates that no substantial growth had occurred in over a decade. They were still very much on the margins.

R. E. McAlister

McAlister served as the pastor of the assembly from 1922 until 1940. In Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada hagiography, he is of legendary stature. McAlister’s efforts in London resulted in a long period of sustained growth. Earl Kulbeck, for example, reported that under his leadership the church “experienced a great numerical growth.”

Earl Kulbeck, along with many others, remembered McAlister as having prodigious intellectual abilities. He was a serious preacher, who would quote paragraphs of Scripture from memory, with an assurance and authority that was irrefutable. Possessed with an analytical mind, his

---

46 Bradbury, 11, and “London Gospel Temple, TMs, PAOCAR.

47 “The London Pentecostal Work During R. E. McAlister’s Time As Pastor,” TMs, PAOCAR, 1.

48 E. Kulbeck, 2.
associates said that had he chosen the legal profession, he would doubtless have been numbered among the nation’s top level lawyers.\textsuperscript{49}

Similarly, Kay Kerr, McAlister’s secretary in London, stated that his knowledge of Scripture was so well-known that he was called “the walking Bible.”\textsuperscript{50}

Perhaps the best expression of McAlister’s success in London is found in a manuscript written by McAlister himself, in 1946, as he lived in semi-retirement in Toronto. In 1922 when he first arrived in London, his salary had been twenty dollars a week. In the manuscript, he stated that “we never took from office or assembly more than a bear [sic] living allowance.” Growth brought an increase that was lost again during the Depression: “After going to London I received 35 dollars a week. When the depression came and things were hard I cut my salary down to $20.00 a week.” McAlister’s work habits were truly extraordinary as his own list of accomplishments shows:

- Took no holidays while in office, went 22 years seven days a wx week without any holidays. [sic]
- Sponsored [sic] 1000 radio broadcasts in London.
- Sponsored a paper in Egypt in Arabic language in co-operation with Brother Randall that continued regularly for 25 years. [sic]
- Was Gen Secty Treas. And Missionary Secty Tre, and Editor of the paper [The Pentecostal Testimony] for 15 years. [sic]
- Wrote the doctrinal statement for Canadian fellowship.
- Edited a paper called the ‘Good Report’ in the early days of Pentecost in Canada.
- Sending out 45000 [?] copies of a 24 paged paper on the free will offering plan.

That Pentecostals in 1946 were still numbered generally among the poorer classes of society can be detected in McAlister’s lament that he found himself in difficult economic straits: “I

\textsuperscript{49} E. Kulbeck, 2.

\textsuperscript{50} Kay Kerr to Douglas Rudd, TLS, 22 June 1994, PAOCAR.
have no insurance and not a dollars (sic) income from any source apart from the $25.00 a week from London. I have a Mortgage of $2200 on my house.”

Originally from the Ottawa Valley, McAlister had been introduced to revival religion through the Hornerite splinter from Methodism. Educated at God’s Bible School, the Holiness Institute of Martin Wells Knapp in Cincinnati, Ohio, McAlister was certainly one of the first Canadians to experience the Pentecostal Baptism of the Holy Spirit. This experience came on his way to the Azusa Street mission in December 1906. By the time McAlister arrived as the pastor of the London assembly, he had founded Bethel Pentecostal Church in Ottawa, pastored the church in Berlin (Kitchener), been a founding signatory to the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada charter, and was serving as its General Secretary.

McAlister did not resemble the charismatic evangelist so often associated with revivalism. William Wortman’s niece, Mary Wortman, remembered him as being dour and serious. She stated that he was

---

51 “Robert Edward McAlister,” TMs, PAOCAR, 1-2. The grammatical and spelling mistakes in this document are disturbing. They may have been due to failing health or they may be the result of little formal education. McAlister’s formidable intellectual abilities may have been seen primarily in his rhetorical and self-taught reading skills.

52 A variety of sources make it clear that McAlister was raised in a “staunch” Presbyterian home and only later came under the influence of the Hornerite version of the Methodist Holiness movement. See, for example, James Craig, “Robert Edward McAlister: Canadian Pentecostal Pioneer,” (M.Rel. thesis, Wycliffe College, University of Toronto, 1987), 5. This is perhaps the most complete biography of McAlister’s life and work available at present. See also John F. Lynn, “R. E. McAlister: Pioneer and Charter Member,” TMs, 5 May, 1994, PAOCAR.

53 Some have claimed that he was the first Canadian to experience the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Late in life, McAlister claimed that he was the first man to receive the baptism in Canada. However, it would appear that, independent of Azusa Street, this experience was occurring at the Hebden Mission before McAlister made his way to Los Angeles. See Craig, 9. Craig stated, also, that there might have been scattered individuals in southern Saskatchewan that had experienced the Baptism prior to McAlister.

54 “London Gospel Temple,” TMs, PAOCAR.
a man who didn't mingle too much with the congregation... Also, he was a strict disciplinarian so far as "separation from the world" was concerned. This was a source of frustration to some of us young folks, but his solid teaching (and that of Mrs. McAlister) far outweighed any frustration we might have felt.55

Even in presentation, McAlister was atypical: James Craig has stated that McAlister spoke in a monotone, was considered to be long-winded, and never came out from behind the pulpit.56

When McAlister first arrived in London in 1922, the visibility of the assembly in London society was negligible. Advertisements in the London Free Press were small and nondescript, and did not even appear consistently. For example, in July 1922, the advertisement was absent. A week later it reappeared, reading simply "Pentecostal Assembly SERVICES AS USUAL." The form is generic, exactly the same in copy as the nearby advertisement for Chelsea Green Presbyterian Church.57 Throughout that summer, the London Free Press contained a large section called "Activities in the Churches." There appears to be no mention of the Pentecostals in this section.

As early as 1924, after McAlister had served for only two years in London, the number of adherents had increased dramatically. This increase can be seen in the advertisement in the 16 August 1924 edition of the London Free Press that announced that at the London Pentecostal Tabernacle two more services, on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, were being held in addition to Sunday services.58 Perhaps the most significant

55 Mary A. Wortman to Douglas Rudd, 18 May 1994, TLS, PAOCAR.

56 Craig, 35.

57 LFP, Sat. 29 July 1922, 17, LPL.

58 LFP, 16 August 1924, 27. By November of that year, a Friday evening service had also been added. LFP, 1 Nov. 1924, 27, LPL.
evidence that rapid growth had been occurring was the completion of a new building on the 557 Dundas Street site, seating an estimated 800 persons.

A brief history of the assembly attributed the source of the rapid growth to many who were "drawn by a hunger for God and filled with the Holy Spirit." The anonymous author reported that visitors would be surprised by the sense of love that met them when they first entered the church in those days. Also, while miracles of physical healing were reported during this period, reports of supernatural activity went even beyond these: sometimes the sense of the immediate presence of the divine was so strong that McAlister was unable to preach a sermon "nor, apparently was it necessary. The presence of the God was so strong he merely had to walk the aisles, praying for individuals, as the Spirit moved into open, seeking lives. . . ." [sic]59

A crucial event occurred in 1924 through which the assembly made its first significant impact on the city. Another anonymous author stated that in that summer, a large tent was raised on the adjoining lot to the Church. At the meetings that followed, God began to move in a very wonderful way . . . . Scores were saved and many who were hungering for more of God made their way to the little Mission hall nearby where they waited before Him and were filled with Holy Spirit. In August of that year 100 were baptized in water at a great public service in Thames Park. After a tent meeting the following summer 76 were immersed -- this group in a baptismal tank in the new church which had been built after the revival of the previous summer but which had already become too small. The constantly growing congregation had necessitated enlargement of the building.60

The May and June 1924 issues of The Pentecostal Testimony, the national magazine of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada that McAlister published out of London, carried an

59 "London Gospel Temple," TMs, PAOCAR.

60 "The London Pentecostal Work During R. E. McAlister's Time As Pastor," AMs, 1-3, PAOCAR.
advertisement for the tent meetings. McAlister had planned to hold these meetings from 20 July to 10 August 1924 with Mr. and Mrs. J. S. McConnell from California. The August issue of The Pentecostal Testimony reported that

as the paper goes to press we are in the midst of a great revival in London. The tent became far too small to hold the people and we have moved to the Arena. There were two thousand people out Sunday night and about one hundred went forward for salvation and baptism . . . Over three thousand people witnessed the immersion services. The meetings are to continue for about a month longer.

The report in the September issue included a picture from the London Free Press. The report stated that the meetings represented “one of the greatest revival awakenings that we have had in the Pentecostal movement in Canada.” Numerically, “over one hundred went forward at one altar call,” and “in some meetings as many as six received the Baptism of the Spirit.” The report suggested that the Pentecostals were finally being noticed by Londoners: “There were also some cases of remarkable healing which stirred the whole city . . . .” According to an observer quoted in The Pentecostal Testimony, “The work has completely outgrown our present hall and plans are now under way for the erection of a tabernacle which will accommodate our congregation.”

The growth of the Church in the consciousness of Londoners is seen in an indirect dialogue between McAlister and a local United Church minister. In 1927, The Pentecostal Testimony reprinted a sermon by Rev. W. R. McIntosh of King Street United Church that had been published originally by the London Free Press. Apparently, McIntosh had preached the sermon in response to requests from members of his congregation for

---

61 The Pentecostal Testimony (PT), May 1924, 8.
McIntosh commended Pentecostals for "their religious zeal and genuine devotion to missionary work" but argued that they "were too taken up with the thought of the next world and individual morality to realize the duties of this life."
The Pentecostal approach, according to McIntosh, was characteristic of "a primitive people." To him, Pentecostalism was like other similar movements in the past that had died out because their emphases were "not healthy and normal" and had appealed primarily to "uneducated and unscientific people."

McAlister joined the debate with a sermon published the next week defending the Pentecostal message. Under the headline, "Claims Churches Giving 'Shows,'" McAlister's rhetoric had an edge to it, even using McIntosh's title repeatedly in a derisive manner: "What Meaneth This?" In his sermon, McAlister condemned the worldliness of mainline Protestant churches as seen in their sponsorship of rummage sales, bazaars, and concerts. McAlister believed that the Pentecostals, with their strong stress on personal holiness, stood in stark contrast to the worldliness of the mainline Churches. He concluded that "scientific men, so-called, would try to stop it [the Pentecostal movement], but you might just as well try to brush back the waters of Niagara with a broom as try to stop this God-sent, heaven-born movement."  

McAlister was not afraid to enter into debate with other clergy and seems almost to have relished it. For some time, he carried on a running verbal battle with Reverend James McGinlay, the pastor of the large fundamentalist Central Baptist Church. McGinlay appears to have been a preacher of some flamboyance. His advertisement in the 2 June 1934 edition

64 PT May 1927, 11 and "Religious Sects Under Criticism, LFP, 21 Mar. 1927, LPL.
65 PT, May 1927, 11 and LFP, 27 Mar. 1927), 11, LPL.
of the London Free Press, for example, advertised "The Coolest Building and Hottest Sermons in Town." In the Fall of 1931, McGinlay preached a six-week series attacking the Pentecostals. McGinlay charged that the Pentecostals denied the Trinity and that some even disavowed belief in God. Also, according to McGinlay, they placed tongue-speaking first when God had placed it last. The February 1932 edition of The Pentecostal Testimony printed part of an address by McAlister in response to McGinlay. In his address, "Our Distinctive Testimony: Replying to Rev. James McGinlay," McAlister proclaimed that "I want to state that the Pentecostal people do not magnify the speaking in tongues. You will attend this place for months at a time and never hear the subject mentioned." He asserted that the fundamentals of the faith were "mentioned here a hundred times for every once that the matter of tongues is mentioned." The Pentecostal Testimony continued McAlister's address a month later.

The impact that Pentecostals had on the consciousness of Londoners grew throughout the McAlister years. Over 2,000 had jammed the London arena to hear McConnell in 1924. The March 1927 issue of The Pentecostal Testimony gave a short report of another "splendid campaign" in which "a number were converted." At this meeting, "a number also received the baptism of the Spirit. The meeting was profitable inasmuch as it got us in touch with a great many people in the City who were hungry for the

---

66 LFP, 2 June 1934, 24, LPL.

67 Craig is not sure whether the attack came via the pulpit or through McGinlay's radio broadcast that competed with McAlister's. Craig, 37.

68 Craig, 37.

full gospel and many of them now attend our services.” The crowds at the 1927 meetings were so large that McAlister had to rent the Masonic temple both in the afternoon and evening as the average attendance ranged from 900 to 1,200.\textsuperscript{70}

An account by Marion Roberta McAlister, McAlister’s daughter, stated that revival lasted “for about eight years.” During this period, numerical growth continued. Marion McAlister remembered, for example, that on one occasion when R. E. McAlister’s nephew, Harvey McAlister, was preaching at series of special meetings, “many were saved and healed and 40 filled with the Spirit. On another occasion with no special worker 65 were filled in about three weeks in the regular services, as many as thirteen receiving the fullness of the Spirit in one meeting.”\textsuperscript{71}

Not only did the assembly’s visibility in the city increase during these years, so did its reputation, as growth appears to have been fuelled by the positive impact it was having in the entire region. Marion McAlister reported that “the developing, expanding church was a challenge to Rev. McAlister. Community and country folk were becoming Christians . . . . People attended from cities and towns near and far.”\textsuperscript{72} This reputation may have been furthered by daily one-hour radio broadcasts that McAlister began in 1933 from CFPL AM radio station. Perhaps driven by the broadcasts, the assembly began to play a role as a “‘mother church’” and became, in Earl Kulbeck’s words, “largely responsible” for the

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{70} \textit{PT}, March 1927, 2.
  \item \textsuperscript{71} Marion Roberta McAlister, “Rev. R. E. McAlister: April, 1880 to September, 1953,” TMs, 1988, 2. PAOCAR.
  \item \textsuperscript{72} M. McAlister, 2.
\end{itemize}
planting of churches in Ingersoll, St. Thomas, Woodstock, Aylmer, Bothwell, Chatham, Goderich, Ripley, Lucan, and Komoka.\textsuperscript{73}

The egalitarian nature of the Tabernacle's leadership during this period, consistent with the early Pentecostal ethos generally, may have provided a further impetus for growth. McAlister seems to have had no qualms, for example, concerning women in roles of explicit public leadership. June Deacon remembered that “three women shared his pulpit: his wife Laura, and Sims and Wilson.”\textsuperscript{74} “Sims and Wilson” refer to L. A. Wilson and Beatrice Sims, two “deaconesses” that McAlister used to minister to the growing congregation. They, too, have become almost legendary in stature in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. Wilson, a former school teacher, took oversight of teacher training for Sunday School, visitation of the sick, and the afternoon ladies’ prayer meetings. Sims, a trained nurse and former missionary was, according to Marion McAlister, “a brilliant student of God’s Word.” McAlister remembered that “for several years she expounded the Scriptures in the local church.”\textsuperscript{75} Not only was Sims a strong preacher, she was also literate. The Pentecostal Testimony throughout this period carried numerous articles and sermons written by her.\textsuperscript{76}

\textsuperscript{73} Earl Kulbeck, 3. M. McAlister made the connection explicitly between the broadcasts and the opening of new Churches, 4. June Deacon, however, attributed the opening of new Churches at least in part to another factor: as soon as the youth showed spiritual maturity “they were sent to the small towns round about to conduct services and open Pentecostal churches.” See, also, Deacon and Lynn.

\textsuperscript{74} Deacon.

\textsuperscript{75} M. McAlister, 5.

\textsuperscript{76} During 1926, for example, The Pentecostal Testimony carried a number of articles by Sims. See Mar. 1926, 11; April 1926, 9; June 1926, 6; Aug. 1926, 2; and Sept. 1926, 7.
A measure of the growth experienced by the Church can be found through its presence in the press. In the early years of his tenure, the small advertisement had begun appearing on the religion page in the Saturday London Free Press. The 15 July 1922 advertisement for the “Pentecostal Assembly” at 577 Dundas Street, for example, listed McAlister as pastor and offered “Special Services on Sunday. 10:30 Sacramental Service. At 7:30 in the evening Evangelist Matthews from Cincinnati will be speaking.”

Two years later, on Saturday, 16 August 1924, the first newspaper article in reference to the activities of the Pentecostals appeared in the London Free Press. The paper published an article and picture describing the revival services that McConnell held at the London Arena under the sponsorship of the Pentecostal assembly. The Free Press described McConnell as the “Fiery Irishman.”

At the same time, The Pentecostal Testimony carried numerous reports of activities in London. This was to be expected given McAlister’s role as editor of the magazine. Typical is a report in the May 1923 issue of a campaign with evangelist Mae Frey. This report showed McAlister’s three-fold emphasis: “Many were saved and filled with the Spirit as on the Day of Pentecost. God manifested His healing power and it was soon noised abroad till our hall was packed with hungry people.” The church was going to prepare for a “city-wide campaign” in July when Frey would return. A series of nine brief testimonies followed the report. Some of the nine were testimonies of previous healings; others, such as  

---

77 LFP. 15 July 1922, 15. The presence of Matthews at the Church may have been a result of McAlister’s ties with Holiness people at “God’s Bible School.” LPL.

78 “Afflicted Claim Cures By Faith,” LFP. 16 August 1924, 3. LPL.
as the following example, were accounts of healings during the campaign: “I would like this evening to glorify God that in answer to prayer to God I was healed of paralysis in my right arm when I was at church on Sunday morning. A SISTER.” As these reports and testimonies indicate, McAlister relied on three major emphases to convince London of the truth of the Pentecostal message: conversion, the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and healing.80

The Relationship between Microscopic Growth and Macroscopic Growth

Important hints regarding the nature of early Pentecostal culture, both in London and beyond, appear in an advertisement for the summer meetings with Frey that was published in the June 1923 issue of The Pentecostal Testimony. The advertisement explained that during the campaign, Sundays were to be set aside for all-day meetings for those travelling in from outside.81 This passing comment is telling. It gives three important characteristics about Pentecostal gatherings: first, a Pentecostal society had formed that would travel to local assemblies that were holding meetings; second, the meetings were not just for evangelistic purposes but served the culture of the insiders; third, one way to make an impact on London society was to flood the city with as many believers as could be mustered.

Growth in the London assembly paralleled that of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada in Eastern Canada generally. Owing to McAlister’s position of leadership within the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, and probably in part due to the prosperity of the

---

79 As early as January 1923, the address on the masthead was 740 Queen St. London. That it was originally called the Canadian Pentecostal Testimony, shows McAlister’s indebtedness to Durham, PT, January 1923, 1.

London assembly, three times McAlister hosted the Eastern District Conference of the PAOC in London.\textsuperscript{82} A report given at the London Conference in October 1931 emphasised Pentecostal growth: 171 had registered as official delegates and, on the last day, during the evening service, the main auditorium "seating 800, was packed to the door . . . ."\textsuperscript{83} Only six years earlier, The Pentecostal Testimony had reported that the total number of ministers and delegates at the 1925 Conference had been "about 80."\textsuperscript{84}

The prosperity of the London assembly and its rank among other PAOC assemblies, not just in terms of adherents but also economically, is shown by a report in the January 1928 The Pentecostal Testimony. In the entire Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, London had given the most to missions in 1927, almost $4,000 more than Winnipeg, the assembly that was the second largest contributor.\textsuperscript{85} Not only did the London Church contribute to the ongoing missionary work of the denomination, the assembly demonstrated that it had significant resources that could be made available in times of emergency. A report in the 1933 issue of The Pentecostal Testimony, for example, stated that the London Assembly raised $900.00 to send a missionary family back to Argentina when no funds were available

\begin{footnotes}
\footnote{\textsuperscript{81} }PT, June 1923, 5. The same advertisement appeared the previous month, 6. Frey’s campaign lasted from 22 July until 12 August.

\footnote{\textsuperscript{82} }The London assembly hosted the Conference in 1925, 1927, and 1931. Initially, the Western Provinces had organised as the Western Canadian District of the Assemblies of God in the United States, while the Eastern Provinces incorporated as the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. In 1921, the two groups joined as the Western and Eastern Districts of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

\footnote{\textsuperscript{83} }"Editorial," PT, Oct. 1931, 6.

\footnote{\textsuperscript{84} }PT, Sept. 1925, 8.

\footnote{\textsuperscript{85} }The London Church had given $9,968.62 as compared to Winnipeg’s contribution of $6,171.90. "A Year of Progress," PT, Jan. 1928, 19.
\end{footnotes}
nationally. Table 51 shows the financial leadership within the denomination that the London assembly demonstrated during the McAlister years:

Table 51. “Missions Giving”(later “Financial Report - Home and Foreign”)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>National Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1923</td>
<td>$1,046.85</td>
<td>1(^{87})</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1923</td>
<td>$118.15</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1924</td>
<td>$136.65</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1924</td>
<td>$158.10</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1925</td>
<td>$100.00</td>
<td>11 (tied)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1925</td>
<td>$297.00</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1926</td>
<td>$240.7</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov. 1926</td>
<td>$1,640.00(^{88})</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1926</td>
<td>$168.20</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1927</td>
<td>$245.20</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1927</td>
<td>$778.00</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1928</td>
<td>$306.90</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1928</td>
<td>$1,061.25</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1929</td>
<td>$395.15</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1929</td>
<td>$390.60</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1930</td>
<td>$1,049.60</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1930</td>
<td>$351.30</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 1931</td>
<td>$372.00</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec. 1931</td>
<td>$324.75</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


\(^{87}\) This includes $1,000.00 from one individual: “Sister Higgins.”

\(^{88}\) This includes $1,300 from “friend” (without the donation from the “friend,” London would have been 4\(^{th}\)).
Throughout McAlister's pastorate, visiting evangelists were an important feature of the assembly's services. Of singular significance for the numerical growth of the London assembly seems to have been the two tent campaigns of McConnell. A news report from London in the July 1925 issue of The Pentecostal Testimony reported that, in the wake of the campaign, "The revival spirit which has been manifest in the London Assembly for

---

89 The leading donor was an anonymous individual.

90 Of this amount, $490.00 came from the broadcast. However, revenues seemed to be up generally.

91 For the first time, the statistics are given according to District.

92 PT, 1923-1937. While statistics are available for every month, August and December/January were chosen for this sample since, traditionally, they are the lowest and highest months, respectively.
nearly a year still continues.” According to this account, new members were being added each week: eighteen more baptisms had occurred at a service on Sunday 7 July in the evening, making a total of 181 baptisms in the past eleven months.\textsuperscript{93} Under the large headline “LONDON REVIVAL,”\textit{The Pentecostal Testimony} reported that the 1927 McConnell return campaign was “the best we have ever had in London.” The author of the account reported that the campaign resulted in seventy-five conversions, sixty baptisms in the Spirit, seventy-one water baptisms, and “it is possible that our congregation has increased nearly two hundred.” In an oblique reference that seems to refer back to the original series of McConnell meetings, the author exuberantly stated that “the London Assembly has had constant revival for over three years.”\textsuperscript{94}

As important as McConnell was to the assembly’s growth, McAlister relied not only on him but also on a constant stream of itinerant evangelists passing through the church. Both\textit{The Pentecostal Testimony} and the\textit{London Free Press} give ample evidence of the regular visits of travelling preachers. For example, both an advertisement in the March 1925 issue of\textit{The Pentecostal Testimony} and a report a month later document the visit to the London Church of William Booth-Clibborn, the grandson of the Salvation Army’s founder, General William Booth: “Great interest has been manifested. Many have been turned away on some occasions who could not get entrance.”\textsuperscript{95} The article in the April issue reported that Booth-Clibborn spoke on the subject “Pentecost Over the Phone.”

\textsuperscript{93}PT, July 1925, 7.

\textsuperscript{94}“LONDON REVIVAL,” PT, Sept. 1927, 19.
Booth-Clibborn's sermons documented a series of telephone conversations between Booth-Clibborn and a critic who had a change of heart and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Similarly, in the Saturday, 23 February edition of the *London Free Press*, a large advertisement heralded missionary services with Rev. James Salter who was identified as a "a pioneer missionary from Africa." The statement, "They (the services) are sure to be of interest to all Christians . . . ." shows that McAlister was not above appealing to sheep from other flocks to augment his own. A survey of the *London Free Press* religion advertisements and *The Pentecostal Testimony* during the McAlister years, shows that visiting evangelists were regular features at the London assembly and that these evangelists usually stayed for protracted periods often lasting several weeks.

Even at the end of his tenure in London, McAlister was still using itinerant evangelists and attempting, through the press, to market them for maximum effectiveness. The "Pentecostal Tabernacle" advertisement in the 15 October 1938 issue of the *London Free Press*, for example, called attention to the visit of "The Fiery Norwegian":

"REVIVAL! REVIVAL! REVIVAL! THE OPPORTUNITY OF A LIFETIME." The

95 "Revival Services," PT, 4:3, 12.
96 PT, April 1925, 5.
97 LFP, 23 February, 1924, 30, LPL.
98 *The Pentecostal Testimony*, during a period from May 1925 to May 1932, for example, reported visits from Donald Gee, the famous English Pentecostal, William Black from California, Jack Saunders, Louise Nankevill, L. C. Hall, Harvey MacAlister, Hubert Entwistle from Sunderland England, Ben Hardin from Chicago, John Bostrom, and C. E. Baker from Montreal. Undoubtedly, McAlister's position as Secretary-Treasurer of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada afforded him considerable influence throughout the Pentecostal movement and this, at least in part, was responsible for his ability to book major names from the Pentecostal preaching circuit.
advertisement stated that the Church would give “Five Dollars Reward for Anyone Who Can Go To Sleep While Evangelist Vick Preaches.”

The demands of the London assembly appear to have taken their toll on McAlister. Suffering from ill health, he resigned in October 1940.

**Short-term Leadership**

With the resignation of McAlister, the “Pentecostal Tabernacle” experienced a decade of brief pastorates. Following McAlister came Allen Mallory, a bright young evangelist. Two short notices in *The Pentecostal Testimony* announced the pastoral change in London: “R. E. McAlister Retires” and, in smaller print, “Pastor Allan Mallory Goes To London.” Mallory, who had been the pastor of the Kitchener assembly, stayed in London only until 1942. Retrospectively, his career appears to have been that of an itinerant evangelist punctuated with occasional and brief periods of local church ministry.

After Mallory, the London assembly called J. D. Saunders to serve as its minister. Saunders was not a stranger to the Church. While it is difficult to gauge his visibility in the assembly prior to his appointment, it is evident that he had preached at the Church in the past. An article in the September 1925 edition of *The Pentecostal Testimony*, for example, reported three weeks of “Special Services” in London with Jack Saunders, lasting from 20 September to 11 October. Older in years, Saunders stayed until 1947, resigning because of ill health.

---

99 LFP, 15 Oct. 1938, 30, LPL.

100 PT, 1 Nov. 1940, 7.

101 PT, Sept. 1925, 8.
In 1947 and 1948, two interim ministers, Vernon Morrison and W. S. Howells, came in quick succession. Morrison, who had been stationed in Kenya, was a supervisor of Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada missionaries. When The Pentecostal Testimony reported the return of Morrison and his family to Kenya, both he and his wife were called interim pastors of the London assembly who had served while on furlough from missionary responsibilities. It appears that Morrison, whose heart was in missionary service, had come to London explicitly for a short tenure. Howells, older in age like Saunders, was an Englishman who, after his brief tenure in London, returned to England where he preached in the churches of the Elim movement, one of the two major Pentecostal groups active in the United Kingdom. A 1980 letter stated that Howells had become available for an interim role in London because he was in Canada convalescing after major surgery in November 1947 in England.

Significantly, little is heard of the London assembly during the 1940s. The Church was still active but little can be found to describe its history. When the next leader of great personal ability and strength arrived, in 1949, the assembly appears not to have grown throughout the previous decade. While the Second World War may have had some deleterious influence on the assembly, its effects are difficult to ascertain. The apparent lack of growth in the Tabernacle may have been related more to the kind and style of pastoral leadership than to wartime pressures.

\[102\] PT, 15 Feb. 1948, 11.

The history of the Tabernacle should not be characterised as one of unmitigated stagnation during the interim pastorates, however. Under Howell's brief tenure there are several indications of a renewal of energy. One letter stated that, after a lapse "of some years," Howells along with Reg McLeod, a long-time member of the congregation, was able to revive the assembly's radio program using the title "Wonderful Name Broadcast." In January 1949, in a review of the previous year's activities, Howells told the assembly's deacons that 1948 had been "one of the best years in the history of the assembly." Of most importance to Howells was the awareness that "13 souls that he knew of had been saved." While Howells' report can be interpreted as a sign of life, in comparison with the reports that issued from R. E. McAlister's tenure, such increases were, at best, modest.

**Ralph Hornby**

In May 1949, a young minister from Manitoba came to the London assembly. Like McAlister, he was able to initiate significant growth in terms of the size of the congregation, its influence in London society, and its influence within the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

When Ralph Hornby arrived in London, he came with experience gained from ministry in small western towns such as Ruthilda, Saskatchewan and Brandon and Dauphin, Manitoba. He began immediately to apply his considerable abilities and energy to the needs of the assembly. In an undated letter, his widow, Retha Hornby Sword stated that as

---


105 PT, March 1957, 5.
soon as they had reached London, before the summer began, her husband initiated a
visitation to every family associated with the church.106

Hornby made an immediate impression on the congregation. Only six months after
his arrival, in light of his “splendid work” as pastor, the Board of Deacons voted to give him
a raise amounting to seventy-five dollars a week and payment of his utilities at the
parsonage. Satisfaction with his work remained high; similar raises appear in the minutes of
Board meetings in 1951 and 1953.107

One of the first tasks that Hornby set out to accomplish was the acquisition of a new
site and building. An anonymous chronicler of the assembly’s history has affirmed
Deacon’s description of the building at 555 Dundas Street and added more details: by 1950,
the city had grown and a dairy had moved in beside the church. The loud voices of workers
during Church functions, the clanking of milk cans as they were loaded onto horse-drawn
wagons, and the condition of the stables produced an intolerable situation. The “swarms”
of flies “were too heavy and odours too noticeable.”108

By February 1950, the Board of Deacons decided to ask the congregation to
approve the purchase of land so that a new Church could be built. At Thirty Grand
Avenue, in an established area of old south London, a parcel of the land had become
available for $20,000.109 Construction began that year and by late spring 1951 the new

106 Retha Hornby Sword in “Book of Letters.”

107 “Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Deacons held in the Church, Wed., Feb. 15, 1950 at 7 PM.,” in “Untitled Minute Book,” 29. See also, 53 and 87.


109 “Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Deacons held in the pastor’s study, Sunday, February 12, 1950 at 1 P.M.,” in “Untitled Minute Book,” 28.
building was complete. The *Full Gospel Advocate*, the magazine of the Western Ontario District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, reported the dedication of the new Church. On the weekend of 17 June, the assembly celebrated its opening with five services featuring dignitaries from both the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada and its sister organisation in the United States, the Assemblies of God: the guest preachers were C. B. Smith, General-Superintendent of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, J. H. Blair, Superintendent of the Western Ontario District, and “Brother” E. Balliet of Springfield, Missouri. The importance of London Gospel Temple to the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada can be seen in the comment by the unnamed reporter from the *Full Gospel Advocate*: “The London Assembly has long been one of the leading congregations of the Dominion . . .”

The new church represented the march of progress in the fortunes of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada: the cover of the 15 March 1952 issue of *The Pentecostal Testimony* was a photograph of the new Church. In an accompanying article, the magazine’s editor stated that the seating capacity of the new building was 1,200. For the time, the new Church was one of the most modern and sophisticated of buildings in the entire denomination and the home of a congregation that was understood by other members of its denomination to be progressive, on the cutting-edge of progress.

Hornby achieved remarkable success in a short period of time. He built a new Church within two years of his arrival and within five years, the assembly was able to retire

---


111 *PT*, 15 Mar. 1952, cover and 3. The estimate of 1,200 for seating capacity is certainly exaggerated. However, this does not take away from the magnitude of the achievement.
its $150,000 mortgage.\footnote{112} The measure of his success in the early years of his tenure at the London assembly can be seen in the souvenir leaflet that the Church published for the dedication of the new building. Even taking into account the possibility of over-zealous reporting, Hornby's achievement was considerable. The leaflet stated that the Sunday School enrolment was 700 and that fifty "officers" oversaw its work. Also, the leaflet claimed that in the past two years, "many" had been saved, "many reclaimed," and about 180 had "received the Holy Spirit."\footnote{113}

Hornby also appears to have made a significant and positive impression on London society. His obituary in the \textit{London Free Press} included a picture and the headline "Well-known Cleric W. R. Hornby Dies."\footnote{114} Referred to in many reports, both in the religious and secular press, was his Sunday School class for men that grew to a weekly attendance of at least 140 each week. Debby Foster has claimed that the mixture of practical teaching and discussion that Hornby used in the class became so well-known and popular that it attracted men who were not part of the congregation and who came only for the class and did not stay for the morning Church service.\footnote{115}

\footnote{112}{"London Gospel Temple," 1-2. See also the \textit{LFP}, 16 June 1951. Hornby was able to move so quickly because prior to Hornby's arrival the Board of Deacons had already taken initial steps toward finding a new location, as can be seen in the minutes of a Board meeting held at the beginning of the month that Hornby was to arrive. Either Hornby established the agenda at his first meeting with the Board if he was present at the beginning of May or, as seems more likely, the "table was already set for him" when he arrived later. The minutes of the early May meeting stated, "After some deliberation on matters pertaining to the welfare of the assembly, consideration was given to the possibility of the erection of a new church." Each member of the Board agreed to seek information regarding possible locations. "Minutes of a Meeting of the Board of Deacons held in the parsonage, Monday, May 8, at 8 P.M.," Untitled Minute Book, 6-7.}


\footnote{115}{See, for example, Debby Foster, "A History of London Gospel Temple in Its 70\textsuperscript{th} Year, 1980, London Gospel Temple, London, Ontario, 20 and 23. Foster included a picture that is found in a number of}
In a manner similar to McAlister, Hornby could be decidedly entrepreneurial in style. He, too, used itinerant evangelists to appeal both to his flock and to non-Church-goers, and the more exotic, the better. In 1958, for example, evangelist Abraham Kudra conducted meetings in London. Hornby reported to The Pentecostal Testimony that “Rev. Kudra is a full blooded Arab, originally a Mohammedan, whose parents came from Northern Punjab, and his grandfather came from Arabia.” According to Hornby, Kudra’s emphases were the salvation of souls, believers baptised in the Holy Spirit, and the sick healed. In this regard, the assembly, at least on an ideological level, still affirmed the same essentials as those found during McAlister’s tenure. Not only did Hornby use evangelists, he initiated large pageants at Easter and Sunday school contests designed to motivate the congregation to bring newcomers. In 1980, Victor and Pearl Clark remembered the effort that Hornby put into such contests: “How hard he worked to build up the Sunday School, having many contests etc! We still have a beautiful China Tea Set that was won in one of them.”

In 1953, tragedy struck. Hornby was diagnosed with cancer of the liver and was not given much time to live. A booklet written by Hornby documented his battle with the disease and his apparent miraculous healing. Hornby’s account of his experience is consistent with the general Pentecostal emphasis on physical healing and the mystical bent 

---

sources showing the class on a typical Sunday morning. See, also, “Sunday School Department: This Is The Way We Did It,” PT, Sept., 1957, 24. In this article, in which the London Gospel Temple men’s Sunday School Class is presented as a model for others, the picture of the class is printed. In the picture, there are approximately 100 men.


117 Victor and Pearl Clark, 10 May 1980, in “Book of Letters.”
of Pentecostal piety. Hornby wrote that on Thursday, 9 July 1953, he slept easily for the first time in a long period. At 1:45 AM he awoke and, according to his account, “while lying asleep in my bed I saw from behind and to my left a finger of light come out of nowhere. It entered through my body and smote me in the abdomen. I was conscious of its impact. I had the sensation of being lifted slightly from the bed and gently rocked from side to side two or three times.” Within a few days, it was determined that the tumour had ceased to grow, his blood pressure returned to normal, and pain was no longer evident. From this moment on, a long gradual amelioration of his health occurred.

Hornby lived for almost five more years, dying in February 1958. After his death, there appears to have been a felt need to affirm that he did not die of cancer. A memoir in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada archives by Louis Maxwell Hornby, for example, asserted that he died of complications from Asiatic influenza. Louis Hornby stated that Ralph Hornby had written the booklet “declaring his healing as a help to others,” but it had been “largely discredited by his death.” According to Louis Hornby, an autopsy conducted by an independent doctor brought in at the suggestion of Hornby’s physician showed that while he had had cancer of the liver and pancreas, “the tissue left by the cancer was slowly disintegrating.”

After Hornby had been healed in 1953, he appears to have worked with the same energy as before and, consequently, London Gospel Temple seems to have sustained a pattern of growth. In 1957, for example, The Pentecostal Testimony reported that “London

---

118 According to Hornby’s account, the cancer was terminal beyond hope in any known treatment. W. Ralph Hornby “He Sent His Word and Healed Me,” n. p., n. d., 15.
119 W. R. Hornby, 17, 19, 21-23.
Gospel Tabernacle [the use of the older name is surprising] is experiencing continuous growth under the aggressive leadership of Hornby. Due to continued growth, the assembly purchased six acres of land in east London. Hornby's renewed vigour can be seen also in his literary output during this period. Throughout the middle 1950s, he contributed devotional articles regularly to The Pentecostal Testimony.

In April 1958, The Pentecostal Testimony published a lengthy obituary and printed along with it an account of his funeral that had been published in the London Free Press. The summary of his accomplishments in The Pentecostal Testimony obituary expressed both Hornby's leadership abilities and personal commitment: at age sixteen he had begun walking and riding by horseback in Saskatchewan to anywhere he could find to preach, including isolated mining towns. Later, he served in North Portal, Saskatchewan, Oak Lake, Dauphin, and Brandon, Manitoba. In Brandon, he had built a new church, purchased a new parsonage, and, at the same time, cared for another assembly in Glanton. Also, he directed the Pentecostal camp in Manitoba. The London Free Press account reported that at the time of his death, Hornby was serving on the national executive of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, the District executive, and the denomination's Bible College Committee.

---


122 See, for example, W. Ralph Hornby, "Barnabas: A Good Man," PT, March 1957, 5.

Donald Emmons

The assembly's choice of a pastor after the death of Hornby represented a radical departure: the congregation chose Donald Emmons who had been raised in the assembly. The election of Emmons was not a foregone conclusion, however. At a "Special Business Meeting" called in May 1958 for the purpose of electing a new pastor, Emmons did not receive the required two-thirds majority. At this meeting, two names had been presented to the congregation. One month later, at a second congregational meeting, Emmons was the only candidate presented. This time, Emmons received a "yes" vote of 74.6% of the total number of ballots cast.124

Emmons background was different from anything experienced by the congregation previously. Not only was he from the congregation, he had been a promising athlete in a time when organized athletics were still frowned upon by Pentecostals. Years earlier, he had been on the way to Beaumont, Texas for a try-out to play professional baseball when, according to his wife, at the train station "God spoke to Don and made it very clear that he was not to go to Texas."125 Instead of playing baseball, Emmons went to Central Bible Institute, the Assemblies of God training institution in Springfield, Missouri. When he returned, he served as the minister in Chatham, Ontario prior to receiving the appointment to London.126

124 "Special Business Meeting of London Local Assembly: May 9, 1958," in "Untitled Minute Book," 189 and "Special Business Meeting of London Local Assembly: June 6, 1958," in "Untitled Minute Book," 191. Within the PAOC, this percentage would be considered to be low as a statement of support.

125 Jean (Emmons) Holmes to Douglas Rudd, TLS, June 1992, PAOCAR.

126 Hornby came from the west where the "Latter Rain" schism had devastated many Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada congregations. In the later 1980s, I spent an evening with Pentecostal historian Gordon Atter. Atter told me that at the height of the "Latter Rain" scare in the early 1950s, a meeting was held in Chatham, Ontario, to organize and to strategise in order to build a defense against the "Latter Rain"
Any lingering doubts that some may have had about the young pastor’s abilities must have been dispelled quickly. After only a year, he convinced the Board of Deacons to hire the first assistant pastor for the Church since the two deaconesses who had worked with McAlister.\(^{127}\) In May and September 1960, The London Free Press reported two bold projects that Emmons initiated. One report told of an ambitious expansion project on the Church site that would see an adjoining building constructed that would include a full basement, two auditoriums, Sunday School rooms and offices, a library, a kitchen, a women’s lounge, washrooms, boiler room, and “boys’ workshops.” With dimensions of sixty-five feet by sixty-seven feet, the project was to cost $70,000.\(^{128}\) The second report, in early September 1960, stated that the opening of the new annex would coincide with the sixtieth anniversary of the assembly and the twenty-second biennial General Conference of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada that was to be held in London later from the 22nd to the 27th of that month.\(^{129}\)

Emmons’ second project was the planting of a new Church. The London Free Press reported that the assembly had sponsored the opening of another Pentecostal assembly in the east end of the city. The new “Royal View Pentecostal Church” began in a small building that cost $18,000 to build. The plan was to remodel the original building to serve

---


\(^{128}\) “Church Annex Start Planned For Tuesday,” LFP, n. d., n. p., PAOCAR.

\(^{129}\) “Opening of Education Wing Feature of Church Anniversary,” LFP, n.d., n. p., PAOCAR.
as a parsonage once the congregation had grown to the extent that it warranted the
construction of a larger facility.  

Emmons represented another example of the strong pastoral leadership that began
with McAlister and had been carried on by Hornby. In a letter sent to archivist Douglas
Rudd, Emmons' wife listed his accomplishments while in London: he had built the addition
to the church, maintained the weekly radio broadcast, visited nine hospitals, and established
the new Royal View Church that started with a congregation of seventy "given from
London Gospel Temple." Jean Emmons Holmes reported that "tremendous growth and
many outstanding healings took place during Don's eight years of ministry in London."  
However, the entrepreneurial edge of McAlister and Hornby appears to have been muted in
Emmons. Instead, a picture is painted of a strong administrator whose abilities to organise
fostered growth in a steady controlled manner.

In 1966, Emmons' work in London came to a close when the Western Ontario
District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada elected him to be the District
Superintendent. Six years later, in November of 1972, he died of a brain tumour.

**Howard Honsinger**

Chosen to succeed Emmons in 1966 was Howard D. Honsinger, a plain-speaking
intense war veteran from the west. Like Hornby, prior to his appointment to London
Gospel Temple Honsinger had served churches in the west. Under Honsinger's
leadership, the precedent of employing an assistant pastor was maintained, a Saturday night
series of concerts targeted at youth was inaugurated, and a branch church started in north

---

130 "Pentecostal Members Officially Open Church," LFP, n. d., n. p. PAOCAR.
131 Jean (Emmons) Holmes.
London. The concert series, however, appears to have caused tensions with other Christians in the city as it held events similar to and sometimes on the same evenings as popular “Youth for Christ rallies. Also, the London North Church, called “Glad Tidings,” seems to have emanated more from the Royal View assembly rather than London Gospel Temple. Perhaps due to changing times, the London Gospel Temple radio broadcast was discontinued during this time. Like Emmons before him, Honsinger was elected to the post of District Superintendent, a position he assumed in 1973.

**Virgil Gingrich and Jack McLoughlin**

The bulk of the 1970s saw the pastorates of two very different individuals who accomplished a rare manoeuvre: trading churches. In 1973, the congregation had appointed Virgil Gingrich as the senior minister. In 1977, he traded churches with Jack McLoughlin who had been serving at Woodvale Pentecostal Church in Ottawa.

Very little has been preserved concerning either of these tenures. Gingrich’s appointment represented another radical departure for the assembly. Possessing a graduate degree, intellectually gifted, a former teacher at the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada Bible College in Peterborough, Ontario, Gingrich’s style appears to have been more cerebral and less obviously revivalist than that of previous ministers at London Gospel Temple. After his move to Ottawa, he left the denomination and became first a minister and then a Bible College teacher in the Missionary Church. Like Gingrich, McLoughlin had graduated from seminary. However, he seems to have had a more gregarious personality. Unlike many of her predecessors, the pastor’s wife became actively involved in the ministry of the assembly.

---

133 Myrl M. Honsinger, “Biographies of Reverend Howard Dwight Honsinger and Myrl May Honsinger,” TMs, 1991, 7, PAOCAR.
By 1980, during McLoughlin's tenure, the Church's operations appear to have reached new levels of sophistication. Differentiation in the kinds and styles of ministry offered by the Church seems to have been an important characteristic of the assembly during this period. The Church employed a senior pastor, a minister of youth, a minister of visitation, a minister of Christian Education, and a director of music. The cover of a 1980 booklet published by the Church featured an artist's conception of a new building to be built on land acquired on Commissioners' Road. In the closing pages of the booklet, a sophisticated vision statement articulated the congregation's hopes for the future.

Robert Smith

In 1981, McLoughlin resigned and the congregation turned to Robert Smith, the senior minister at the Assemblies of God's Bethel Temple in San Francisco. Smith came from a family that was highly respected in Pentecostal circles: his grandfather was A. H. Argue who, along with R. E. McAlister, had been one of the most revered pioneers of Pentecostalism in Canada, and his father was C. B. Smith who had been General-Superintendent of the PAOC and President of Eastern Pentecostal Bible College.

134 Foster, 30-31.
135 Foster, 42-44.
137 The Smith family's abilities and achievements can be seen in realms beyond religion. Robert's brother David, for example, was a cabinet minister in the Trudeau government and in 2000 was still a major figure in federal Liberal politics.
Known for his administrative acumen, Smith was appointed to bring financial stability to the London assembly. That Smith had great success both numerically and financially is obvious both from available documents and from visits to the Church. A booklet published by the Church around 1989 recorded the rise in attendance both in Sunday morning and Sunday evening services:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>AM</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>860</td>
<td>950</td>
<td>1,000</td>
<td>1,100</td>
<td>1,075</td>
<td>1,340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PM</td>
<td>555</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>725</td>
<td>770</td>
<td>825</td>
<td>940</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To care for a congregation of this size, an extensive multi-layered staff was necessary. A flow chart in the booklet included thirty-eight positions of which thirty-four were occupied at the time of printing.

By the spring of 1999, London Gospel Temple held four services on Sundays: two in the morning, one in late afternoon, and one in the evening. Both morning services in the large modern auditorium were filled close to capacity. At the front doors, newcomers were warmly greeted. On entering the auditorium, visitors were impressed first with the size of the crowd and second, with the excellence of the contemporary music. Unlike St. Paul the

---

138 Although each congregation in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada is considered to be "autonomous," the Districts wield considerable power. The degree to which Smith's appointment was influenced and perhaps even determined by the District administration can only be surmised.


Apostle Church, however, the music was a mix of “pop” and rock. The worship leader and the musicians with him conveyed an easy congeniality reminiscent of a night-club. The preaching was conversational and filled with personal anecdotes and illustrations. The services lasted about an hour and a half.

Evening services featured a marked departure from the casual atmosphere of the morning services. In the late 1990s, London Gospel Temple had become the subject of intense scrutiny by other assemblies in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada due to its adoption of a more ecstatic worship style than that found elsewhere. Expressions of ecstatic prophecy, various manifestations of physical motor phenomena, and exorcisms were all seen on a regular basis. Significantly, the piety of the assembly seemed to be a reversion to a much earlier Pentecostal form. This raises many questions concerning the relationship of institutionalisation and secularisation to historical process.

**Declines in the History of London Gospel Temple**

With the evidence available, detection of declines in the life of London Gospel Temple is difficult. However, the evidence does indicate that episodes of decline did occur.

**Decline as Loss of Fervour Due to Lack of Prayer**

The first evidence of a decline, at least in the perception of participants, came during the ministry of McAlister. A report in the February 1935 issue of *The Pentecostal Testimony* referred to renewed vitality in the assembly. After a summer period during

---

141 The relationship of London Gospel Temple to other similar expressions of ecstatic piety in North America and Europe is intriguing. On the surface, the London piety seems to be unconnected causally to other such phenomena.
which “our meetings were a little dull” because people did not take appropriate interest in the prayer room, there had been a great change in circumstances. A recent Sunday had seen the largest attendance in two years, both in the morning and evening services and in the Sunday School. Also, twenty-eight new members were received into fellowship in the morning and, in the evening, there were seventy-five new individuals in the congregation including one from Hope Baptist Church who had come for the first time and had received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. With the admission that dullness had begun to characterise the services at the tabernacle, we have the first indication that, at least in their perception, a decline of religious fervour had occurred from which recovery was needed.

Numerical Decline as the Result of Competition

The most intense crises that the assembly experienced during the McAlister years came in the form of rivals who began ministries in London and who succeeded in causing the defection of members from London Pentecostal Tabernacle. In the Saturday religion advertisements in the 19 May 1934 edition of the London Free Press, there was no advertisement for the Pentecostal assembly but one does appear for “Emmanuel Gospel Temple” on Wellington Street, led by Rev. W. R. Croson. James Craig, relying on an interview with Marion McAlister, discussed the relationship between Croson’s Church and the Pentecostal assembly. According to Craig, Croson had arrived in London and “befriended” members of the Pentecostal congregation who in turn began to call for the ouster of McAlister. The intensity of emotion reached such a peak that at the 1934 New

142 As vital as the McAlister years were, a flawed portrait of the London assembly would result if balance were not brought into the discussion of this period. During his tenure as minister, the Church had to face a variety of challenges.
Year’s Eve service police had to be called to remove those causing a disturbance.\textsuperscript{144} According to both Craig and eyewitnesses who were still alive in 2000, after a number of defections, the revolt ended when one who had played a leading role in the departure of members died of a heart attack. Shortly after his funeral, his wife also died, prompting those who had left to return to the Pentecostal Tabernacle the next Sunday.

Significantly, Croson was not a Pentecostal.\textsuperscript{145} The members of the Pentecostal assembly who had defected to Croson seem to have been attracted by his revivalist piety and were prepared to jettison their Pentecostal pneumatology. This raises a key question concerning decline: how important is commitment to ideology for the growth and maintenance of a group? For at least some members of the congregation, Pentecostal doctrine had either receded in importance or had never been successfully inculcated into their belief system.

By the summer of 1934, the assembly found itself faced with not one but two rivals. In the 1930s and early 1940s, advertisements for a new Church led by Reverend J. H. Dudgeon can be found both in the \textit{London Free Press} and in the \textit{Advertiser}.\textsuperscript{146} Perhaps the first advertisement for Dudgeon’s “London Gospel Tabernacle” was a notice that appeared in the \textit{London Free Press} in 1934 for tent meetings that were to begin on a lot on Colborne Street.\textsuperscript{147} The 18 August edition of the \textit{London Free Press} contained large advertisements

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{144} Craig, based presumably on Marion McAlister, calls Croson, “Crossham.” Craig, 38. Craig wondered if the New Year’s Eve meeting included the annual general meeting of the assembly. This would have been a natural context for the expression of discord.

\textsuperscript{145} Mary Workman, interview by John W. Stephenson. Dec. 1998.

\textsuperscript{146} See, for example, the \textit{London Advertiser}, 24 Dec. 1938 and the \textit{LFP}, 20 Feb. 1943. LPL

\textsuperscript{147} \textit{LFP}, 14 July 1934, 26, LPL.
\end{flushright}
for both Emmanuel Gospel Temple and London Gospel Tabernacle. In this particular issue, the Pentecostal assembly’s advertisement was much smaller than those of its new rivals. Also, by this time, Croson’s Emmanuel Gospel Tabernacle was advertising its own radio broadcast.

The numerical effect on the Pentecostal Tabernacle’s congregation is difficult to judge. However, that references to growth appear to be almost entirely absent in the late 1930s and 1940s, and that elderly members still remember the challenge posed by Croson and Dudgeon, indicate that these two rivals exerted significant pressure on the assembly. No one appears to have discussed the possibility of a connection between the stresses of this period and McAlister’s health problems that led to his resignation in 1940.

In 1951, London Gospel Temple faced a new competitor. From 1947 until 1952, North American Pentecostalism was wracked with a schism that rivalled the “Oneness” crisis earlier in the century in terms of intensity and potential for loss. The “Latter-Rain” movement, beginning in North Battleford, Saskatchewan, swept through many Pentecostal assemblies both in Canada and the United States. Little is known of the coming of the “Latter Rain” to London. However, by 1951, an evangelist named Newkirk had established a small “Latter-Rain” assembly called “Faith Tabernacle” on a highly visible block of Richmond Street. As Hornby began his building project, he would have known

---

148 LFP. 18 Aug. 1934, 24, LPL. Craig omits the Dudgeon controversy from his account. For whatever reasons, the advertisements of the “Pentecostal Tabernacle” were inconsistent in size during this period. Perhaps in this period of economic downturn, money for advertising was not always available.

149 LFP. 16 June 1934, 35, LPL.

150 Unfortunately, the pastor of Faith Tabernacle, who traces his involvement with the Church back to the 1950s, declined to be interviewed.

that little growth had occurred in London over the past decade and that a new challenge had arrived.\footnote{See table 9 for documentation of the decline from 1941 to 1951.}

\textit{Decline as the Result of Linkage to the Larger Religious Context}

"Declines" in the life of London Gospel Temple should be understood in relation to the process through which other religious bodies were moving in the twentieth century. While Protestant hegemony in London has persisted throughout the city's history, a multigenerational decline in mainline London Protestantism is evident during most of the twentieth century consistent with that experienced by those Churches throughout Canada. At the same time, Roman Catholicism has experienced a pattern of gradual growth in London to the extent that it has begun to rival traditional Protestantism in numbers.

Table 53 shows the strength of Protestantism in London throughout the twentieth century. With the exception of Pentecostals, only the large established Protestant denominations have been included. Table 54 translates the numbers into percentages of the total population of London.

From the early 1940s onward, all major Protestant groups declined in terms of MPR. The apparent catastrophic decline in Presbyterianism, the origins of which antedated declines in other denominations, cannot be explained totally with reference to losses incurred due to the 1925 Union. Presbyterian decline from 1921 to 1931, although significant in itself, has intensified ever since. Equally as disastrous proved to be the steady decline in Anglicanism since 1941. The corresponding increase in Roman Catholic adherents, more than doubling in percentage of the population from 1941 to 1991, was
probably due, at least in part, to the introduction of a wider diversity of immigrants to London.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>London</th>
<th>Anglican</th>
<th>Baptist</th>
<th>Meth./ United</th>
<th>Presby.</th>
<th>R. C.</th>
<th>Pent'l</th>
<th>Unspec.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>46,300</td>
<td>13,106</td>
<td>4,381</td>
<td>12,960</td>
<td>8,003</td>
<td>5,262</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>53,838</td>
<td>16,922</td>
<td>4,873</td>
<td>13,045</td>
<td>9,431</td>
<td>6,184</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>71,148</td>
<td>21,856</td>
<td>6,259</td>
<td>21,831</td>
<td>8,047</td>
<td>8,174</td>
<td>591</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>78,264</td>
<td>23,658</td>
<td>7,679</td>
<td>24,233</td>
<td>7,149</td>
<td>9,542</td>
<td>838</td>
<td>1,222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>95,343</td>
<td>26,778</td>
<td>8,217</td>
<td>30,280</td>
<td>8,169</td>
<td>14,065</td>
<td>784</td>
<td>4,653</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>169,569</td>
<td>43,428</td>
<td>11,505</td>
<td>50,556</td>
<td>12,213</td>
<td>33,650</td>
<td>1,292</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>286,010</td>
<td>60,355</td>
<td>18,670</td>
<td>78,110</td>
<td>20,480</td>
<td>63,250</td>
<td>2,775</td>
<td>14,060</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>280,060</td>
<td>50,925</td>
<td>14,620</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>17,785</td>
<td>71,535</td>
<td>3,790</td>
<td>22,970</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>381,522</td>
<td>50,800</td>
<td>17,785</td>
<td>70,740</td>
<td>19,050</td>
<td>102,820</td>
<td>6,845</td>
<td>54,035</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When Pentecostalism becomes the focus of discussion, further observations can be made. In several respects, the results are surprising. First, the growth of Pentecostalism was not continuous. As tables 54 and 55 show, Pentecostalism declined from 1941 to 1951 both in terms of numbers and percentage of the overall population. This decline was

---

perhaps due in part to the effects of the "Latter Rain" movement as seen visibly in the establishment of Faith Tabernacle.

Table 54. Growth Pattern of Churches in London as Percentages of Total Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>London Pop.</th>
<th>Angl.</th>
<th>Baptist</th>
<th>United (Meth.)</th>
<th>Pres.</th>
<th>R. C.</th>
<th>Pent'l</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>46,300</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>28.0</td>
<td>17.3</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>53,838</td>
<td>31.4</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>71,148</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>30.7</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>78,264</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>95,343</td>
<td>28.1</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>31.8</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>169,569</td>
<td>25.6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>29.8</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>286,010</td>
<td>21.1</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>280,060</td>
<td>18.2</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>381,522*</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>18.5</td>
<td>5.0</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 55. Protestantism, Roman Catholicism and Pentecostalism: Percentages of the Total Population of London

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>&quot;Mainline&quot; Protestantism</th>
<th>Roman Catholicism</th>
<th>Pentecostalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>83.1</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>82.2</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>81.5</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>80.1</td>
<td>12.2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>77.1</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>69.4</td>
<td>19.8</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1971</td>
<td>62.1</td>
<td>22.1</td>
<td>.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>41.5</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Second, when the growth pattern of London Gospel Temple is studied, the need for balance in interpretation is evident. On one hand, Pentecostalism appears to have enjoyed major growth. In the city, London Gospel Temple, for example, was by far the largest Pentecostal Church in 2000 and one of the largest of any kind, as tables 56 through 58 attest.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Pastors</th>
<th>Support Staff</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adherents</td>
<td>3,200</td>
<td>532</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daycare Staff</td>
<td>Daycare Enrolment</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In 1998, Ken Raymer, the "executive pastor" of the Church, stated that there were forty-one charismatic churches in London of which "approximately nine started from London Gospel Temple either directly or indirectly." A list of Pentecostal churches in the city prepared by London Gospel Temple in early 1999 emphasised the extent of growth since 1952. According to this list, as of 9 February 1999 there were forty-three Pentecostal Churches in London. The list, provided by Robert Smith, included seven more for which returns were not complete. Not including those for which attendance at the main service of the week was unavailable, the total number attending Pentecostal Churches was 6,725. The pre-eminence of London Gospel Temple is obvious as its congregation accounted for

---

almost half the total number. By any standard, the growth of Pentecostalism in London is impressive.

The same is true for the PAOC nationally. Pentecostalism has grown significantly in Canada since the first decade of the twentieth century. From 1911 to 1981, for example, when the large, mainline, Protestant denominations declined, Pentecostals grew.

Table 57. PAOC Churches in London Ontario as of 9 February 1999.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Est'd</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Congregation Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>London Gospel Temple</td>
<td>3,200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Royal View P. C.</td>
<td>350-400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Glad Tidings P. C.</td>
<td>350-400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>New Life Community</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>New Covenant Assembly</td>
<td>180</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Centro Evangelistico de London</td>
<td>130</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>Dorchester Community C.</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Church in the Oaks</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>Abundant Life Community C.</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Royal View Deaf C.</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>New Hope Community C.</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>The Faith Gospel C. (Ethiopian)</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>The Neighbourhood Church</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Jesus First Assembly of London</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Cornerstone Church.</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Carisma P. C. (Portuguese)</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Living Fountain</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

155 London Gospel Temple's congregation of 3,200 is just several hundred short of the combined total of 3,525 for all others.
Table 58. Non-PAOC Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches in London Ontario as of 9 February 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year Est’d</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Affiliation</th>
<th>Congregation Size</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Faith Tabernacle</td>
<td>I.A.O.G.I.</td>
<td>250-300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>London Central C. of God</td>
<td>Church of God</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>New Life Centre</td>
<td>Apostolic C. of Canada</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Zion Tabernacle</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Oneida House of Prayer</td>
<td>I.A.O.G.I.</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>Slavic Pentecostal P.C.</td>
<td>I.A.O.G.I.</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>C. of God of Prophecy</td>
<td>C. of God of Prophecy</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>Lord of the Harvest Ministry</td>
<td>Independent Assemblies</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>Victory Christian Centre</td>
<td>Independent Charismatic</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>Agape Christian C.</td>
<td>Elim Fellowship</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>Faith Congregational Christian C.</td>
<td>Cong. Christian C.</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>Community Christian C.</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Trans Russian Indigenous Mission</td>
<td></td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Jubilee C.</td>
<td>Open Bible Faith Fellowship</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Faith Community C.</td>
<td>Partners in Harvest</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Dorchester Christian Family Centre</td>
<td>Open Bible Faith Fellowship</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>Inter Faith Ministries</td>
<td>Canadian Inter faith Ministries</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Harvest Time C.</td>
<td>Pentecostal Holiness C. of Canada</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>Eastwind</td>
<td>Salvation Army</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>Word of Life</td>
<td>Open Bible Faith Fellowship</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Revival Christian Centre</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Word of His Power Faith Fellowship</td>
<td>Word Faith</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Covenant Victory C.</td>
<td>Victory Churches Int.</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Rivers of Joy Centre</td>
<td>Christian Fellowship of Churches and Ministers</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Open Door Christian Fellowship</td>
<td>Apostolic</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td>Thames Valley Vineyard</td>
<td>Vineyard</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In response to the appearance given by tables 56 through 58 of dramatic growth at London Gospel Temple and of its position of pre-eminence among London Pentecostals, several caveats must be stated. First, according to Raymer, London Gospel Temple was instrumental in the establishment of, at most, nine other churches. Accordingly, all Pentecostal growth in London cannot be reduced to the influence of London Gospel Temple.

Second, table 55 shows that in spite of obvious growth, in relation to the crucial "MPR" Pentecostal growth has not been spectacular but, rather, has been disappointing. This is true of London Gospel Temple, of Pentecostalism generally in London, and of the PAOC nationally. Tables 59 and 60 demonstrate that, when related to the growth pattern of Canada's population, the growth patterns of the PAOC and of London Gospel Temple appear to be even more problematic as part of a wider phenomenon: the inability of the PAOC to make significant inroads into Canadian society may have been due, in part, to its social context that appears to have been inimical to growth in religion generally. Nationally, this can be seen through a comparison of Pentecostalism with the mainline, Protestant denominations and the Roman Catholic Church. Tables 61 and 62 make these comparisons in terms of numbers of percentages of the general population.

The local context in London has mirrored the national growth rate. According to Statistics Canada, by 1998 there were 6,845 Pentecostals in London, more than the total indicated by London Gospel Temple's informal study in 1999. However, even with this higher number, the growth of Pentecostalism in London, in terms of the MPR, is unspectacular, amounting to a percentage of only 1.8 of the population.
Table 59. 1961 Census: Populations By Religious Denomination, 1901-1961

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1941</th>
<th>1951</th>
<th>1961</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>5,371,315</td>
<td>7,206,643</td>
<td>8,787,949</td>
<td>10,376,786</td>
<td>11,506,655</td>
<td>14,009,429</td>
<td>18,238,247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Angl.</td>
<td>689,540</td>
<td>1,048,002</td>
<td>1,410,632</td>
<td>1,639,075</td>
<td>1,754,368</td>
<td>2,060,720</td>
<td>2,409,068</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bapt.</td>
<td>319,234</td>
<td>384,152</td>
<td>422,312</td>
<td>443,944</td>
<td>484,465</td>
<td>519,585</td>
<td>593,553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pres.</td>
<td>847,635</td>
<td>1,121,394</td>
<td>1,411,794</td>
<td>872,428</td>
<td>830,597</td>
<td>781,747</td>
<td>818,558</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>2,238,955</td>
<td>2,841,881</td>
<td>3,399,011</td>
<td>4,102,960</td>
<td>4,806,431</td>
<td>6,069,496</td>
<td>8,342,826</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meth.</td>
<td>924,750</td>
<td>1,084,695</td>
<td>1,161,165</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Army</td>
<td>10,360</td>
<td>18,909</td>
<td>24,771</td>
<td>30,773</td>
<td>33,609</td>
<td>70,275</td>
<td>92,054</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pent'1</td>
<td></td>
<td>515</td>
<td>7,012</td>
<td>26,349</td>
<td>57,742</td>
<td>95,131</td>
<td>143,877</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See United Church


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>1981</th>
<th>1991</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>24,083,495</td>
<td>26,994,045</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecostal</td>
<td>338,785</td>
<td>436,435</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>1901</th>
<th>1911</th>
<th>1921</th>
<th>1931</th>
<th>1941</th>
<th>1951</th>
<th>1961</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Anglican</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>14.7</td>
<td>13.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baptist</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presbyterian</td>
<td>15.8</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>16.1</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roman Catholic</td>
<td>41.7</td>
<td>39.4</td>
<td>38.7</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>45.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methodist</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>13.2</td>
<td>See United Church</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>20.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentecostal</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>Less than 0.05</td>
<td>.1</td>
<td>.3</td>
<td>.5</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 62. Pentecostals: Number and Percentage of the General Population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Canada</th>
<th>Pentecostals</th>
<th>% of Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1901</td>
<td>5,371,315</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>--</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911</td>
<td>7,206,643</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>Less than 0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>8,787,949</td>
<td>7,012</td>
<td>.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1931</td>
<td>10,376,786</td>
<td>26,349</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1941</td>
<td>11,506,655</td>
<td>57,742</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>14,009,429</td>
<td>95,131</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>18,238,247</td>
<td>143,877</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>24,083,495</td>
<td>338,785</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>26,994,045</td>
<td>436,435</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

Nationally, triumphalist reports of exceptional growth prior to 1993 exaggerated the growth of Pentecostalism in Canada. As table 63 shows, the growth pattern of Pentecostalism in Canada has not been as spectacular as that of either eastern non-Christian religions or of those who reported "no religion." When the "MPR" is made the primary indicator of growth, the growth of Pentecostalism appears to be even less significant as it has failed to make major inroads into either Canadian society in general or into London society in specific.

Locally, the number of Pentecostals listed in London Gospel Temple's list must be treated with caution. During recent visits to London Gospel Temple, while attendance was certainly impressive, it did not appear to me that attendance at the two morning services came close to 3,200.

Finally, a divergence in growth patterns can be seen between London Gospel Temple and the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. During the 1980s, London Gospel Temple experienced, as did the entire Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, a strong pattern of growth in the number of adherents. However, in the late 1990s the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada growth pattern ceased. According to its own statistics, found in tables 64 and 65, the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, by far the largest group of organised Pentecostals in Canada, experienced outright decline from 1993 to 1997. However, even though the PAOC began to undergo a decline, that decline was not seen at London Gospel Temple.
Several conclusions can be suggested from observations concerning London Gospel Temple’s relationship to its wider religious context. First, when religion declines in importance in a given social context, all religious groups in that context will be affected. While some can be affected less intensely due to other factors unique to their history that are contra-indicative of decline, nonetheless, all will be influenced. Second, although a local Church’s growth can be influenced by its relationship to a larger body, this relationship is not determinative. In spite of the general decline in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada during the 1990s, London Gospel Temple has continued to grow. It seems to me that there is a need for additions to the nomenclature: “macro Revival,” the rapid proliferation of local

expressions of a movement and "micro Revival," dramatic growth in one of those local expressions. These two are not necessarily tied to each other.

Table 64. PAOC Growth in Membership and in Congregations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Membership (In Thousands)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Congregations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1982</td>
<td>135</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1983</td>
<td>164</td>
<td>1950</td>
<td>565</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>1970</td>
<td>743</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>1980</td>
<td>842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1987</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>1990</td>
<td>994</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>192</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>193</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>195</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>206</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Membership</th>
<th>Growth Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1989</td>
<td>189,753</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>190,607</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1991</td>
<td>206,172</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(199,633)</td>
<td>(4.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1992</td>
<td>221,566</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>231,420</td>
<td>4.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>226,678</td>
<td>-2.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>223,825</td>
<td>-1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1996</td>
<td>218,782</td>
<td>-2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>227,344</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total loss from 1993 to 1996: 5.46.
Total loss from 1993 to 1997: 1.8

The Influence of the Social Context

External social factors do not appear to have played a role consistently as sources of declines in the life of London Gospel Temple. Orlo Miller, for example, has shown that the

162 When the MPR is taken into consideration, losses may be even greater. The growth rate in the general population in 1990 was .9%. When this is factored into the PAOC growth rate, the growth of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada rate was almost 0 (.1%).

163 1991 saw a change in the method of calculation. From 1991 onward, the nomenclature shifted from “inclusive membership” i.e., Sunday morning attendance, to “people served.” The growth rate from 1991 to 1993 may be illusory to some extent, since “people served” is a broader category.

growth of the general population in London during the 1920s was almost non-existent.

However, during this same period, the London Pentecostal assembly was experiencing great growth.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Numerical Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>+181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1921</td>
<td>+503</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1922</td>
<td>+1,585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1923</td>
<td>+498</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>+19</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scandal did not appear to hurt the local church. During the late 1920s, Londoners, as many North Americans, were shocked by the investigation of fraud charges brought against Aimee Semple McPherson along with the sordid stories surrounding her alleged kidnapping.\(^\text{166}\) These reports do not appear to have had any adverse effect on the Church.

The effect of external economic difficulty on the London assembly is more difficult to judge. Orlo Miller stated that London survived the crash of 1929 better than any other Canadian city. In terms of the wealthy elite, effects of the crash were softened. According to Miller, the earliest generation of London wealth had learned from the crash of 1859 with the result that "the members of the financial establishment came out of the trauma of those

\(^{165}\) O. Miller, 183 and 187. In 1923, the total population of London was 61,867.

\(^{166}\) O. Miller, 190.
years (the Depression) relatively unscathed." However, the other classes in London were hit hard. Miller stated that throughout the 1930s “London’s poor and unemployed suffered ever more intensely.” The economic crisis also brought with it, according to Miller, a decline in moral standards. The overall effect of the Depression was that “economically and physically London had stagnated . . .” From 1930 to 1940, the population of the city grew by only 5,000. The change from 1939 to 1940 was actually a decline of 324. By 1940, London’s population was only 76,099.

For London Pentecostal Tabernacle, the days of great growth came in the 1920s. The lack of growth that is apparent in the 1930s and 1940s may have been related to the economic downturn in this period. However, the nature of the relationship of economic distress during this period to the failure of London Pentecostal Tabernacle to grow is difficult to ascertain without more evidence. If economic hardship in this period did influence the assembly negatively, then, as in Congleton, it can be seen that Church growth patterns run counter to the accepted wisdom that in times of economic difficulty individuals turn to religion for solace. This conclusion appears to be consistent with the findings of a variety of scholars including Currie, Gilbert, and Horsley, David Luker, and W. R. Ward.

---

167 O. Miller, 190.
168 O. Miller, 195.
169 O. Miller, 200-201.
170 O. Miller, 216.
The suspicion that economic distress is a crucial factor in the decline of religious groups is strengthened by evidence that at a much later time London Gospel Temple suffered a major decline related to economic problems. In spite of the appearance of prosperity at the beginning of the 1980s, the congregation was moving toward an intense crisis: financial over-extension. A report in the 15 August 1981 edition of the London Free Press, stated that “construction of the 46,000 square-foot complex on a 5.8-acre site at Commissioners Road and Andover Drive is stalled while the board of deacons and the congregation reassess the heavy debt load.” McLoughlin, the senior pastor at that time, told the Free Press that interest rates had jumped from twelve percent in January to twenty-two percent in August. The difference of one per cent alone, said McLoughlin, required, annually, an additional $22,000 cash flow. At the time, the crisis was becoming acute since the old Church had already been sold and the congregation was reduced to leasing their former building on a temporary basis.172

That the crisis was not only financial can be seen in two contrasting London Free Press reports. In June 1966, at the end of Emmons’ tenure, the Free Press reported that the assembly had 800 adherents. In the 1981 report, the Free Press reported that the Church had only 500 “members and adherents.”173 The consequences of the drastic rise of interest rates appear to have been exacerbated by the loss of members and adherents and a subsequent decline of income.174

---


174 In Pentecostal Churches, often only a minority of those who attend an assembly take out formal membership. This would account, for example, for the small number of eligible voters at the election of
As of spring 1999, most of the financial records from London Gospel Temple were unavailable for public viewing at the Western Ontario District offices. Without such documentation, the magnitude of the crisis is difficult to judge. In private conversation, however, with leaders in a position to know the full scope of the crisis, with rank and file ministers, and with long-standing members of London Gospel Temple, the spectre of bankruptcy at that time appears to have been real and immediate. In such "off the record" conversations, knowledge that the assembly was on the verge of bankruptcy seems to be both ubiquitous and taken for granted. If bankruptcy had become a possibility, it was because of the economic pressure of soaring interest rates that had begun to have such a deleterious influence on London Gospel Temple that the very existence of the assembly was threatened.

Those records that are available show that concomitant with numerical increase during Smith's tenure as senior minister has been a dramatic restoration of financial health. Table 67 shows the increase in contributions throughout the last half of the 1980s.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giving</td>
<td>.82</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>1.32</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>1.35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Emmons as pastor. This also accounts for the nomenclature of "members" and "adherents." This reticence to become formal members may be related to the early Pentecostal deep distrust of organization. Some Pentecostal assemblies still refuse to have a formal membership.

Documents made available at the Western Ontario District office of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada demonstrate the recovery of the assembly. Barbara Regan, a mortgage underwriter, wrote in 1993, for example, “The London Gospel Temple has been an excellent customer over the past six years particularly during a time of high interest rates. We are very pleased to share your financial success of the past couple of years.” In a series of letters from financial institutions, successive mortgages were discharged from 1991 to 1995. By 1989, the annual budget of the Church had risen to $1,121,725.00. Ken Raymer stated that the Church debt was about $3,000,000 when the new Church was complete. With interest rates over twenty per cent, more than fifty per cent of the church income went to service the debt. A sign of the current prosperity of the church can be seen in the reduction of debt servicing to only thirteen per cent of income.

Demographic Factors as Sources of Decline

The one realm of life at London Gospel Temple for which significant statistical evidence is still available is that of the Sunday School. Through a study of Sunday School attendance patterns at London Gospel Temple and throughout the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, identification and explanation of declines can be confirmed and adjusted.

176 Barbara Regan to Ken Raymer, TLS. 1 April 1993, WODARC.


179 Ken Raymer.
Two glimpses of growth in the Sunday Schools of the PAOC can be seen in the early 1950s. In September 1951, The Pentecostal Testimony published a list of the largest Sunday Schools in Canada:

Table 68. “How Do You Rate: Sunday School Attendances June 1951: The Five Largest in Canada”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>426.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calgary</td>
<td>331</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Port Colborne</td>
<td>145.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Niagara Falls</td>
<td>138</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A similar report published in January 1954 shows a significant shift:

Table 69. “Sunday School Monthly Averages For October, 1953”: The Five Largest in Canada

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vancouver Broadway</td>
<td>645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London</td>
<td>432.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnipeg Calvary</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edmonton</td>
<td>388</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

180 PT, 1 Sept. 1951, 7

As shown in table 70, more nuances appear when London Gospel Temple is compared with other churches within its District over a period of three decades.

Table 70. Sunday School Growth: London Gospel Temple as Compared to Other Churches in the Western Ontario District, 1951-1978.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1951</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hamilton</td>
<td>408.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>536.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>545</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>487.25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hamilton Central</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>513.75</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>454.25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>465.75</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Hamilton Bethel</td>
<td>399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>412.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Windsor -</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Jan.</td>
<td>406.2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>104.75</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>479</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1961</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>143.75</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>471</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1962</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>Toronto Queensway</td>
<td>526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1963</td>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>393.1</td>
<td></td>
<td>192.5</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Queensway</td>
<td>533</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1964</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>480.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Queensway</td>
<td>647</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td>Queensway</td>
<td>605</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1967</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>265.75</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>Queensway</td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1968</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>299.5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>464</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>Dec.</td>
<td>351</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>306.25</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Queensway</td>
<td>493</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970</td>
<td>Nov.</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>256.2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>36.4</td>
<td>Queensway</td>
<td>421</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1972</td>
<td>Jan.</td>
<td>289.5</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Brampton</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several observations can be made from these tables. First, from the lofty heights attained in 1951 and 1952, the last years of Hornby’s tenure saw significant decline. This may show, again, the importance of the leader as a factor in sustaining growth since these were the years when Hornby was ill. Second, the overall pattern of the London Sunday School is that of a slow meandering decline. In the last recorded entry for London Gospel Temple in 1976, its daughter assembly, Royal View Pentecostal Church, had surpassed it.

More striking, however, is the dramatic growth experienced in larger urban centres, especially Toronto, growth that London could not match. In 1976, for example, the Toronto West End assembly recorded 2,280 in Sunday School as compared to London

---

182 *Full Gospel Advocate, 1951-1978, WODARC.* This periodical was a magazine published monthly by the Western Ontario District of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. To my knowledge, the only extant collection of copies is found at the Western Ontario District Offices in Burlington, Ontario.
Gospel Temple's 366. The acceleration of growth in Toronto may have been due to a variety of exogenous factors such as immigration especially from countries that placed a high value on religious commitment, greater population density that eased access to churches, the degree to which other locations were utilising sophisticated techniques of recruitment, and other unique local factors.¹⁸³

Tables 68 and 69 may indicate another demographic nuance. As Western Canadian assemblies mirrored the growth in the overall population, a growth pattern was established in the west with which London could not keep pace.

Tables 68 through 70 also give a new dimension to an understanding of decline related to the ideas of “macro” and “micro-revival.” Over time, a congregation may experience a failure to keep pace with the growth of other churches in the same denomination. Although numerical decline in an assembly may not be evident, in comparison with others it fails to match growth. This failure brings a loss of influence and power within the organisation of which it is a part, a loss that can truly be called a decline.

**Idiosyncratic Factors as a Source of Decline**

The influence of idiosyncratic factors in the history of “declines” at London Gospel Temple is difficult to determine due to a lack of explicit evidence. However, it is tempting to see the unique problem of the presence of the dairy adjacent to the 555 Dundas Street location as a perceived threat after the period of stagnation during the 1940s. Members of the congregation certainly believed that the odour, noise, and insects from the dairy had an

¹⁸³ In the early 1970s, for example, Ron Stevens, the charismatic pastor of Kennedy Road Tabernacle in Brampton, Ontario, imported American church growth techniques. The ubiquitous purple, Sunday School buses of the Church became a common sight on the streets of the city during that time and fueled the meteoric growth of the assembly's Sunday School.
adverse effect on the assembly's growth. Significantly, one of Hornby's first projects was to move the Church and the years of growth that occurred under his leadership took place after the move was completed.

Conclusions

Several observations can be made concerning declines in the life of London Gospel Temple. First, London Gospel Temple appears to have developed a basic character early in its history. Regardless of subsequent exogenous and endogenous factors, whether those conducive either to growth or to decline that the assembly experienced over an extended period, the patterns that were possible seem to have been circumscribed by that character. Elements in London Gospel Temple's character were drawn, primarily, both from the early leadership of the church and the nature of its constituency.

In the case of London Gospel Temple, its character was forged under the influence of R. E. McAlister, a visionary and entrepreneur who was totally committed to his work. Based on the imprint of McAlister's leadership, throughout the history of the assembly growth appears to have been strong whenever pastors of similar personality were in charge. With that kind of leadership, growth appears to have been possible even in the face of strong contraindications such as the financial difficulties of the early 1980s. At other times, with leadership different in style to that of McAlister, the congregation stagnated or even became vulnerable to decline especially when affected negatively by other factors detrimental to its health.

The effect of the early constituency on the basic character of the assembly is seen in the Anglo-Saxon demographic base of the congregation. This base, while allowing for
growth in the early years of the assembly’s history, established a barrier to the attraction of those from culturally marginalised groups that might have been drawn to Pentecostalism.

Second, London Gospel Temple may be another example of a sacrifice of identity for survival. London Gospel Temple’s identity shift appears not to have been one of cognitive beliefs or distinctive practices, but of style. By adapting successfully to the cultural changes in the host society, the assembly has been able to grow through adjusting the presentation of its message. Significantly, Edith Blumhofer and Paul B. Tinlin have argued that the Assemblies of God in the United States failed to thrive in the early 1990s because “the denomination continues to rely on outmoded programs and outdated methods that fail to produce the desired results.” Blumhofer and Tinlin’s argument was that the 1990s were becoming a “decade of decline” rather than the planned “Decade of Harvest” because the denomination failed to engage in “modernization” and became trapped in programs efficacious in the 1950s but hopelessly outdated for the 1990s. If Blumhofer and Tinlin are correct, the lack of decline at London Gospel Temple in the 1990s was due at least in part to its willingness to adapt to culture. However, the culture that has been embraced by the assembly’s leadership is that of white middle-class North America. The sophistication and style of London Gospel Temple’s music, facilities, and programs, demonstrates that the assembly’s leadership has responded to the rise of Pentecostal constituents from the poor and the working class to the comfort of middle class life, with an expression of Christianity that affirms and perpetuates their values.

---

In an intriguing counterpoint to the motif of cultural adaptation, in the late 1990s the assembly adopted a ministry style that hearkened back to the early days of Pentecostalism. Frequent manifestations of physical motor phenomena, expressions of the Pentecostal “gifts” of prophecy and knowledge, encounters with what was understood to be the demonic, and intense worship, have been regular characteristics of life at the Church. However, ecstatic worship, Pentecostal pneumatology, and a Pentecostal theology of the supernatural all appear to be purveyed in a context comfortable to the middle-class. This may have implications concerning a hierarchy of priorities and felt needs that members of organisations unconsciously use as a measure to determine the desirability of involvement. This hierarchy may be seen in play not only at the end of the twentieth century but also in the 1930s with the defection of members to Croson’s and Dudgeon’s churches.

Third, the role of cognitive affirmations in the maintenance and growth of an organisation appears to be significant. In the case of Croson and Dudgeon, decline may have been initiated by a failure to inculcate core ideological distinctives in the members and adherents of the assembly. The absence of commitment to ideological distinctiveness may be a predisposing factor to decline.

Fourth, competition itself may have played a role as a source of declines especially in the 1930s with the appearance of two major competitors appealing to the same “market share.” In the 1980s and 1990s, it was yet to be established whether the many charismatic and classical Pentecostal churches in the city would augment each other’s work or detract from it. Certainly, the long-term pre-eminence of London Gospel Temple among the Pentecostal community in London was not a given.
Fifth, in the 1980s, the financial pressure on the assembly that the North American economy initiated by the dramatic escalation of interest rates, triggered a decline that was almost fatal. Here as in Congleton, significant and prolonged economic distress appears to be a powerful force that can have a pernicious effect on a Church. In the case of London Gospel Temple, the effects of economic downturn may have been exacerbated by a lack of pastoral leadership in the style of McAlister. However, with a return to McAlister’s leadership style, the effects of economic difficulty were ameliorated. Accordingly, a corollary to the principle that prolonged economic distress is a significant source of decline, may be that, while the exogenous factor of economics has a great influence on a Church’s history, its influence can be lessened by the presence of other positive factors.

Sixth, a hidden decline appears to be evident from the mid-1950s through the 1970s as the assembly failed to keep pace with other congregations in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. This decline that resulted in a loss of influence and authority in the denomination came from demographic change over which the assembly had no control.

Seventh, at various times members and leaders have interpreted the state of affairs as in decline because of a perceived loss of spiritual fervour. However, reports of decline understood in this way are muted probably due to their presence in denominational publications that have a vested interest in affirming the wellbeing of its assemblies.

Eighth, while differentiation may be adduced as a growth mechanism when churches plant new congregations and members leave to join the newly established assemblies, this is true only in the short term. Over time, these new churches take on a life their own and soon can no longer be viewed as merely a satellite of the original. In the case of London Gospel Temple, the Royal View assembly, while beginning from the parent church, developed
quickly so that within a decade it, too, was able to plant a congregation. In such a
circumstance, a decline occurring some time after the planting of a new church cannot be
masked by attributing it to growth by differentiation.

Ninth, while local idiosyncratic factors are difficult to discern, the case of the
neighbouring dairy may provide evidence that local factors were at work in the history of
London Gospel Temple as well.

Finally, exogenous factors other than economics can also play a role in growth and
decline. The enduring ethnic composition of London's citizens may have established
parameters that circumscribed possibilities for growth. Also, while the Pentecostal message
appealed primarily to those in distress or uncertain about the future, the predominant ethos
of prosperity in London accompanied by long-term social lift compromised the possibility of
unlimited growth. 185 While individuals could be attracted, the nature of London society
prevented any large-scale conversion to Pentecostalism.

Now that declines in the three subject congregations have been discussed, I will
attempt to show that these declines can be classified in such a way as to suggest a historical
typology.

---

185 This tension between personal need and social comfort can be seen in my own family. In the
1930s, my grandmother converted to Pentecostalism after battling emotional or mental illness. Coming
from a comparatively wealthy family, it is significant that none of her family members, with the exception
of one son, followed her departure from the family's Anglican and Methodist roots.
CHAPTER 6

A TYPOLOGY OF "DECLINES" AND "DECLINE": BUILDING THE FOUNDATION

Any attempt to discover a historical typology must deal with the rich diversity of historical reality. Those who would posit the efficacy of typologies as meaningful tools of explanation must first confront the assertion that historical reality is so heterogeneous that no single theory of social change could explain all reality adequately. Because of the complexity of historical processes, facile typologies inevitably run aground when taken from the world of ideas and applied to specific historical phenomena. Often, historical reality refuses to conform to the constraints that typologies tend to place on it. In recognition of the nature of historical reality, prior to an attempt to construct a historical typology based on the evidence gathered from the three subjects, I will put forward five foundational assertions on which to base that typology:

1. Historical process is extraordinarily complex.
2. Since historical process is complex, it appears that historical process is non-repeatable.
3. Although historical process is non-repeatable, because of fundamental similarities among humans in all places and at all times patterns will be discernible.
4. In the historical process of human organisations, two internal logics are identifiable, and the dominance of one over the other shifts toward the end of the "coming-to-be" stage of the organisation's existence.
5. The shift of dominance from one internal logic to the other leads regularly to circumstances that foster profound decline.

The Contribution of "Complexity Theory"

Since the 1970s, three related disciplines have appeared in Western thought that have begun to have significant influence on our understanding of historical reality:
“systems theory,” “chaos theory,” and “complexity theory.” “Complexity theory” or simply “Complexity” is perhaps the most fruitful of these three since it uses the same principles as “systems theory” and “chaos theory” but goes further than either.¹

In recognition of the highly technical and often perplexing nomenclature and conceptual content of the discipline, I will not attempt a full explanation of Complexity or an application of it to history.² Rather, I will use Complexity in a suggestive way to point the way forward toward a feasible historical typology of “decline.” The use of “Complexity,” even in such a truncated fashion, can help interpret the nature of historical process.

**Five Characteristics of Complexity Theory**

Complexity is difficult to define. It refers to a condition that can be found in systems of all kinds in the world, whether, for example, molecular, species, business, or religious. M. Mitchell Waldrop has distilled the basic characteristics of complex systems to five statements that, he has asserted, summarise the meaning of Complexity:

---


² Thinkers primarily from the “hard sciences” of physics, biology, and chemistry articulated complexity theory first. One of the first applications of Complexity beyond the natural sciences came in the realm of economics. Several attempts that serve as a beginning for application of complexity theory to other disciplines are now appearing. The closest to a historical application may be Wolfgang Fikentscher’s, “Cultural Complexity: Legal Ethnographical Observations,” in *Festschrift für Bernhard Grossfeld* (Heidelberg: Verlag Recht und Wirtschaft, 1999): 197-225, in which Fikentscher discusses the anthropological fieldwork he conducted on the customary laws of South-western Indian tribes.
1. Many independent agents interact with other agents.\(^3\)
2. These interactions allow the system as a whole to undergo spontaneous self-organization.
3. Such self-organising systems are adaptive.
4. Each system “possesses a kind of dynamism.”
5. These systems have somehow acquired the ability to bring order and chaos into a special kind of balance.\(^4\)

**Interaction**

Onar Am began his explanation of Complexity with a statement that is logically prior to Waldrop’s first statement: a system in which complexity exists must have many agents or components and they must be independent. He stressed that “a Complex system is NOT a whole that is built up of parts. It is a whole built up of other wholes.” The richness of the system is underscored by the realisation that any one of the components may itself be a complex system. In any given system, all its components “are interacting with each other in a great many ways.”\(^5\)

In complex systems, the nature of the interaction is necessarily local in that an agent will interact only with its nearby agents. However, the continual interaction of all the components influences the system as a whole. Using the term “component,” a common synonym for “agent,” Am stated that

---

\(^3\) “Agent” is used as a technical term in Complexity theory. Ethan Decker stated that the term is used because all agents “have the basic properties of information transfer, storage and processing.” Ethan H. Decker, “Biology 576: Landscape Ecology and Macrosopic Dynamics: Self-Organizing Systems”; available from [http://algodones.unm.edu/~bmilne/bio576/instr/html/SOS/sos.html](http://algodones.unm.edu/~bmilne/bio576/instr/html/SOS/sos.html); accessed 11 May 2000; Internet. Amanda Inskip Corcoran defined “agents” or “elements” as “individual autocatalytic elements interaction within a system or community.” [sic] “Autocatalytic,” another crucial term for Complexity theorists, refers to the “independent actions of elements within a system resulting (hopefully) in change to self and to system (auto: self; catalytic: inspiring change).” Amanda Inskip Corcoran, “Common Terms in Complexity Theory”; available from [http://www.arc.losrios.cc.ca.us/~corcora/complg.html](http://www.arc.losrios.cc.ca.us/~corcora/complg.html); accessed 11 May 2000; Internet.

\(^4\) Waldrop, 11-12.

\(^5\) Waldrop, 11.
a component is indirectly connected to all other components in the system via other components. One component interacts with a second component that interacts with a third . . . and so on. So although the components of the system only interact locally they have a global effect on the system."

"Spontaneous Self-organization"

The richness of interaction is so great that "self-organisation" begins to occur.

"Self-organisation" refers to the ability of groups of agents, whether, for example, genes in an embryo, birds in a flock, atoms in molecules, or individuals in a religious group "to transcend themselves, acquiring collective properties . . . that they might never have possessed individually." Ethan Decker has observed that, in many systems, "organization seems to arise spontaneously from disordered conditions. And it doesn’t appear driven by known physical laws. Somehow the order arises from the multitude interactions of the simple parts . . ." Decker’s comments stress that a crucial characteristic of the interaction is its nonlinearity. He referred to computer simulation experiments that have proved to be foundational to complexity theory and that have shown the way in which the "local, nonlinear interactions of many agents can develop into complex patterns." Related to the non-linear nature of self-organisation in complex systems is the idea of "emergence," perhaps the most difficult and controversial of the affirmations of complexity theorists. Waldrop has stated that emergence occurs when "somehow, by constantly seeking mutual accommodation and self-consistency, groups of agents manage

---

6 Am; see also Decker.

7 Waldrop, 11. Waldrop uses the same language, sometimes verbatim on 288-289.

8 Decker.

9 Decker.
to transcend themselves and become something more.” Stated succinctly, “emergence” is the theory that the whole is greater than the parts, that the whole will exhibit “patterns and structures that arise spontaneously from the parts.” 10 This tendency toward patterning is so crucial to Complexity that Stuart Kauffman has defined the discipline as a search for a “general law of pattern formation in non-equilibrium systems throughout the universe.” 11 As patterning develops, “emergent behaviour” begins to occur as the actions of a cluster of agents enables that cluster to serve as a building block for some larger cluster. 12

Adaptation

The ability to adapt, meaning “agents are capable of changing their internal information processing functions,” is necessary to have a self-organising system. Waldrop clarifies the nature of these internal changes: agents “don’t just passively respond to events the way a rock might roll around in an earthquake. They actively try to turn whatever happens to their advantage.” 13 According to Waldrop, each system, known as a “complex adaptive system” (CAS), functions as a network of agents acting in parallel. In the network, “each agent finds itself in an environment produced by its interactions with the other agents in the system. It is constantly acting and reacting to

10 Decker; and Waldrop, 64.

11 Waldrop, 299.

12 Waldrop, 169.

13 Decker; and Waldrop, 11. In the lexicon of complexity theory, self-organising systems are given the acronym “SOS” or “CAS” for “complex adaptive systems.”
what the other agents are doing.” For coherent behaviour to be found in the system, “it has to arise from competition and co-operation among the agents themselves.”  

For emergent behaviour to appear as systems learn to adapt, circularity in the system must be evident. Essential to circularity is the idea of “feedback.” As each agent seeks to survive, it must learn through interaction with other agents those behaviours that improve its performance. Positive feedback in the form of rewards, along with negative feedback experienced through adverse results, provide guidance for future interaction. If an agent is truly adaptive, it will learn “to keep the strategies that pay off well, and let the others die out.” Reality, according to Waldrop, is a “rich mixture” of positive and negative feedbacks that “can’t help producing patterns.” The early years of Primitive Methodist history provide a good example: when a “negative feedback” began to appear as early as 1816 in the waning popularity of the distinctive Primitive Methodist practice of camp meetings, Bourne adjusted his methods by reintroducing prayer bands as central elements in the meetings. The response to this change, a renewed growth in camp meeting popularity, provided a positive feedback so that the focus on prayer became enshrined as a necessary component to camp meetings.

In the development of self-organisation, circularity in a complex adaptive system does not exclude a linear dimension to the process. Am described his understanding of the historical process of a CAS in terms strongly reminiscent of Arnold Toynbee’s “ox-cart” analogy: a CAS is “a circular structure rolling through linear time.”

14 Waldrop, 145-147. See also, 83.
15 Waldrop, 36.
16 Waldrop, 165.
17 Am.
"Dynamism"

Waldrop asserted that complex adaptive systems possess an animation that makes them "qualitatively different from static objects." The essence of this "dynamism" or animation, is continuous change. In a complex adaptive system, "equilibrium," a state of complete stasis, is never possible since, in Waldrop's words, the system "is always unfolding, always in transition." The open possibilities for change are always so many that such a system's agents can never find their optimum form or place. The most that agents can ever do is "to change and improve themselves relative to what other agents are doing. In short, complex adaptive systems are characterized by perpetual novelty."19

The language of economist Brian Arthur is significant: in the early years of reflection on Complexity, he understood its nature to "be about flux, change, and the forming and dissolving of patterns . . . it would have a place for individuality and the accidents of history." Both consciously and unconsciously, Arthur appears to have viewed Heraclitus' idea of "flux" to be the ancient progenitor of complexity theory.20

Complex adaptive systems are often said to be "far-from equilibrium." Static systems in which no change occurs cannot display complexity. Decker, however, has clarified the principle: CAS need only be "far enough (from equilibrium) to avoid collapsing into a local equilibrium condition, and sometimes that's not very far."21 Only when there is change can there be "flux," and only where there is "flux" can there be complexity.

18 Waldrop, 11.
19 Waldrop, 147.
20 Waldrop, 17, 38, and 330-331.
21 Decker, 3.
Perhaps the most striking feature of the nonlinear dynamics in Complexity is "chaos." Since the 1960s, physicists have begun to see affirmed, in profound ways, the principle that "everything is connected often with incredible sensitivity." In this state of connectivity, "tiny perturbations won't always remain tiny. Under the right circumstances, the slightest uncertainty can grow until the system's future becomes utterly unpredictable -- or, in a word, chaotic." Arthur, for example, realised that in biology "small chance events are magnified, exploited, built upon. One tiny accident can change everything." He realised also that biology, physics, and economics, which are vastly different disciplines, were essentially the same in that identical phenomena could be observed in every discipline: "tiny initial differences producing astonishingly complex behaviors . . . A handful of pieces falling into a near-infinity of possible patterns."

In chaos theory, the ability of small changes to produce large results is often called the "butterfly effect." The apparently serendipitous decision of William Durham to visit London, Ontario in the winter of 1910 provides a good example: his visit became the precipitant to Pentecostal organisation in London and also shaped the theological and spiritual character of London Pentecostalism in the long term.

---

22 Waldrop, 65.

23 Waldrop, 30 and 32. Walter Fontana has argued that the common link among disciplines is that they are all "chemistry." If the essence of chemistry is "simple variety" and "reactivity," as Fontana affirms, then a wide variety of systems exist that could be classed as "chemistry" since their agents combine in many different ways and they are able to interact with each other to form new entities. Waldrop, 314.

24 Amanda Inskip Corcoran has defined the "butterfly effect" as a circumstance in which "small variables effect large changes within a system." Corcoran.
Decker has emphasized that the ability of individual entities in a complex adaptive system to connect or recombine is essential to Complexity. When a system develops, a transition occurs when the “connectedness” among entities “reaches a critical value.” Decker defined this transition as “the boundary between sparsely connected and percolating networks . . . .”

According to Stuart Langton, life is a process hovering at this transition, “eternally trying to keep its balance on the edge of chaos, always in danger of falling off into too much order on the one side, and too much chaos on the other.” Waldrop stated that a variety of scholars have come to see the world not as “a static thing buried deep in the frozen regime” but as “a dynamic, ever-changing system poised at the edge of chaos.” By maintaining itself on “the edge of chaos,” a complex adaptive system develops the ability to bring order and chaos into balance as its agents “never quite lock into place, and yet never quite dissolve into turbulence, either.”

**Implications of Complexity for Historiography**

Complexity, still in its infancy as a discipline, appears to have enormous implications for historiography in general and may be able to offer help directly in the task at hand, the formation of a typology of decline. At least three implications for

---

25 Decker, 6 and 10. “Percolation” is a technical term used to indicate that connectedness spans the entire system.

26 Waldrop, 235 and 252.

27 Waldrop, 12. Danish physicist Per Bak’s experiments in the late 1980s discovered a relationship in complex systems that was similar to the idea of the “edge of chaos.” His term for the phenomenon was “self-organized criticality.” The state of a system could be called “self-organized” in that it reached a steady state “itself without any external force explicitly shaping it.” This state could be called “critical” in that it would be barely stable, making it liable to imminent change ranging from the minuscule to the catastrophic. Like the idea of the “the edge of chaos,” the notion of “self-organized criticality” maintains that a system can reach a state that is at the border between no change and chaotic change. See Waldrop, 304-307.
historiography are evident. First, Complexity strikes a blow against the claims of "minimalist" historians while affirming the emphasis of "microcosmicists," and, at the same time, it raises questions similar to those posed by the "precision-pluralists."\(^{28}\)

Given the richness of the interaction among the many agents in a system, new and different possibilities are always appearing. Consequently, complex adaptive systems are, by nature, inherently "messy. This "messiness" speaks to the difficulty that historians have had applying typologies to concrete historical reality. The "messiness," argued Arthur, "is inherent in the systems themselves. You can’t capture any of them and confine them to a neat box of logic."\(^{29}\) Invariably, typologies are stretched by their inability to account for such "messiness," as local circumstances fail to conform to expectations raised by the typologies.

Second, conclusions regarding the nature of historical process can only be reached by achieving a balance: on one hand, history must be seen as fundamentally non-repeatable, while on the other hand, it can be affirmed that there may be patterns that can be detected. If, with the passage of time, local interactions occur in similar ways since humans and their behaviour have had a fundamental consistency throughout history, then commonalities can be observed through a comparison of historical processes in different places and times. Brian Arthur affirmed this in a tentative application of complexity to history: Arthur stated that, if a system is complex, "then the exact patterns are not repeatable. And yet there are themes that are recognisable. In history, for example, you can talk about ‘revolutions,’ even though one revolution might be quite different from

\(^{28}\) See above, chapter 1, 6-7.

\(^{29}\) Waldrop, 11 and 329.
another. So we assign metaphors.”30 In this statement, Arthur, almost inadvertently, affirmed the importance of metaphors in expressing the nature of historical reality, metaphors that include those on which this study has focused. Perhaps John Holland gave the best analogy to express the non-repeatable nature of history together with the patterns that can be observed. Hollands compared Complexity with meteorology:

The weather never settles down. It never repeats itself exactly. It’s essentially unpredictable more than a week or so in advance. And yet we can comprehend and explain almost everything that we see up there. We can identify important features such as weather fronts, jet streams, and high-pressure systems. We can understand their dynamics. We can understand how they interact to produce weather on a local and regional scale.31

By maintaining a balance between recognition of perpetual novelty in history and awareness of patterning that is discernible, observers can engage in short term rather than long term anticipation if not prediction.

Third, complexity affirms that a complex adaptive system can only be understood through analysis, as difficult as it may be, of its local context. This may point to the provisional character of conclusions that seek to explain the historical process of “global structures.” Given the complexity of the systems that make up a large “global” system, researchers working on a given system’s local context can see only a portion of the totality of the large system.

Complexity and a Historical Typology of “Declines” and “Decline”

Complexity can contribute to the discovery of a typology of “declines” and “decline” in six ways. First, Complexity theory serves as a potent reminder of the thoroughgoing complexity of historical process, a process that, in any local context, is

30 Waldrop, 334.

31 Waldrop, 255.
made up of a multitude of agents that are complex systems themselves. When a more
global approach is taken, the number of agents rises exponentially. While a complex
system may not be dependent on any one component for its existence because each is a
whole in itself, changes in any one component will bring corresponding changes in the
nature of the overall system. Demographic shifts in the parish of St. Paul the Apostle
Church provide a good example: the loss of most of the Irish constituency did not mean
the end of the parish. It did mean, however, a significant change to the system as the
parish struggled to adapt to the loss of the Irish and to successive waves of new
immigrants into the parish.

Second, the “butterfly effect,” a necessary feature of complex systems, can help
explain the appearance of “declines.” This effect can occur since every agent has the
ability to affect the whole. Also, both the interactive nature of the system and the nature
of the interaction within the system foster the possibility of an appearance of this effect.

Since the “global structure” of the system and the “local interaction” of agents are
so intimately related, even minor changes in the local context will affect the whole.
Given the intricate nature of the relationships within the system, even a minor change in
the interaction of local agents can bring about monumental change. Economist Birute
Regine, as quoted by Megan Santosus, affirmed both the possibility and the strength of
the “butterfly effect”: “One thing complexity theory says is that the most powerful
processes happen at the micro level . . . .” If this is true, then “declines” can begin in

---

32 Am.

on-line]; available from http://www.cio.com/archive/enterprise/041598_qanda_content.html; accessed 11
May 2000; Internet, 6.
the smaller systems that comprise a larger system, and they can begin through apparently small changes. For example, care for discipline by the Quarter Day Board of the Kinsey Street Circuit at one meeting in September 1970, led to a "decline" the strength of which affected the Chapel throughout its subsequent history. In the same way, "declines" in denominations or Churches can be traced to processes occurring at the local level. Local squabbles in chapels after union, for example, exacerbated the pattern of "decline" in the Methodist Church after 1932.

Third, Waldrop stated that the central point of Christopher Langton's groundbreaking Complexity research was that "complex, lifelike behavior is the result of simple rules unfolding from the bottom up." Decker clarified this emphasis: "To say that a system is self-organized is to say that it is not governed by top-down rules . . . . Instead, the local actions and interactions of individuals is the source of the higher-level organization of land [sic] the system into patterned, ordered structures with recognizable dynamics." Therefore, explanation cannot be rooted in analysis of "global structures" alone. Further, once the focus is turned to local interaction, the "messiness" of historical reality becomes evident.

Fourth, growth is tied to an organisation's ability to find the "edge of chaos" and to remain in that state. Applying Complexity to business practices, Regine stated the central distinctions among complex adaptive systems. They have

three ways of functioning. There is the stable zone, in which the company is in a state of inertia, not responding to opportunities nor adapting to changes . . . . Then there is the chaotic zone, in which the organization is bouncing off the walls, haphazard, led by events rather than choices and overreacting. And there is a

34 Waldrop. 329.
35 Decker. 3.
zone in between these two, the creative zone, which is the place to be – not so stable that [little] changes, nor so unstable that everything falls apart.\textsuperscript{36}

Equilibrium or “stability,” John Holland stated tersely, “is death.”\textsuperscript{37} Systems that are stable in that agents have become adapted to each other to the point that interaction and change have ceased to occur do not grow or to develop. Chaos, the dominant feature of an out of control system in which no patterning, no “settling down” is possible, is likewise not conducive to growth. Only systems that can maintain themselves on “the edge of chaos” can continue to grow. All complex adaptive systems, to be truly complex and adaptive, must be continually in this state. Drawing from the character of the physical world, John Holland extrapolated to all complex adaptive systems: they are “systems that remain continuously dynamic, and that are embedded in environments that themselves are continuously dynamic.” The task for any organisation becomes adaptation “to a condition of perpetual novelty, at the edge of chaos.”\textsuperscript{38} The inability of religious groups to adjust to change, whether demographic, social, economic, or religious, leads to decline. Failure to remain at “the edge of chaos” means loss and even death on one hand or fragmentation and loss of coherence on the other.

Fifth, since complexity in systems is governed by “bottom-up” rules, both religious leaders and researchers must adopt a cautious approach to institutional planning. Economist Roger Lewin has stated that because of the “butterfly effect,” “it is hard if not impossible, to implement a strategic plan for anything but the short term.” Leaders risk

\textsuperscript{36} Santosus. 6.

\textsuperscript{37} Waldrop. 356.

\textsuperscript{38} Waldrop. 356.
initiating a process of decline if they adopt long-term plans that, by definition, may not fit future conditions.

Finally, adaptation to the “edge of chaos” comes at a cost. Religious groups, like all organisations, must tolerate the ambiguities of “messiness.” Periods of overzealous cultivation of stability will lead to “declines.” Total “equilibrium,” the result of a thoroughgoing and perhaps contrived resistance to change, will culminate in final “decline” in which the complex adaptive system that was the religious group ceases to be. However, since religious groups, as all organisations, live in the context of other complex adaptive systems, unless equilibrium is forced on the system in an unrelenting fashion, periods of equilibrium will be ended by the ongoing course of historical process. In the continual interaction of complex adaptive systems, an agent in a system will suffer an alteration that knocks it out of its stable state. Whatever the modification is, it induces changes in one of the agent’s neighbours and soon a deluge of changes begins to occur.

Existence at “the edge of chaos” means, to use Am’s metaphor, that

the order that emerges in complex systems is soaked with an element of wilderness. When we look at clouds we never see strike lines or nicely “ordered” patterns. And a wild jungle stands in stark contrast to the well-trimmed gardens of the human world. Neither the jungle nor clouds nor organisms are ordered in a traditional sense, yet they are not completely disordered either. Somehow we get the feeling that nature balances somewhere between chaos and order. It is a “messy” kind of order. [sic]

To experience continued growth, there must be a willingness to foster some elements of the “wilderness.” The imposition of discipline so strict that creativity is suffocated, and an unwillingness to tolerate those on the fringe, can rob a religious group of its place at the “edge of chaos.”

---

39 Am.
“Settling Down”: Conflict between “Internal Logics”

The tension between order and chaos and their implications for this study are addressed in a different way in the realm of sociology. Complexity theory does not address directly a pattern that many observers have seen occurring with regularity in human organisations. In religion, this pattern has taken the form of a “settling-down,” a loss of fervour and growth that has often been interpreted as a pattern of decline. Commentators have understood this pattern in a variety of ways; all see it as change resulting from a global ongoing process. Some have interpreted this pattern to be the result of “secularisation,” others as the result of “institutionalisation,” and still others as the simple result of passage of time, the so-called third or fourth generation syndrome. The discussion of these paradigms has been long, circuitous, and often confusing. They cannot be dealt within the confines of this study nor must they. Rather, another paradigm may be more helpful in probing this pattern.

Gregory Baum, both in his book Theology and Society, and in his 1987 “Massey Lectures,” probed the tension between order and chaos through a study of what he called the “logics” of organisations. Central to Baum’s argument was Robert Merton’s idea of “trained incapacity,” a condition that Merton described as “that state of affairs in which one’s abilities function as inadequacies or blind spots. Actions based upon training and skills which have been successfully applied in the past may result in inappropriate

---

responses under changed conditions." As Merton studied the development of bureaucracy in organisations over time, he found that bureaucratic structure exerts a constant pressure upon the official to be "methodical, prudent, disciplined." If the bureaucracy is to operate successfully, it must attain a high degree of reliability of behavior, an unusual degree of conformity with prescribed patterns of action.

Over time, however, sound training in the protocol and accepted methodologies of an organisation may lead to the opposite of what is intended. When workers do not recognise that new conditions pertain that are significantly different from previous conditions for which the training was intended, those actions that were once advantageous to growth now lead to decline. The result becomes, in Kenneth Burke's "echolalic" phrase, as quoted by Merton, "people may be unfitted by being fit in an unfit fitness."42

Emphasis on method, prudence, discipline, and learning that have been efficacious in the past can lead, Merton argued, to transference of the sentiments from the aims of the organization onto the particular details of behaviour required by the rules. Adherence to the rules, originally conceived as means, becomes transformed into an end-in-itself; there occurs the familiar process of displacement of goals whereby "an instrumental value becomes a terminal value."43

When this process happens, negative outcomes follow. Discipline, for example, understood as "conformance with regulations," becomes an immediate value and "develops into rigidities and an inability to adjust readily." The result is that


42 Merton, 365.

43 Merton, 365.
formalism, even ritualism, ensues with an unchallenged insistence upon punctilious adherence to formalised procedures. This may be exaggerated to the point where primary concern with conformity to the rules interferes with the achievement of the purposes of the organization . . .

Merton articulated the development of “trained incapacity” in terms of a process that can be expressed succinctly:

1. To be effective, a bureaucracy demands “reliability of response and strict devotion to regulations.”
2. This devotion leads to the transformation of rules into absolutes no longer “conceived as relative to a given set of purposes.”
3. This transformation “interferes with ready adaptation under special conditions not clearly envisaged by those who drew up the general rules.”
4. Therefore, those elements that are conducive toward efficiency in general “produce inefficiency in specific circumstances.”

Building on the work of Merton, Baum argued that every organisation has two internal logics: a “logic of mission” and a “logic of maintenance”:

The logic of mission deals with the aim and function of an organization, the purpose for the sake of which it has been established; the logic of maintenance deals with the well-being of the organization itself, its up keep, security, and perpetuation in the years to come.

Baum argued that both logics are necessary to the well-being of an organisation. Without them, an organisation cannot continue to exist. The growth of Pentecostalism provides a good example. When the Pentecostal movement first exploded on to the world stage following the April 1906 Azusa Street meetings in Los Angeles, the logic of mission could be given almost total priority. Meeting in poor conditions in a hall that was used previously to house construction materials, William Seymour and those in leadership with him had little about which to be concerned except their mission:

---

44 Merton, 365-366.
45 Merton, 366.
46 Baum, 234.
preaching salvation to sinners and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence
of speaking in tongues to the converted.

The rapid surge of Pentecostalism in the coming months is well documented:
other missions in the city such as Elmer Fisher’s “Upper Room Mission” on South Spring
Street adopted the Pentecostal message; Azusa Street veterans such as Florence Crawford
began to export the message throughout the continental United States and Canada;
visitors to North America such as Thomas Ball Barratt continued the exportation
internationally; and followers began to join the Pentecostal movement from a widening
variety of religious backgrounds.

With the swift torrent of early Pentecostal energy, new concerns began to be
evident and the “logic of maintenance” emerged: discipline had to be enforced,
theological statements crafted, leaders trained and credentialed, buildings acquired,
publications inaugurated, and a network of leaders and assemblies organised. By the end
of the twentieth century, Classical Pentecostals had developed highly differentiated
organisations replete with hefty administrative structures. In large churches, business
administrators and “executive pastors” functioning explicitly as “COO’s” or “CEO’s”
became common as assemblies struggled to deal with the manifold needs of large
organisations with large budgets and many divisions, programs, and staff members.47
Over time, an elaborate logic of maintenance has developed.

47 The development of the “logic of maintenance” appears to be related to what some sociologists
have called “differentiation,” the necessary development of multiple strategies of governance and
administration in the face of growing complexity in a society. Larry Shiner uses “differentiation” in this
way as a response to two definitions of “secularisation”: “conformity with the world,” and “disengagement
of society from religion.” Larry Shiner, “The Meanings of Secularization,” in Secularization and the
and 37-38.
Baum's contention is that while an organisation cannot survive without care and concern for both logics, they will always exist in tension. Previous research, Baum declared, has demonstrated that "there is a trend in every organization, a trend that must be resisted, to put an ever greater weight on the logic of maintenance." In this trend, the result of the "greater weight" applied to the logic of maintenance is that this logic takes on an "exaggerated importance." Relating overemphasis of the logic of maintenance to goal displacement, Baum argued that

when the concern for the institution's well-being begins to overshadow the commitment to the institution's function . . . a dialectic begins to operate, according to which the excessive concern for maintenance becomes in fact dysfunctional and undermines the institution's well-being.

Ironically, "whenever the logic of maintenance gives rise to obsessive preoccupation, it not only weakens the logic of mission, it even undermines the maintenance of the institution." When the logic of maintenance begins to overwhelm the logic of mission, "goal displacement" occurs as staff members become increasingly preoccupied with rules and methods designed to make "the organization more efficient and frictionless." The result is that a growing insensitivity to the purposes of the organisation and to clients arises. Baum stressed the seriousness of this trend stating that it must be "wrestled against."

---

48 Baum, 234-235.
49 Baum, 239.
50 Baum, 241 and 244.
51 Baum, 235.
52 Baum, 239.
Since development of the “logic of maintenance” can be subtle, occurring in a multitude of processes within an organisation, it can be difficult to detect. That the leaders of the Kinsey Street Chapel and Circuit appear to have maintained records only from 1843, may, for example, imply that it was in this period that the “logic of maintenance” became fully developed, perhaps over-developed. Evidence that may support this supposition is two “snapshots” of the Chapel and Circuit that can be found in the extant records. A notation in the 1848 Chapel Schedule places the membership of the Chapel at seventy. This seems to indicate a dramatic increase from late 1820 since, in his journal, James Bonser, the incumbent, placed the membership in November 1820 at twenty-four.\(^5\) By 1848, the Chapel had 132 members with an attendance of 400. However, from 1848 on, the membership did not grow significantly except for the period from 1860 to 1864 during the years immediately following the collapse of the silk trade.\(^5\) Not only may the 1840s have marked the full development of the “logic of maintenance,” these years may also indicate the rise of that “logic” to a place of undue importance so that the Chapel and Circuit became predisposed to declines.

Organisational Process: from “Hunters” to “Herders”

From the realm of business, David K. Hurst has given another contribution to a foundation for a typology of “declines” and “decline.”\(^5\) Although Hurst’s language differs from that used by Baum, he deals with the same issues and adds important nuances to an understanding of historical process.

---

\(^5\) Anderson, Kinsey Street, 4.

\(^5\) See Graph 2, 163; Table 11, 165; and Table 12, 166.

Hurst’s central thesis is unique and, at first glance, shocking: “contexts arise in every organization that so constrain managers that their only course of action is to destroy the system -- creatively -- in an act of what I call ‘ethical anarchy.’”\textsuperscript{56} Hurst argued that if leaders are to save mature organisations from a dramatic decline or even a cessation of existence, they must create crises deliberately. Such action is necessary, Hurst asserted, as a kind of pre-emptive strike: “if managers don’t create their own pre-emptive crises, even in what appear to be successful operations, then something else will.”\textsuperscript{57} Damage must be done to the status quo that is “constructive” in that it is necessary to save and to bring renewal.\textsuperscript{58} This damage becomes necessary, according to Hurst, due to the “harmful constraints” that come to bind organisations leading to a loss of critical values.\textsuperscript{59}

To understand the ways in which Hurst’s thesis relates to Complexity, to Baum’s argument, and to the goal of this study, Hurst’s nomenclature must be explained. Hurst’s core metaphors bear a strong resemblance to those that I have used: “revival,” “renewal,” and “decline.” However, he added two new terms that are central to his argument: “crisis” and “constraint.”

Hurst used “revival” and “renewal” interchangeably and did not treat them as having genuine semantic distinction. In Hurst’s argument, however, as in mine, “renewal” or “revival” relates to the affective, cognitive, and volitional realms. His argument is, he stated, \textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{56} Hurst. 2.} \textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{57} Hurst. 115 and 138.} \textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{58} Hurst. 10.} \textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{59} Hurst. 138.}
concerned with the revival in mature organizations of the values, feelings, excitement, and emotional commitment often experienced only in the beginning of an organization’s life. Renewal is about the restoration of something of value, something important, that has been either lost or forgotten as an organization has grown and prospered.60

“Renewal” should change the emotions and it should engender a new awareness of and commitment to important values that come from the organisation’s past: “Renewal involves going back to the founding values to reconnect the past to the present, to rediscover the old in the new.”61

In Hurst’s explanation of the significance of values in the health of an organisation, his argument interfaces with that of Baum:

One of the earliest and most significant developments in the life of a young organization is the emergence of a shared sense of purpose among its members that transcends individual ambitions. This feeling of mission, which engages everyone in the organization, is the central set of values to which anyone can refer, either as a guide to action or as justification for having taken action.62

“Renewal,” it could be said, is a restoration of the logic of mission, or, to use Hurst’s nomenclature, a restoration of the core values of the organisation. In Hurst’s work, “decline” is related principally to the loss of values and he usually gauged “decline” according to measurable financial loss.63

As reflected in his title, along with “renewal,” “crisis” is the most important category in Hurst’s work: it is “crisis” that leads to “decline.” Using the paradigm of

---

60 Hurst, 2.

61 Hurst, 3.

62 Hurst, 39.

63 Hurst, 2, 51, and 93. On one occasion, he measured the loss of values by a loss of fervour. In a discussion of Quaker development, Hurst stated that, as key values came to be eroded, Quakers “became more intellectual in their beliefs, and the emotional fervor started to decline.” By 1725, “exuberance gave way to steady habits.” Hurst, 93.
“oscillation,” Hurst stated that crisis is synonymous with “turmoil” so that the history of an organisation can be characterised by oscillations between stability and instability, “periods of calm” at one pole and “periods of turmoil” at the other. Hurst argued that in the ongoing history of organisations, such oscillations are inevitable. Since crises and resultant declines will occur, Hurst’s goal was to provide an exegetical key to crises so that organisations can understand and respond to them appropriately. When a crisis occurs, “renewal” becomes the path to resolution and the restoration of calm.

Hurst spent much of his discussion exploring the internal sources of crisis. Only rarely did he allude to external precipitants. In order to explore the internal dynamics that lead to crisis, Hurst used a metaphor taken from anthropological research: extrapolating from the San people of the Kalahari Desert, Hurst argued that “crisis” and “decline” occur when “hunters” become “herders.”

In the social dynamics of the nomadic San Bushmen of the Kalahari, Hurst found the quintessential hunting band. He argued that the social behaviours of the Bushmen modelled many of the desirable features that managers are currently trying to introduce into their modern organisational structures: “absence of hierarchy, multiskilling, open communication, mutual trust, and individual empowerment.”

---

64 Hurst, 7.

65 Only late in his discussion does he mention outside tensions that can precipitate “crisis”: “fluctuations” in business and “changing political arrangements.” Hurst, 139.


67 Hurst, 14.
The most important characteristic of the hunting band was its ability to function as a “learning” organisation. Rapid learning was needed to find strategies that could be successful regularly in the continual search for food. This principle could be stated using economic categories: the hunting group was an “immediate-return” system in that “returns to labour are direct and immediate.” This kind of system has a kind of existential immediacy. Results can be procured without significant amounts of preparation or investment and “the proceeds of effort . . . are consumed immediately and not stored for any significant length of time.”

Revival groups are similar: often on the margins of established groups if not exhibiting “come-outer” behaviour explicitly, an emphasis on proselytisation brings the immediate return of a constant stream of converts. Often, a style that features extemporaneous preaching at spontaneous or loosely organised meetings obviates the need for established structures such as buildings, programs, and a credentialed clergy. Organisational development and even the maturation of converts are not central priorities. Rather, such groups focus all effort on the perceived mission, winning new converts to the faith as expressed in a distinctive form by that group. In this mission-driven context, strategies that bring immediate success are discovered and learned quickly.

Hurst found that in the hunting mode, San society consisted of “loose coalitions of open, assertively egalitarian communities” in which there was “a continual flux and flow in the membership of any band.” Such social values meant that hierarchical

---

68 Hurst, 20.

69 Hurst, 14.

70 Hurst, 15.
development and "turf-protecting" were not evident, and the San enshrined their values in a social structure that prevented the establishment of hierarchical relationships.\textsuperscript{71}

In a manner similar to Baum, Hurst did not reject hierarchical development out of hand. Rather, he stated that hierarchy is the essential accompaniment to the survival of any complex system. It reflects the progressive mastery and reduction to subconscious routines of the multitude of activities that have to happen automatically every day if the organization is to stay in business.\textsuperscript{72}

However, he stressed that, as the Kalahari Bushmen have discovered, "the emergence of hierarchy is probably the most insidious of the aging processes in a maturing organization." Hierarchy looms large, Hurst affirmed, as a "source of decline because it functions as a major constraint, preventing organisations from easily changing the processes, technologies, goods, and services."\textsuperscript{73}

In the 1960s, San society underwent a rapid transformation as the Bushmen began to acquire wealth. Hurst expressed the social transformation that occurred in terms of a change from "hunting" to "herding." With the acquisition of possessions and personal resources that was made possible by the rise of a market economy on the borders of the desert, the San began to settle. In the process of "settling," much new social behaviour began to appear. The herding camp, for example, replaced the older emphasis on intimacy with an emphasis on privacy. With the growing isolation that resulted from their privatised habits, the Bushmen needed to develop a system of hierarchical authority to resolve disputes that earlier would have been dealt with informally around the

\textsuperscript{71} Hurst, 16.

\textsuperscript{72} Hurst, 43.

\textsuperscript{73} Hurst, 43-44.
millennia-old communal campfire. As hunters, leadership was not understood to grant special status because leadership was tied to situation. However, as the society became "static," a "formal authority" became necessary.74

Hurst's description of San society serves to establish a paradigm for a typology of organisational growth processes. As organisations change, they tend to follow the same process as the San:

We start off in the beginning in small-scale, informal organizations as naive hunters, not knowing much but capable of learning every day through trial and error. With success and the learning of effective routines, we steadily become more like herders. Soon we are protecting possessions and defending territories in large-scale hierarchical bureaucracies.75

As organisational development takes place, "the easy informality that often characterizes small, entrepreneurial organizations is replaced by formality and rigid procedures."76

The Role of Constraints

The result of the shift to "herding" behaviours from "hunting" behaviours is a growing imposition of "constraints" on to the organisation. Hurst used "constraint" as a technical term to indicate the prime source of crises. By "constraints," Hurst meant restrictions on behaviour that proceed from the top down in a hierarchical fashion and which are fostered and protected by the system itself. Hurst argued that "constraints" are not negative in themselves but, rather, are needed for the health of the organisation. Organisation itself, Hurst asserted, necessarily means to constrain: "in the process of specifying and promoting certain activities, we constrain, at least implicitly, the

74 Hurst. 23 and 25.
75 Hurst. 27.
76 Hurst. 27.
performance of others.” Constraints are imposed, initially, for “the very best of reasons – to perpetuate a winning formula.” As organisations discover behaviours that fulfil their mission, constraints are necessary to continue and to routinise those behaviours.

According to Hurst, “constraints” become injurious to growth when they begin to overwhelm the system. As an organisation’s members find success largely through the process of trial and error characteristic of the “hunting” mentality, structures become necessary to preserve, clarify, and further that success. The problem, however, is that the growth of these structures affects the entire organisation by making it brittle so that it cannot respond to changes in its context. When the original conditions in which trial and error produced initial success change, then such organisations do not have the flexibility to adjust to the new conditions.

“Constraints” become harmful simply in the on-going course of historical process; circumstances change “until eventually the once beneficial influence of the constraints begins to inhibit learning and adaptive change.” Since the onward thrust of historical process transforms the nature of constraints, their harmful effects “can grow so slowly and insidiously, they can be very difficult to detect from the inside.”

Most significant in the growth of “constraints” to detrimental levels is the appearance of a “‘dominant design’” that “embodies all the features that customers . . . regard as basic requirements.” This ends the period of obvious innovation and begins a stage in which the emphasis is on improvement of the production process. A shift occurs

---

77 Hurst, 123.
78 Hurst, 124.
79 Hurst, 131.
in the organisation from a predominantly “learning” mode to a “performance” mode of behaviour.\footnote{Hurst, 106-107.}

The “dominant designs” of all three subjects in this study are distinguishable. Although Primitive Methodist piety was closely aligned with that of the Wesleyans, its “dominant design,” while perhaps the most difficult to recognise, is still discernible. It is found in the formalisation of a rich variety of gatherings that sprang from their distinctive emphasis on open-air gatherings: “camp meetings,” “protracted meetings,” and “revival” meetings. For Pentecostals, the “dominant design,” organisationally, was a hierarchical structure in which power resided in “District” officers presiding over “Districts” divided into smaller “Sections.” Congregationally, the “dominant design” is seen best in their worship practices: vibrant and sometimes ecstatic singing, vivid preaching often from travelling evangelists, and “altar calls.” For their “dominant design,” Paulists carefully developed the idea of the parish as “perpetual mission,” placing a high value on preaching and entrepreneurial vision. In this “dominant design,” parish missions became a crucial feature.

Disaster is the final outcome of the development of “constraints.” Hurst argued that as organisations, in a drive for standardisation and efficiency, work to consolidate those strategies that brought success in the early days of the organisation’s existence, they “sacrifice resilience and flexibility and become more vulnerable to catastrophe.” The impulse found in organisations to make themselves “hyperstable” results in a state in which they are “brittle and vulnerable.”\footnote{Hurst, 109.} Organisations reach this condition of
vulnerability because, although learning leads naturally to discoveries that must be
routinised through an emphasis on performance, “learning” and “performance” are, in
essence, inimical to each other:

The dynamics of the learning process hamper performance by discouraging the
establishment of routine, whereas the demands of performance inhibit learning by
institutionalizing routine. The loss of control is different in each case. The
learning organization is internally controlled during its process of emergence. It
is pulled by the vision and shared sense of mission of its founders. The
performance organization, on the other hand, becomes increasingly externally
controlled -- constrained as it becomes successful.82

In the 1960s, the decline of parish missions in effectiveness and popularity, coupled with
the ecclesiological shift prompted by Vatican II, provoked a growing angst among the
Paulists. This may be an example of a “dominant design” that no longer suited either
external circumstances or internal core values both of which had changed.

The circumstances that pertain when “constraints” have developed beyond their
usefulness are also reminiscent of Merton’s “trained incapacity.” Strategies that were
once appropriate can become, as time passes and circumstances in the external context
change, detrimental to the organisation’s mission and overall well-being. Also, like
Baum, Hurst concluded that while maintenance strategies or “constraints” are necessary
for continued success, they can begin to overwhelm the core values and consequently the
mission of the organisation.

Hurst, however, differs from Baum and Merton in two key aspects. Whereas
Baum only alluded to the dark consequences that follow an over-exaggeration of the
logic of maintenance, Hurst declared repeatedly that overdeveloped “constraints” lead
inexorably, not only to negative outcomes, but to disaster. In this assertion, Hurst may

82 Hurst, 49.
have gone too far: his belief that disaster is inevitable does not do justice to the complexity of history. While Baum’s silence on the nature of negative outcomes leaves the reader unsatisfied, his affirmation that organisations can obviate an over-exaggeration on the “logic of maintenance” through adroit institutional planning appears to be accurate. Without a proper response to over-developed constraints, disaster may result. However, catastrophe is not inevitable.

Conclusions

In conclusion, Complexity theory, the work of Gregory Baum, and the work of David Hurst help establish a foundation for a typology of “declines” and “decline.” From Complexity, we can affirm that the nature of historical process is characterised by “perpetual novelty.” History is, at base, non-repeatable. However, we can hasten to add that we can distinguish themes or patterns in historical process, and these patterns occur with at least a degree of regularity. In a sense, both those historians who argue for a linear understanding of historical process and those who argue for a cyclical understanding have something important to contribute. However, linear aspects of historical process should not be defined in “developmental” categories.

Also, Complexity points toward the necessity of a “bottom-up” approach to historical analysis. If the source of organisation and “patterning” comes from “the local action and interaction of individuals,” then historical analysis should seek to begin as close to the “bottom” as possible, focusing on individuals as the most fundamental units.

---

83 Hurst does allude once to at least a theoretical possibility that disasters can be avoided: “ideally, the product of learning, strategy, should be expressed in performance, and the results of that performance should be fed back in to the learning organization.” Hurst, 50.
of study. This approach becomes even more appropriate with the realisation that since every religious group is itself a complex adaptive system, then not only are its congregations smaller complex adaptive systems within the larger one, but the congregations are themselves made up of many smaller systems all of which contribute to the life of the whole. Accordingly, the study of “declines” in large complex adaptive systems must pay attention to the ongoing processes in the smaller systems that are constituent parts of the larger system, and to the individuals that comprise them.

The edge of chaos in Complexity points toward the inherent “messiness” and “wildness” of organisational growth. The necessary drive to organise brings great challenges and here Complexity interfaces with Baum and Hurst: if the “logic of maintenance” is developed too stringently, “equilibrium” will result and a “decline” will ensue. However, if organisational strategies are not put into place, the organisation will not be able to maintain coherence or identity. The degree to which an organisation can tolerate a degree of “wildness,” while at the same time protecting its coherence, will go a long way toward determining its ability to ward off “declines.”

Since at the edge of chaos a certain “wildness” can be detected, a system’s behaviour can be vulnerable to a wide array of changes coming from any one of many sources. As the “butterfly effect” has shown, even a minute change in the system can result in vast consequences. In the search for explanations, the researcher must always seek to discern which events and factors had great import for future change, even though, superficially, they appeared to be insignificant.

---

84 Decker.
Baum and Hurst helped clarify the nature of the basic pattern of accommodation through which groups grapple with the necessity and perils of organisation. Whether it is articulated in the language of the "logics" of maintenance and mission or in the language of "constraints," organisations appear to grow in a fashion that indicates the presence of two fundamental internal dynamics, and the interplay of these dynamics can predispose organisations to "declines."

With this foundation, I can now proceed to propose a typology of "declines and decline." From the study of the three subjects, we can discern those patterns that played a role consistently in initiating decline.
CHAPTER 7

TOWARD A TYPOLOGY OF "DECLINES" AND "DECLINE"

Attempts to construct a typology of "declines" and "decline" must be consistent with the "perpetual novelty" that is characteristic of historical process. However, while historical process is fundamentally non-repeatable, the historian can distinguish themes or patterns in history, some of which occur with at least a degree of regularity. Apparent regularity in the appearance of these patterns does not affirm, however, that historical process is essentially circular. On the other hand, denial of circularity in historical process does not mean, necessarily, that historians must adopt a "developmental" interpretation of history either in a Hegelian manner or in any variation of a theory of progress.

Observers from a variety of disciplines might call one set of patterns or themes in historical process, "oscillations." Historians of religion, for example, could use this idea to affirm that the themes of "revival" and "decline" appear to alternate. The use of these terms, however, must emphasise that the nature of each aspect is not identical in each "oscillation" and that the nature of the process of movement from one aspect to the other is not determinative.¹

The Logics of Mission and Maintenance

Regardless of whether or not it is couched in the language of "oscillations," one major theme of change in the history of organisations is "decline." David Hurst and

¹ I use the term "aspect" rather than the usual term, "pole," in reference to "oscillation," since "pole" connotes the determinative aspect of "oscillation" understood according to Newtonian physics.
Gregory Baum have shown that, in the midst of the complexity of historical reality, there is a fundamental pattern that is discernible in the way in which organisations carry on in the ongoing course of history. This pattern, to use Baum’s language, features the growth of the “logic of maintenance” to the extent that it represents a threat to the “logic of mission.” In Hurst’s nomenclature, the development of “constraints” grows so that it makes the organisation “brittle” and vulnerable to decline.

The dangers of an exaggerated emphasis on the “logic of maintenance” can be seen in the three subjects of this study. When maintenance becomes the focus, energy and time that would have been expended on the mission can become introverted and expressed, for example, in interpersonal and professional conflict. Also, natural differences that can be put aside in the interest of the mission can be given full play. The conflict between Thomas Hill and W. R. Foxlow, the two itinerants in Congleton in 1860, and those who rallied behind each one, illustrate this principle. In 1860, at the threshold of dark days for the town and the Chapel, while Chapel membership had slipped from 130 to 118, attendance at Sunday services had risen from “about 400” to 450 and Circuit membership had climbed from 290 in 1857 to 340. However, observed over the long term, neither the Chapel nor the Circuit was growing: Chapel membership had peaked at 139 in 1854, and Circuit membership, although rising from its 1857 low, had still declined from 342 in 1851. Clearly, the Chapel and Circuit were dealing with issues that were primarily maintenance and not mission oriented. As the Circuit struggled to maintain its strength, the tensions of the moment may have created an environment that was conducive to interpersonal conflict.

\[^2\] “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D. 1851. 1854, 1857. and 1860, CCRO.
When the mission is the preoccupation of the group, attention is turned primarily
outwards. Accordingly, altruism can more freely dominate since all members are united in
their desire to further the mission. However, when maintenance becomes the central value,
the desire for power and the protection of “turf” can become primary concerns, as can be
seen not only in terms of internal power struggles, but also in the ongoing battles in which
the Congleton Circuit became embroiled with Tunstall Circuit.

At least one Primitive Methodist historian made the connection, perhaps intuitively,
between the dangers of an exaggerated “logic of maintenance” and decline. Kendall drew
attention to decline that began to set in early in the existence of the Tunstall Circuit, a
decline fuelled by a concern to consolidate accompanied by a temporary moratorium on
expansion. According to Kendall, these emphases hindered early Primitive Methodist
progress.3

Although the articulation varies, Baum, Hurst, Poloma, and others appear to be
correct: decline occurs when the “logic of maintenance” begins to overwhelm the “logic of
mission,” when “constraints” become overly developed, when “institutionalisation”
suffocates “charisma.”

“Declines”: Multifactoral and Bidimensional

Not only does a group have internal tensions that the interaction between the “logic
of maintenance” and the “logic of mission” inevitably brings, it must deal also deal with the
many vicissitudes of change that can occur in the ongoing historical processes in its context.

Given the nature of complex adaptive systems, sources for decline in a particular
system will always be multifactoral. However, they are not only multifactoral but also
bidimensional in that many patterns, both in the smaller complex adaptive systems that make up the organisation, and in the multitude of complex adaptive systems operating in its surrounding context, affect the ongoing historical process of the organisation.

Consequently, the search for operative factors contributing to a "decline" in a given circumstance must seek to include all the patterns that are constitutive of the historical processes of the system.

**Factors: Endogenous and Exogenous**

Currie, Gilbert, and Horsley, and Bryan Wilson appear to be correct in their classification of factors into the categories of "exogenous" and "endogenous." Endogenous factors are those that are identifiable in the ongoing existence of a group; exogenous factors are those from without, factors in the social setting that impinge on a group's existence. Both of these categories must be included in the search for patterns.

Accordingly, contributing factors active in the dynamics of the organisation itself, as well as contributing factors operating in the context, must be identified. However, while the commentator can understand the contours of declines, in part, by determining the presence of such factors, (s)he must go further. The relative intensity of factors and the manner in which they interface with other factors must also be determined. For example, in our three subject groups, it is obvious that economic upheaval is related to declines. However, as a comparison of Primitive Methodist in the 1860s with the Paulists in 1872 shows, it appears that a "decline" can also be offset by other positive factors such as charismatic personal

---

3 Kendall, 44.

leadership. On the other hand, long-term economic difficulty may over time wear down even the capacity of charismatic leaders to rise above it.

The continual flux that is found in historical process as the presence, intensity, and combination of factors wax and wane constantly complicates attempts to understand declines further. Accordingly, analysis of factors must always be done with an eye to their changing character, intensity, and relationship to each other.

Both in terms of exogenous and endogenous factors, a close examination of the three subjects of this study show strong commonalities in their understanding of the nature of decline and the sources of declines. Table 71 uses the material found in table 8 to show that even though Primitive Methodists and Pentecostals had unique elements to their understanding of decline, commonalities are obvious.

Table 71. “Decline”: Commonalities between Primitive Methodism and Pentecostalism.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primitive Methodism</th>
<th>Pentecostalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Emotional fervour.</td>
<td>Complacency.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Spiritual power.</td>
<td>Worldliness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of the ability to grow.</td>
<td>Loss of potential recruits.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A comparison of all three subjects of this study strengthens the assertion that similarities are detectable in the nature of the “declines” found in all three. Similarly, attribution of the sources of a “decline” shows a marked similarity across all three groups.

Table 72. “Decline”: Commonalties among the Three Subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primitive Methodism</th>
<th>Paulists</th>
<th>Pentecostalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Loss in terms of “MPR”</td>
<td>Loss in terms of “MPR”</td>
<td>Loss in terms of “MPR”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of fervour</td>
<td>Loss of commitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of distinctives</td>
<td>Loss of differentiation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of commitment</td>
<td>Loss of commitment</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 72 shows that in the available evidence there were six commonalties in terms of definitions of a “decline.” Table 73 suggests that there are ten commonalties in the sources of “declines.” These tables do not imply that these understandings of decline or its sources are exhaustive. Rather, given the multifactoral nature of historical reality, there may be more ways in which decline can be understood and certainly more sources of decline that could be discovered. The evidence from the three subjects of this study affirms the presence of these common themes in at least two, and often all three, of the subjects. These commonalties may indicate a general pattern that could be indicative of a typology of “declines.”
Table 73. Precipitant Factors of “Declines” in the Three Subject Groups.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primitive Methodism</th>
<th>Paulists</th>
<th>Pentecostalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>♦ Economic distress</td>
<td>♦ Economic distress</td>
<td>♦ Economic distress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Social stress (urban development, war)</td>
<td>♦ Social stress (urban development)</td>
<td>♦ Social stress (war)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Demographic issues</td>
<td>♦ Demographic issues</td>
<td>♦ Demographic issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Linkage with denominational decline.</td>
<td>♦ Linkage with denominational decline.</td>
<td>♦ Linkage with denominational failure to grow in terms of “MPR.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Financial stringency</td>
<td>♦ Financial stringency</td>
<td>♦ Financial stringency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Loss of distinctives</td>
<td>♦ Loss of distinctives</td>
<td>♦ Loss of distinctives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Competition</td>
<td>♦ Competition</td>
<td>♦ Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ The nature of clerical leadership</td>
<td>♦ The nature of clerical leadership</td>
<td>♦ The nature of clerical leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Idiosyncratic local conditions</td>
<td>♦ Idiosyncratic local conditions</td>
<td>♦ Lack of cultural adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Lack of cultural adaptation</td>
<td>♦ Lack of cultural adaptation</td>
<td>♦ Lack of cultural adaptation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Rigid discipline</td>
<td>♦ Rigid discipline</td>
<td>♦ Rigid discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Lack of discipline</td>
<td>♦ Lack of discipline</td>
<td>♦ Lack of discipline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Internal tension</td>
<td>♦ Internal tension</td>
<td>♦ Internal tension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Tension with denominational authorities</td>
<td>♦ Tension with denominational authorities</td>
<td>♦ Tension with denominational authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Internal power conflicts</td>
<td>♦ Internal power conflicts</td>
<td>♦ Internal power conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Union</td>
<td>♦ Union</td>
<td>♦ Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Emigration</td>
<td>♦ Emigration</td>
<td>♦ Emigration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ Human sinfulness</td>
<td>♦ Human sinfulness</td>
<td>♦ Human sinfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>♦ The pressures of the world</td>
<td>♦ The pressures of the world</td>
<td>♦ The pressures of the world</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Economic Distress**

The most injurious of factors appears to be economic distress in the host system. Although the Chapel and the Circuit did not manifest serious effects for half a decade, eventually, the devastating consequences of the collapse of the silk trade in Congleton wreaked havoc on the life of both the Chapel and the Circuit. The Chapel dropped from an all-time high of 161 members in 1864 to ninety-five in 1867; the Circuit embarked on a long slide from 430 in 1864 to 260 in 1868.\(^5\) It appears that economic distress can be withstood for a period of time and may even lead to increase in commitment: the Chapel membership grew from 118 in 1860 to its 1864 high.\(^6\) However, extended periods of economic difficulty lead to a severe decline.

The economic depression that occurred in the 1870s appears to have damaged St. Paul the Apostle Church also. One consequence was the abandonment of O’Rourke’s original architectural plan for the new Church.\(^7\) Also, reports from the Paulists of the time show that they believed the interpretation that the difficult economic times had been a source of a decline in the spiritual life of parishioners.\(^8\)

The pressures exerted by economic distress on London Gospel Temple can be observed most clearly in the dramatic rise of interest rates in the 1980s that may have driven the church to the brink of bankruptcy. The history of London Gospel Temple gives perhaps the best picture of the interplay of factors. The significant growth that the assembly had

---

\(^5\) "Circuit Reports and Schedules." D. 1860-1868. CCRO.

\(^6\) "Circuit Reports and Schedules." D. 1860-1864, CCRO. The membership of 118 in 1860 may be misleading to some extent: it may reflect the conflict between Hill and Foxlow.

\(^7\) Malloy, S and McVann, 199, APF.
experienced during the last fifteen years of the twentieth century shows that even serious economic difficulty can be surmounted by positive factors, in this case proactive entrepreneurial leadership.

Patterns of economic prosperity and distress in Congleton may indicate that the health of a revival may be linked to the economic well-being of the context that serves as the revival's host. Head has stated, for example, that Primitive Methodism established the Chapel in Congleton around 1800-1821, the same time as the inception of silk throwing in the town. A comparison can be made between the conditions of 1821 and those of the middle 1860s: tables 74 and 75 show that parallel declines occurred in the town and in the Congleton Chapel from 1865 to 1867.

Table 74. A Comparison of Congleton and Kinsey Street Chapel: 1865.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inhabitants of Congleton</th>
<th>Chapel Members</th>
<th>Sunday Attendance (average at principal services)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14,000</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>350</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearers on Work Days</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Debt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>£45 0/1⁹</td>
<td>260</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 75. A Comparison of Declines in Congleton and in Kinsey Street Chapel: 1867.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inhabitants of Congleton</th>
<th>Chapel Members</th>
<th>Sunday Attendance (average at principal services)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12,000</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hearers on Work Days</td>
<td>Income</td>
<td>Debt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>£43 10/11½</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

⁸ "Chronicles," 2:362, APF.

⁹ This representation of funds is given according to pounds, shillings, and pence.
From 1865 to 1867, there was substantial decline in the general population of the town, in Chapel attendance, and in Chapel membership. The Chapel Schedule for 1866 is missing altogether. After 1867, "inhabitants" of the town and work-week "hearers" ceased to be categories that were reported. These omissions may indicate further decline both for the general population and for the Chapel.

**Social Stress**

Social stress, occurring in a variety of forms, also appears to have functioned as a source of decline in all three subjects. In Congleton, one of the most painful episodes of social difficulty came with the Chartist unrest beginning in 1839. The depression of 1847 seems to serve as a boundary for the adverse effects of this period, since, from 1848 to 1860, the town enjoyed a period of prosperity. It is difficult to separate the influence of Chartism on the town from the economic problems of this period. The effect of the Chartist movement on the Chapel and Circuit is even more difficult to gauge since the Circuit did not maintain full records until 1848. It can be inferred, however, that the stresses of this period, both socially and economically, took its toll. Circuit membership declined from 444 in 1846 to 381 in 1848.11

The effect of war on Congleton Primitive Methodism, is also difficult to judge. Certainly, there is evidence that the Primitive Methodists themselves believed that war was affecting the Circuit negatively. Itinerant John Wilson's comments in 1940 may express succinctly an opinion held by Primitive Methodist leaders in Congleton and elsewhere.12

---

10 "Circuit Reports and Schedules," D, 1865 and 1867. CCRO.

11 "Circuit Reports and Schedules," D, 1845-1848, CCRO.

12 "Annual Returns," D, 1940, CCRO. See above, 206.
Semper, in his account of social development in Congleton, recorded the problems faced by Congleton after the First World war were nearly "insuperable." Unfortunately, there is little evidence that these difficulties impinged on the Chapel and Circuit. While Chapel attendance was low throughout the first two decades of the twentieth century, records for both Chapel class membership and Circuit membership are not extant.

St. Paul the Apostle demonstrates best, perhaps, the potential of social stress to be a source of decline. The parish has seen successive waves of demographic change during its existence. None was more traumatic, however, than the dramatic loss of much of its constituency that the parish experienced beginning in the 1950s because of the massive urban renewal projects in westside midtown Manhattan. With this urban development came the final and wholesale destruction of many of the tenements in the area that had been the home for generations to St. Paul the Apostle parishioners. These projects culminated in the Lincoln Center complex in the block immediately adjacent to the Church. The profound nature of the effects of these projects is seen in the The Fordham Ram's report that the parish had suffered a disastrous loss of many of its weekly worshippers. Ironically, and as a witness to the complexity of historical reality, that which was perceived to be a "renewal" in the city's core, became the source of a dramatic decline in the parish's existence.

13 Semper, 108-109. See above, 104.

14 "Circuit Reports and Schedules," D. 1901-1921, CCRO.

15 Scott, 52.

The city of London has enjoyed a history of prosperity throughout its history. First as a garrison town, then as a thriving farming hub, and more recently as an affluent financial centre serving as the dominant city of the region, London has undergone little by way of wholesale social stress. Undoubtedly, London Gospel Temple has benefited from this environment. The only source of social stress during the assembly’s history may have come from the Second World War although the evidence is minimal. While the Second World War may have had some negative influence on the assembly, its effects are difficult to ascertain.

**Demographic Issues**

Changes in the demographic composition of the host society provide another major source of decline. In Congleton, demographic shift appears to have been a consequence of economic distress. The 1865 Circuit Report, for example, painted a bleak picture: forty-nine had moved away, eighty-six had “fallen” or left the Society, and three preaching places had been lost. The itinerant reported that the Congleton Chapel alone recorded net decreases of fifty in attendance and thirty-seven in membership. The report tied these losses explicitly to the collapse of the silk industry.\(^\text{17}\) However, perhaps more significant than the loss of families to the Circuit and the town because of the silk industry was the inability of the Chapel and Circuit to adjust to the new influx of workers that came with the beginning of fustian cutting in 1867. As a comparison of entries from Kinsey Street Chapel Roll Books with Census records appeared to show, the Society failed to attract the new

\(^{17}\) “Circuit Reports and Schedules,” D, 1865, CCRO.
residents of Congleton and, at least until the early 1890s, remained dominated by silk workers.18

As noted above, St. Paul the Apostle Church has suffered the most from demographic shifts. Originally an Irish parish, the Church has had to cope with successive population shifts: as the numbers of Irish declined from the 1890s on, southern Europeans began to enter the area in significant numbers; after the Second World War, Puerto Ricans settled into the parish; in the early 1990s, the Asian population increased significantly; and, by the end of that decade, as the neighbourhood transformed into an up-scale district, yuppies were immigrating to the parish. While documentation is available relating to the loss of much of the constituency because of urban renewal projects, little evidence is available to judge the effects of the continual shifting of the composition of the parish’s constituency.

London Gospel Temple faced demographic problems of different kinds. As study of Sunday School statistics shows, the London assembly could not keep pace either with the dramatic growth experienced in larger urban centres, especially Toronto, or with growth in the Western provinces occasioned by westward emigration.19 While a significant “decline” in numerical terms did not occur in Sunday School attendance at London Gospel Temple during the decades from 1950 to 1980, failure to keep pace with the growth of other churches in the same denomination may have meant a corresponding loss of influence and power, a loss that could truly be called a “decline.” Although in 1999 London Gospel


19 See tables 67, 68, and 69.
Temple seemed to be positioned well in terms of political influence within the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, it no longer enjoyed the kind of pre-eminence that it once did.

London Gospel Temple may have suffered from a demographic trend that was opposite to that faced by St. Paul the Apostle Church: whereas the Paulist parish experienced successive waves of demographic shifts, London remained virtually unchanged demographically well into the second half of the twentieth century. As tables 49 and 50 demonstrated, London Gospel Temple’s membership followed closely the ethnic and racial composition of London society. The assembly failed, for much of its history, to attract those from the minorities of London society. While not, in itself, a source of decline, failure to appeal to those other than the majority, placed a cap on possibilities for growth.

**Financial Stringency**

Financial pressure appears to have been a significant source of decline in the history of all three subjects. In two of them, accumulation of debt served as the catalyst that induced financial difficulty. Capital expenditures appear to have been the source of two declines in the historical process of the Kinsey Street Chapel. The construction of the new Chapel in 1889 and the building of the new organ in 1904 both appear to have precipitated loss.\(^20\) Acquisition of a large debt may have dissuaded members and potential members from further commitment to the Society. Although the organ project did not place further financial stress on the membership, the decline that is linked to it may indicate both a lingering suspicion of economic decisions made by the leadership and a reluctance to become committed to an organisation encumbered by debt.

\(^{20\text{—"}}}\) "Circuit Reports and Schedules," D, 1889-1896, CCRO and "Circuit Reports and Schedules," D, 1904 and 1905, CCRO.
By far the most dangerous decline in London Gospel Temple's history stemmed from the escalation of interest rates in the 1980s. Bankruptcy seems to have been a real threat as the assembly struggled to cope with the burden of debt incurred by the building program. Although explicit statements are difficult to find, fragmentary evidence seems to suggest that the assembly declined by almost 40% from 1966 to 1981.\(^{21}\)

In the history of the Paulists and St. Paul the Apostle Church, three episodes of financial stringency appear to have been sources of decline. In all three, the accumulation of new debts was not the issue; rather, financial difficulties arose in concert with other factors. As Malloy has noted, the depression of the 1870s had made an impact on Manhattan in general and on the parish in particular.\(^{22}\) Unemployment, poor living conditions in the tenements, and the spectre of large-scale industrial growth in the parish all began to influence the parish negatively. The author of the parish mission report in 1879 understood that these conditions had led to a decline.\(^{23}\) Also, the decision to abandon O'Rourke's first plan for the new church can be seen as one more symptom of the malaise experienced in the parish during this period.

The impact of the depression of the 1930s on the order and on St. Paul the Apostle Church is difficult to ascertain. However, John Burke's correspondence to John Harney at the beginning of Harney's tenure as Superior-General shows that economic hardship nearly caused a deep crisis in the early years of the depression. Burke believed that the Paulists


\(^{22}\) See Malloy's comments, above. 31.

\(^{23}\) "Chronicles." 2:362. APF.
had come perilously close to bankruptcy. Although little information is available regarding the effect of this financial difficulty on the Church, it must surely have had some effect.

The only other period of financial stringency that seriously affected St. Paul the Apostle Church occurred in the 1970s and early 1980s as the parish struggled to cope with the loss of its constituency. Here, again, financial distress occurred in concert with other factors. With the loss of the expected loan money from the state government, the parish had to close its school and sharply curtail its ministry.

**Linkage with Denominational Decline**

A relationship between growth patterns in local groups and the patterns of the larger organisations of which they are a part appears to be evident. The Congleton Primitive Methodist Chapel, for example, came to be in 1921, during a period of dramatic rapid growth in Primitive Methodism generally. As Graph 1 indicated, Primitive Methodism grew by 60% from 1821-1823. However, the growth rate within the denomination plummeted thereafter; never again did a period of growth occur in Primitive Methodism that matched that of 1821-1823. Similarly, while periods of modest growth can be found in the history of the Kinsey Street Chapel and Circuit, they have never enjoyed periods of rapid great growth.

More significantly for this study, declines in the larger body may have damaging influence on the local group. Primitive Methodism, for example, increased in membership

---

24 Fr. John E. Burke to John B. Harney, L, 1 Aug. 1930. APF.

25 See Graph 1, 159.
by less than 2% in the decade from 1885 to 1895. During this same period, chapel membership at Kinsey Street declined by 25%. Although the Connexion did not experience absolute decline during this a decade, a decadal growth rate of 2% is marginal at best and indicative of a non-growth mode that may have shown that, for the most part, the general society was no longer attracted to the piety of the Primitive Methodists. The local group may pay the price for general disinterest.

With London Gospel Temple, the evidence is mixed prior to the 1990s. The decade of the 1940s, for example, appears to have been a period of slow decline for the assembly. Reports dried up, a series of interim and short-term pastors led the assembly, and the Canadian population Censuses of 1941 and 1951 show declines both in terms of membership and in terms of “MPR.” Nationally, growth in “MPR” was modest for the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada during this decade as only .2% more Canadians in 1951 identified themselves as Pentecostal. However, this translated into a national growth rate of 37,389 persons or almost 65%.

A positive relationship between the national denomination and the local assembly can be seen not through decline but through rapid growth. In the 1960s and 1970s, Pentecostals in Canada doubled their “MPR” and their growth rate was 135%. London Gospel Temple, threatened by the financial crisis of the early 1980s, may have been the

---

26 Minutary Records, 10:37 and 12:49, JRUL.

27 Table 12.

28 See tables 53 and 54.

29 See tables 60 and 61.
recipient of the greater popularity of Pentecostals in Canadian society once resolution was reached in the local crisis.

In the 1990s, a clear relationship appears to be evident between London Gospel Temple and the PAOC. While the assembly has enjoyed a strong growth rate, in terms of “MPR,” it, along with the rest of the Pentecostal churches in the city, has managed to attract only about 1.8% of London’s population. This mirrors the “MPR” rate of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada as a whole: according to the 1991 Census of Canada, Pentecostals were only 1.6% of the total population. This relationship between the local assembly and the national body of which it is a part may indicate that membership growth in a larger body establishes parameters that provide a powerful limiting factor to local growth.

At St. Paul the Apostle Church, the relationship between declines in the order and those in the parish is ambiguous. An atypical situation in that the parish was the mother church of the larger body and, as Scott has stated, the only Paulist foundation for almost a half century, it may be difficult to extrapolate a general principle from the circumstances at St. Paul the Apostle Church. However, there does appear to be some relationship between declines in the order and declines in the parish. Paulist recruitment rates, for example, demonstrate this: after reception of an unusually large number of members in 1962, the Paulist recruitment rate fell drastically in 1963 and has remained low since. In the life of the parish, the early 1960s saw the dramatic loss initiated by the Manhattan urban renewal followed by an extended period of financial difficulty. However, the relationship between declines in the Society and in the parish becomes less clear in the context of the

---

30 Tables 54 and 55 cf. Table 61.

31 Scott, 15.
overall membership of the Society. The experience of St. Paul the Apostle Church and the Paulists emphasises that while there does appear to be some relationship between the historical processes of parent organisations and their local groups, the exact nature of this relationship is not as yet plain.

Loss of Distinctives

Crucial to decline appears to be the loss of a strong commitment to a distinctive practice or doctrine that sets the group apart from all others. For the Primitive Methodists, their distinctive attribute was a commitment to camp meetings, a commitment so strong that they developed ritualised forms of the camp meeting and still valued outdoor preaching even after union. For the Paulists, their distinctive practice appears to have been a devotion to parish missions. For Pentecostals, the doctrine of “initial evidence” became their non-negotiable distinctive belief.

Reports of outdoor preaching remained a required feature of Methodist reporting even well into the second half of this century. However, early on, a ritualisation of camp meetings took place through the development of “protracted” and “revival” meetings as the exercise of this distinctive became domesticated into an “in-house” practice. After union, reports of outdoor preaching in the Congleton Circuit seem to become more perfunctory and formulaic. Without a primary feature that distinguished them from others, Primitive Methodists in Congleton appeared to have difficulty attracting new members. The long pattern of decline in Kinsey Street Chapel attendance from 1862 onward, long after the first

---

32 Tables 46 and 47.
surge of camp meeting enthusiasm had passed through to the end of the twentieth century, may be indicative of a failure to present a strong sense of identity to the general society.  

Progressively, and especially after Vatican II, the Paulists self-consciously underwent a process of reflection concerning the effectiveness of parish missions. Concern regarding parish missions reached its height in the 1960s and 1970s, the same period in which the parish experienced its most difficult numerical and financial declines. The angst experienced by members of the order during this period was certainly fuelled by the discussion concerning parish missions. Their loss forced the Paulists to search for a source of identity. In this context, it may be that the parish, as well as the entire order, was affected negatively. That Vatican II, a “renewal” in the Roman Catholic Church, may have contributed to decline both in the Society and the parish demonstrates again the complexity of the interaction of factors in historical process.

Although “initial evidence” is of singular importance to the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, there is little in the history of London Gospel Temple that indicates firm allegiance to it. Perhaps the only reference to glossolalia in the evidence comes from McAlister’s response to criticism in the press in which he denies that “tongues” were unduly emphasised at the assembly. At the end of the twentieth century, worship practices at London Gospel Temple appeared to represent a blend of popular culture with themes drawn from the wider charismatic movement. There seemed to be no obvious emphasis on “initial evidence.”

33 Graph 2 and tables 11, 12, and 14.

Both at St. Paul the Apostle Church and at London Gospel Temple, an excellent music tradition, articulate preaching, and a comfortable ambience seem to be significant factors in renewed growth. John Anderson stated also, that, at the end of the 1990s, the difference between Trinity, the former Wesleyan chapel in Congleton, and Wellspring Methodist Church was a matter of style. The experience of all three subject groups at the turn of the twenty-first century may provide an important interpretative key for understanding not only them but also evangelical religion in the United Kingdom and in North America generally. The importance of differences has been reduced, both in terms of doctrine and practice, as a growing homogeneity overtakes evangelical churches of all kinds. Consequently, choice of a church may have been reduced to matters of style. Those who grow are those that have developed a style that appeals most to the tastes of the host society. Such a basis for growth may be tenuous at best; as tastes change, leaders must be poised to change doctrine and practice quickly.

**Competition**

Competition as a source of decline appeared in the historical process of two of the subjects: Primitive Methodism and Pentecostalism. Whether or not this indicates a susceptibility to this factor that is peculiar to non-Roman Catholic traditions, remains to be explored.

Explicit references to the effects of competition can be found in the history of Kinsey Street Chapel and Circuit. Although co-operation with other groups, especially the Wesleyans, seems to have occurred, Circuit reports beginning as early as 1848 display sensitivity to the threat of other groups, recording numerous references of defection from the Circuit’s Societies. The 1848 Circuit Annual Report, for example, stated that a total of
122 members had been lost. In the list of reasons given for this decline, the author included the arrival of "Association Methodists" and Baptists in Congleton who had attracted "unstable members."  

In an ironic twist, the influence of Pentecostalism in Cheshire during the 1960s appears to have had a negative influence on the Congleton and Mow Cop Societies. John Anderson stated that in Congleton the loss was mainly of lay preachers but in Mow Cop a "mass exodus" had occurred. 

Competition appears to have affected London Gospel Temple negatively as well. That the threats posed by the independent churches led by Croson and Dudgeon during the 1930s and 1940s were serious is demonstrated by the vivid memory of those churches that still persists in the recollections of elderly long-time members of the assembly. The lack of growth and the apparent decline at London Gospel Temple during the 1930s and 1940s may have been influenced at least in part by the pressures brought to bear by these two groups. Information is limited regarding the effect on London Gospel Temple of the "Latter-Rain" Faith Tabernacle that began in London during 1951. However, the cumulative effect of these three perceived major threats may explain, at least in part, the 20% decline in "MPR" experienced by Pentecostals in London during the decade from 1941 to 1951, a decline that saw no amelioration until the early 1970s.

**Idiosyncratic Local Conditions**

Given the complexity of historical process, it is not surprising that in each subject in this study, unique local situations played a role in initiating and fuelling declines. In

35 "Circuit Reports and Schedules," D, 1848, CCRO.

36 John Anderson. Interview.
Congleton, while it could be argued that the devastating collapse of the local silk industry had unique local dimensions, there is evidence that other seemingly minor local incidents could affect the Chapel and Circuit deleteriously. The angry landlord in 1874 provides one example of this factor.\(^{37}\)

In Manhattan, several unique local circumstances appear to have contributed significantly to decline. The elevated railroad provides a good example, ironically, both in its construction and in its loss. In the 1870s, during a period understood by the Paulists as a time of decline, Alfred Young led the unsuccessful attempt to scuttle plans for the railroad. Although I cannot find direct evidence linking the “El” with actual decline, since the Paulists believed that the “El” would result in decline and a decline did occur in the late 1870s, it seems plausible to conclude that there may have been a connection.\(^{38}\) Conversely, in the 1960s, the loss of the “El” appears to have been a factor in decline since its decommissioning exacerbated transportation problems for parishioners.

The razing of the “El” worked in concert with other unique factors related to the urban renewal projects of the period. Scott stated that the construction of the Coliseum effectively cut off cross-town traffic to the Church.\(^{39}\) Even at the end of the twentieth century, the Church appeared to be paying the price for urban renewal. In 2000, the magnificent Church, situated at the corner of Columbus Avenue and West Fifty-ninth Street, sat in comparative obscurity. Immediately to the Church’s north was the massive Lincoln Center complex; to the east, the Church was completely hidden by the Coliseum.

\(^{37}\) “Circuit Reports & Schedules,” D, 1874, CCRO. See above, 207.

\(^{38}\) McVann, 199-200 and 226.

\(^{39}\) Scott, 52.
In London, the best example of a unique local factor that influenced decline was the offensive dairy that plagued the congregation in the 1940s with its “swarms” of flies and oppressive stench.

**Clerical Leadership**

In the case of both Primitive Methodism and Pentecostalism, the style of leadership and the personal attributes of the leaders appear to have been crucial in precipitating declines or preventing them in the face of other negative factors.

This factor is evident in the history of the Kinsey Street Chapel in several ways. One of the earliest periods of numerical decline in the Circuit followed the departure of Ralph Jukes in 1847. The attraction of an exceptional leader such as Jukes may have been counter-productive since, after his highly successful tenure, other less gifted itinerants could not satisfy the heightened expectation of the Society’s members. James Prosser, the itinerant who followed Jukes, blamed decline on the loss of the popular Jukes who apparently left against the wishes of the Circuit, and on the lack of strong leaders in rural settings. Not only had expectations been raised by Jukes, there may have been a residual anger in the members that had been aroused by Jukes’ premature departure. The members may have expressed this anger by leaving the Society.

More significant, however, to the history of the Chapel and Circuit, was the polity of Primitive Methodism that allowed and even fostered strong lay leadership. In this milieu, lay leaders of exceptional strength could acquire sufficient power to rival that of the itinerant. The case of James Broad brings this factor into sharp relief. Influential in the Circuit for decades, Broad’s power was such that he appears to have influenced
Congleton's municipal affairs, his Primitive Methodist District, the Connexion, and even Hugh Bourne. In Circuit records, Broad appears in a place of leadership as early as 1848. His presence dominated Chapel and Circuit affairs at least until the dramatic events of 1871, and the *Primitive Methodist Magazine* deemed him of such importance that the editor published a laudatory obituary for him in 1891.41

Whatever might be said about the merits of each side of the Henshall dispute in 1871, it is clear that the conflict triggered a decline that has never been reversed. The initial blow to the Chapel was severe: in 1870, the chapel had 147 members but, by 1874, the membership had declined to seventy-six. The intensity of the dispute may be seen in the lack of extant Chapel Schedules from 1871 to 1873. Either they were not maintained or they were destroyed. Although the Circuit began to grow again so that by 1880 the Chapel had increased in membership to 125, never in its history has the Chapel returned to its pre-1871 strength.42

The nature of pastoral leadership also played a role in the historical process of London Gospel Temple. In Congleton, strong lay leadership that challenged clergy power could initiate a decline. In London, Ontario, when clergy did not manifest certain personality traits, decline ensued. During the 1940s, for example, a series of pastors staying only for brief tenures coincided with stagnation if not decline. Two of these, Saunders and

---

40 "Circuit Reports and Schedules," D, 1846 and 1847. CCRO.
41 "Minutes of Quarterly and Circuit Committee Meetings," D, 19 June, 1848, CCRO and PMM, 1891, 632, JRUL.
42 See table 12.
Howells, were also older, nearing the end of their careers; Howells was convalescing from serious illness.

The decade of the 1970s featured the leadership of two pastors, Gingrich and McLoughlin, who were singularly different from their predecessors. Both seminary trained, Gingrich, especially, was known for his more cerebral reflective style. While under McLoughlin’s leadership the Church developed in sophistication both in terms of operation and differentiation, it is not clear that during this period McLoughlin practised the explicit entrepreneurial approach to ministry that characterised other pastors of the assembly such as McAlister and Hornby.

**Lack of Cultural Adaptation**

Two groups appear to have suffered decline because of a lack of sensitivity to the shifting character of the host society. This would suggest that the continued success and viability of revival groups are related to their ability to adjust, to change, to meet new needs which surface in the passage of time, and to find the felt needs of a given moment. In Congleton, for example, the apparent inability or unwillingness to adjust to the new social reality created by the loss of the silk industry and the rise of fustian cutting seems to have played a role in the aggravation of decline.43

Failure to adapt was expressed in subtle forms in the history of London Gospel Temple. For most of its history, the city of London was monochromatic ethnically and racially. As tables 48 to 50 showed, London Gospel Temple mirrored the lack of diversity in the city. Possibilities for growth were also diminished by class considerations. From its inception, the assembly, with a few notable exceptions, attracted its members from blue
collar and lower middle-class white collar workers. In prosperous London, this pattern of
recruitment narrowly circumscribed the parameters for growth. By not appealing to the
ethnic and racial minorities that would have been, for the most part, from the same strata of
society, problems of recruitment were intensified. Also, by not attracting those from
different social settings, growth possibilities were further compromised. By the 1940s, a
period during which the Pentecostals experienced a decline both in terms of membership
and “MPR,” the assembly could no longer attract by sheer novelty. Recruiting failures in
the areas of ethnicity, race, and class, may have predisposed the assembly to declines or at
least to stunted growth.

The decline that the local assembly experienced in the 1940s may have been related
to a larger national trend in the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. While a variety of local
factors may have influenced this decline, it may also have been associated with the
changing, cultural context in Canada. The rise of the “Latter-Rain” movement in 1948
demonstrated dissatisfaction within Pentecostalism: for some in Pentecostalism’s
constituency, the movement had run its course and needed to be superseded by another
more vital spiritual force. The conflict between Pentecostalism and the “Latter Rain”
movement may have initiated a national decline in two ways: defections from the
Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada throughout the country led both to a loss of members
and to the perception that the Pentecostals had failed to meet the need for ecstatic religious
expression. This may have indicated that Pentecostalism was no longer appealing to its
central “market.” Pentecostalism, generally, and London Gospel Temple, in particular, may
have declined because they failed to adjust to meet the needs of a new generation of those

---

43 See tables 18 and 19, 184 and 186.
who desired the religious enthusiasm that had once characterised the Pentecostal movement. That London chose what appear to have been two explicit Pentecostal loyalists in succession, Ralph Hornby and Donald Emmons, may have been indicative of the assembly’s opposition to the innovations of the “Latter Rain” movement. However, by 1952, the “Latter-rain” movement was in disarray and the London Pentecostal assembly began to benefit because another factor, strong pastoral leadership, took precedence over the failure to adapt.

The Role of Human Agency

Central to an explanation of “declines” and “decline” must be an understanding of the role of human agency in historical process. As many have observed, charismatic leadership is a crucial element in the growth of revival movements. However, human agency must be seen as a crucial element in the ongoing existence of organisations not only in terms of leadership but also in terms of the actions of members.

In the “coming-to-be” stage and, perhaps, early in the “being” stage of an organisation, a way of behaving and a model of relationships seems to be established that have a powerful impact on the character of the organisation. The resultant configuration of behavioural and relational patterns can be traced especially through observation of leadership styles, relationships between the laity and the clergy, and the mores associated with lay behaviour.

From the time that this configuration is generated, it appears to have a major influence on growth and decline patterns in the ongoing existence of an organisation. From the values, attitudes, and behaviours associated with it, beliefs form along with a supporting
language. A nature or character forms that is enduring and that has a lasting effect on the history of the organisation. The strong independence of spirit characteristic of residents of Congleton, for example, left a lasting mark on the Kinsey Street Chapel that could manifest itself in many ways, including conflict between itinerants and lay leaders. The influence of this configuration was so strong that it may have predisposed the Chapel to the kind of intense conflict that occurred between James Broad and the Quarter Day Board in 1870.

London Gospel Temple appears to have “come-to-be” with a different configuration of behavioural and relational patterns. Energetic entrepreneurial leadership as seen first in the catalytic influence of William Durham and Aimee Semple, and then quintessentially through the ministry of R. E. McAlister, predisposed the assembly to either periods of decline or periods of growth depending on the degree to which a given pastor matched that style of leadership. Whenever a pastor introduced a more conservative approach to ministry the congregation languished, demonstrating a tendency at least to plateau in growth if not to enter a period of outright decline.

The character produced by the early configuration of behavioural and relational patterns is so powerful and enduring that it can be impervious even to major changes. The history of St. Paul the Apostle Church, for example, shows that even the complete loss of a constituency may not be enough to change the fundamental character of an organisation. Not only did the parish lose most of its original Irish constituency during the period of extensive urban renewal in the 1960s, it nearly lost its entire constituency. Yet, the nature of Paulist leadership as seen in the values of entrepreneurial action, innovation, and creativity, allowed the parish to continue to exist in spite of harsh circumstances. For the

\[44\] A different nomenclature might speak of this phenomenon in terms of a “world-view.”
fundamental character of an organisation to be modified, dramatic and compelling trauma must be inflicted on the organisation.

An organisation appears to be vulnerable to “decline” when conditions change, either in the organisation itself or in the larger social system of which it is a part, so that circumstances become inimical to the character of the organisation as established early in its history. Again, the relationship between the silk and fustian industries provides a good example. One aspect of the Congleton character appears to have been that the Chapel was, to a significant degree, a silk-workers Chapel. The difficulty that the Chapel had in adjusting to the influx of fustian workers into Congleton may have been due to the Chapel’s basic character. The long painful decline in the Congleton Chapel and Circuit in this period may have been as much an identity issue as an economic one.45

Sometimes, failure to grow results from the character of an organisation working either in unison with, or in opposition to, that of the larger system of which it is a part. For example, the Anglo-Saxon identity of the adherents at London Gospel Temple that had resulted originally from recruitment from the predominantly Anglo-Saxon society in London made outreach to minorities difficult even when London finally began to become more multicultural.

The ethnic monochromaticism in London highlights the necessity of probing the interaction of factors when attempting to find the sources of decline. Problems with a group’s constituency, for example, can be balanced by other positive factors. The leadership of Robert Smith in the last two decades of the twentieth century, for example,

45 See chapter 3, 177-178.
that appears to have been consistent with the fundamental character of the assembly, could counter both the issues of the nature of the constituency and of economic distress.

Circles of Influence

To explain adequately the role played by the fundamental character of a group in its historical process and the way in which many factors influence that process, I would propose a new model, one that could be cast in terms of another metaphor: “circles of influence.” By “circles of influence,” I mean that growth and decline patterns of localised expressions of religion are shaped by two complex sets of endogenous and exogenous factors. These two sets are constantly in flux both within themselves and in terms of their relationship with each other. These two sets of factors represent two “circles” that encompass the character of the group, shaping its process through time. I use the metaphor of “circle” to emphasise that the fundamental character is completely surrounded and continually influenced by these sets of factors.

Within each set of factors, a further distinction can be made: the historical process of a group is affected by both local and more global factors that form two dimensions of historical reality. These dimensions could be referred to as “microscopic” and “macroscopic.” In each of the two circles of exogenous and endogenous factors, the microscopic and the macroscopic dimensions interact. Not only do the two dimensions within each circle interact, all the factors interact with those of the other circle, as well. This interaction influences the kind and direction of change within the group.

Tables 76 through 78 and Charts 1 through 6 record the factors that this study has found to be sources of “declines.” Table 76 lists those factors found to contribute to “declines” in all three of the subjects; table 77 lists those that contributed to “declines” in at
least two of the subjects; and table 78 records all the factors found in at least one of the
subjects. The Charts repeat the process with the added nuance that factors are categorised
according to macroscopic and microscopic dimensions. Chart 1, which includes only those
factors found in all three of the subjects, shows the richness of the interaction of these
factors when endogenous factors are considered according to the two dimensions. Chart 2
includes endogenous factors found in at least two of the subjects. In the same way, Chart 3
shows the interaction of factors according to their two dimensions when the focus of
attention is exogenous factors. Similarly, Chart 4 catalogues, according to their two
dimensions, exogenous factors found in two of the subjects. Charts 5 and 6 record,
respectively, endogenous and exogenous factors according to their two dimensions as found
in one of the subjects.

Table 76. Factors Leading to a “Decline” as Found in all Three of the Subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exogenous</th>
<th>Endogenous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic distress</td>
<td>economic distress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social stress (war, urban development)</td>
<td>financial stringency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demographic issues</td>
<td>accumulation of debt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idiosyncratic local conditions</td>
<td>loss of distinctives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>linkage with denominational decline</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 77. Factors Leading to a “Decline” As Found in at Least Two of the Subjects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exogenous</th>
<th>Endogenous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>economic distress</td>
<td>economic distress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social stress</td>
<td>loss of differentiation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demographic issues</td>
<td>linkage with denominational decline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idiosyncratic local conditions</td>
<td>demographic issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competition</td>
<td>accumulation of debt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of cultural adaptation</td>
<td>loss of distinctives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clerical leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>human sinfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>financial stringency</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 78. All Factors Leading to a “Decline” Found in at Least One of the Subjects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exogenous</th>
<th>Endogenous</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>economic distress</td>
<td>economic distress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social stress</td>
<td>linkage with denominational decline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demographic issues</td>
<td>demographic issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>idiosyncratic local conditions</td>
<td>accumulation of debt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>competition</td>
<td>loss of distinctives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of cultural adaptation</td>
<td>clerical leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>financial stringency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>tension with denominational authorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>internal tension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>power conflicts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>discipline issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>worldly “pressures”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>failure to thrive in comparison with others of the same group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chart 1: Endogenous Factors Leading to Decline in All Three Subjects.
Chart 2: Endogenous Factors Leading to Decline in at Least Two Subjects.
Chart 3: Exogenous Factors Leading to Decline in All Three Subjects.
Chart 4: Exogenous Factors Leading to Decline in at Least Two Subjects.
Chart 5: Endogenous Factors Leading to Decline in at Least One Subject.
A final element in the interaction of factors complicates historical process further: as groups age, a fundamental change appears to occur in their historical process. In the
language of complexity, a "settling down" appears to be evident; in the language of Baum, the "logic of maintenance" compels the group to adjust the way in which its members relate to themselves and to the world. The effect of factors and conjunctures of factors on groups may change when the "logic of maintenance" becomes well developed. What is clear is that an exaggerated "logic of maintenance" predisposes groups to decline.

The rich interaction of exogenous and endogenous factors in their two dimensions point the way forward to a typology of "declines." Since different subjects, separated in so many ways, experienced the same kinds of sources of decline and the same kinds of interaction of those sources, it appears that the presence of these factors in the ongoing historical process of "revival" groups predisposes those groups to decline. While this study has begun to investigate the manner in which these factors interact, future studies are needed to probe the nature of this interaction with regard to comparative strength of factors, linkage of factors, and a hierarchy of factors and combinations of factors.

A Typology of "Decline"

All the groups studied continue in their historical process; none has terminated its existence in history. However, this seemingly obvious statement of fact merits closer examination.

The Will to Continue

The three subjects in this study appear to indicate that organisations have a strong urge to exist; they avoid through all available means the termination of their historical process. To deal with the complexity of the historical processes of the three subjects, I would posit a variation to McIntire's characterisation of historical process. Although, in an
eschatological sense, “ceasing-to-be” may be inevitable given the finitude of all historical entities, as empirically verifiable in many realms, “ceasing-to-be” should not be understood as the necessary end of any specific entity. Rather, since the impulse to exist is so great, in order to survive an entity faced with cessation of its historical process may sacrifice its original identity and assume a new one. When a group faces termination of existence, the drive to exist may provoke it to distance itself from values, attitudes, beliefs, and practices once thought essential, and to adopt new values, attitudes, beliefs, and practices that are perceived to be better suited to its present context. In a very real sense, the old entity “ceases-to-be” and a new entity “comes-to-be” without any interruption in on-going history.

The role of distinctive practices or beliefs is central to questions of identity. The assertion by Currie that ecumenism is a sign of decline helps to clarify the importance of these distinctives: ecumenism may be a response to the perception that decline has become so chronic that union with another group is the only strategy that can maintain the group’s existence. The will to exist takes precedence over concerns regarding identity. In Primitive Methodism, the long diminution of emphasis on the distinctive practice of camp meetings may have, in itself, led to a loss of identity and to decline. By union, Primitive Methodism formally surrendered any claim to uniqueness.

The other two groups in this study did not sacrifice their identity through ecumenical endeavour. However, in different ways, both the Paulists and the Pentecostals may have sacrificed their original identity or at least allowed their identity to change in order to survive and to grow. The intense dialogue among the Paulists over the place of parish missions in their ongoing work indicates that these missions were deeply set in the fabric of Paulist identity. Although Paulist evangelists, acting independently, still carry on
parish missions, the missions no longer occupy a place of primacy in Paulist beliefs or practices. Rather, as Kullmann states, the essence of Paulist identity is found not in substantive issues but in matters of "style." Paulists today are pragmatic, responsive to needs, approaching religion with a "North American flair." Undoubtedly, these values were always part of the identity of the order; they can be traced throughout Paulist history back to Hecker and his early associates. However, the loss of the distinctive practice of parish missions has changed Paulist identity. Kullmann also acknowledged that, in terms of theological issues, the Paulists are "all over the map," an observation that precludes any attempt to find a theological basis for distinctive attributes. While defining distinctiveness in terms of "style" allows for maximum ability to adjust to change, it may be dangerous. The continued existence of such a group seems to hinge only on its ability to market itself effectively rather on any deeply held convictions that provide a firm identity vis-à-vis others.

London Gospel Temple is part of a group that has affirmed the distinctive belief in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit with the initial evidence of speaking in tongues. It cannot be determined the degree to which this distinctive doctrine is affirmed at the London assembly. Beyond that belief, no distinctive practice or doctrine helped forge a Pentecostal identity. Repeated visits to London Gospel Temple found a religious expression that was centred, like St. Paul the Apostle Church, on matters of style. While its historic roots were still evident as seen through the punctuation of worship by moments of charismatic fervour, London Gospel Temple seemed to be struggling to understand its identity. Evidence of this struggle may be seen in the significant shift in theology and practice that occurred at the assembly in the last decade of the twentieth century. While matters of style still appeared to

46 Kullmann.
be paramount, the assembly had attracted attention within the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada for its adoption of practices and beliefs that seem to be consistent with “Latter-Rain” emphases.

**Final Conclusions**

This study has put forward suggestions that point toward a typology of declines and made an observation concerning final “decline.” I have tried to affirm the assertion of many historians that history is fundamentally linear: the richness of history is such that it is essentially non-repeatable. However, while history is linear, this assertion does not necessarily imply a theory of progress or development. I have also tried to affirm the conclusion of other historians who assert that regular patterns can be observed in historical process.

In order to study the manner in which factors and their conjuncture operate, analysis must begin with local history. If local groups are complex adaptive systems that live within a matrix of many other complex adaptive systems, the complexity of historical reality is magnified the further one moves from the local setting. To discern basic patterns of change, the best hope that historians have is to begin from the bottom up with the simplest of complex adaptive systems. Beginning in this way, it may be possible to discern broad axioms concerning the nature of historical process. That having been said, local history can only be fully understood when viewed in its many relationships with larger complex adaptive systems that form its context. Finally, in terms of historiography, the best hope for identifying patterns in historical processes may be through comparison of local histories insulated from each other as far as possible.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Historical Interpretation and Analysis


Shiner, Larry. “The Meanings of Secularization.” In *Secularization and the Protestant*


Linguistic Analysis


**Primitive Methodism**

Secondary Sources


Primary Sources:


Cookson, Marjorie and Taylor, John. “Interview with Marjorie Cookson and John Taylor,
Members of the Museum Committee, Englesea Brook Chapel and Museum.”
Interview by John W. Stephenson, 2 June 1996.


Inscription of Hugh Bourne’s Monument, Englesea Brook cemetery, Cheshire, UK. AMs.


Minutary Records Being Rules, Regulations, and Reports Made and Published By the Primitive Methodist Connexion: 1814-1932.


Congleton Primitive Methodism

Secondary Sources


Congleton Historical Society “Historical Features”; available from http://www.leek.ac.uk/students/MJ_History.html; Internet.


Head, Robert. Congleton, Past and Present: A History of This Old Cheshire Town. n. p.: 1887.


Primary Sources

“1881 Census of the United Kingdom.” microfilm.

“1891 Census of the United Kingdom.” microfilm.

“Circuit Stewards’ Annual Statements: 2 April 1972 to 4 October 1981.” D.

Congleton Chronicle. 24 July 1897-7 June 1996.

“Congleton, Kinsey Street Chapel: Correspondence Relating To Disagreement Between John Worral, Builder, Contractor and Timber Merchant, and the Trustees, Concerning 200 Pounds: July - October, 1891.” ALS.

“Congleton, Kinsey Street Chapel: Kinsey Street Chapel: Notice of Centenary Services: 7 November 1920.” D.

Kinsey Street Circuit Annual Returns,” D, 1845-1959, CCRO.


Primitive Methodist Magazine. 1822-1891.


“Primitive Methodist (Kinsey Street) Circuit: Minutes of Local Preachers Meetings: June 1953 - May 1968.” D.


“Primitive Methodist (Kinsey Street) Circuit: Register of Christenings July 1843 - March 1865.”


“Primitive Methodist (Kinsey Street) Circuit: Steward’s Accounts: 1850-1951.” D.


“Religion Census of 1851.” microfilm.

The Paulist Fathers

Secondary Sources


**Primary Sources**


The Church of St. Paul the Apostle

Secondary Sources


**Primary Sources**


David Kennedy to Thomas F. Burke, L. 10 July 1919.


Fr. J. Murphy to John B. Harney. L. 21 Nov. 1939.

Fr. John E. Burke to John B. Harney. L. 1 Aug. 1930.

Fr. McNab to John B. Harney. D. telegram. 3 June 1930.


Inscription on the Sarcophagus of Isaac Hecker, St. Paul the Apostle Church, Manhattan, New York City. TMs.


John B. Harney to Guy Quinan. L. 10 Jan. 1930.


“Mission Records of the Paulist Fathers.” Sept. 1914 - 1929. 5 Folders, 1 Ledger.


“Parish Notice Books: 1866.” D.

Patrick Turner, St. Peter’s Church, Montgomery, AL to Thomas F. Burke. L. 9 April 1920. APF.


The Paulist Information Center. “The Columbus Circle Project.” D.

“Paulist Missionary Convention January 6-8, 1959.” D.

“Paulist Necrology.” May 5.


"The Spring Program 1968" of the Paulist Centre. D.

St. Paul the Apostle Church Homepage; available from http://www.users.interport.net/~spac/index.html; Internet.

"The Tenth Anniversary of the Opening of the Paulist Information Center." D. 24 November 1953.


. Pentecostalism

Secondary Sources


Atter, Gordon F. The Third Force: A Pentecostal Answer to the Question so often Asked By Both our Own Young People and by Members of Other Churches "Who are the Pentecostals?" Peterborough, ON: College Press, 1962.


Primary Sources


____. *Pentecostal Testimony*. 1 July 1910-1912.


**London Gospel Temple**

**Secondary Sources:**


Primary Sources


Barbara Regan to Ken Raymer, TLS. 1 April 1993.

"Biographies: Honsinger, Howard D." TMs.


James W. Dunlop to Ken MacGowan. TLS. 31 May 1995.


June Deacon to Douglas Rudd, Archivist, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. TLS. n. d.


Kerr, Katherine (Kay). TD. n. d.


“London Gospel Temple 1951.” D.


"The London Pentecostal Work During R. E. McAlister’s Time As Pastor," AMs. n. d.


Mary A. Wortman to Douglas Rudd, Archivist, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. L. 3 August 1989.

Mary A. Wortman to Douglas Rudd, Archivist, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. L. 18 May 1994.


“McAlister, R. E.” TD. 1946.

McPherson, Aimee Semple. This is That: Personal Experiences, Sermons, and Writings. Los Angeles: Echo Park Evangelistic Assoc., 1923.


Pauline Mallory to Douglas Rudd, Archivist, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. L. Received 19 May 1994.


Stephenson, John D. “Interview with John D. Stephenson, long-time member and deacon


“The London Pentecostal Work During R. E. McAlister’s Time as Pastor.” AMs. n.d.


Victor G. Brown to Douglas Rudd, Archivist, Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. L. Received May 1994.

“Wortman file: unidentified newspaper articles.” D.