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PETTICOATS IN THE PULPIT: EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY METHODIST WOMEN PREACHERS IN UPPER CANADA

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ABSTRACT

Women preached and itinerated in different Methodist traditions in the first half of the nineteenth century in Canada. By the middle of the century, many of them had relinquished the pulpit and they soon disappeared. In the United States of America, women preachers also met with resistance, but well before the twentieth century some Methodist women had been ordained. Although many aspects of the Canadian and American contexts were similar, women preachers experienced a somewhat different reception in each country because of the contrasting political climate. Whereas the American Methodist churches reflected the more liberal atmosphere of their country, the Canadian Methodist Episcopal church intentionally adopted the more reactionary stance of the British Wesleyans in order to gain respectability and political advantage. The other Canadian Methodist churches gradually imbibed this conservative atmosphere, and as a result, Canadian women were eventually discouraged from a preaching role. This dissertation recovers the history of a number of nineteenth century Methodist women preaching in Canada, examines their British heritage and the experiences of their American sisters, and suggests reasons for the Canadian devolution.

Des femmes appartenant à des traditions méthodistes différentes avaient prêchées et voyagées durant la première partie du dix-neuvième siècle au Canada. Vers la moitié du siècle, beaucoup d'entre elles abandonnèrent la chaire pour disparaître très peu après. Aux Etats Unis, des femmes prédicateurs devaient elles aussi rencontrer de l'opposition bien que avant le vingtième siècle des femmes de la tradition méthodiste avaient été reçue dans l'ordre. Bien que plusieurs aspects du contexte canadien et américain étaient similaires, les femmes prédicateurs devaient rencontrer un accueil différent dans chaque pays à cause du climat politique opposant qui régnait. Alors que les églises méthodistes américaines reflétaient un air plus libéral de leurs pays, l'église méthodiste épiscopale canadienne a de propos adoptée la position des Wesleyens britanniques, donc plus réactionnaire, afin de gagner le respect et les avantages politiques. Les autres églises méthodistes canadiennes ont progressivement adopter ce même climat et par la suite les femmes canadiennes se sont découragées de ce role de femmes prédicateurs. Cette dissertation récupère l'histoire des femmes de l'église méthodiste du dix-neuvième siècle préchant au Canada, examine leur héritage britannique ainsi que l'expérience de leur soeurs américaines et évoque les causes de la dégradation canadienne.

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PREFACE

A few years ago, I began an intentional search for Methodist women preachers. Studies in the history of the Christian church led me to believe that in religious movements which were charismatic, which placed a major emphasis on the free and generous bestowal of gifts from the Holy Spirit, women often held preaching and other leadership roles. Since Methodism fit this category, this suggested that women might have been preaching in that denomination.

Although at that time little had been written about women preachers, finding Methodist women preaching in Great Britain was not difficult. My research led me to L.F. Church's works, which in turn referred me to Zechariah Taft's writings and other early accounts. The earliest histories and biographies were the most rewarding. Recently, however, two excellent studies by Deborah Valenze and Julia Stewart Werner, mainly on British Primitive Methodist women, have been published.

Canadian Methodist women preachers proved much more elusive, but extensive archival research has been productive. As with the British women, the oldest accounts have been the richest sources, although the paucity of Canadian women's autobiographical material which has survived is both disappointing and frustrating.

In the last few years, there have been a number of essays and monographs on American women preachers, particularly in the evangelical tradition. Although Methodist women have figured prominently in these accounts and analyses, there has been a singular lack of attention paid to the work of Primitive Methodist women.

Perhaps the most interesting question raised by this quest, and one I have attempted to answer, is why Canadian Methodist women lost so much ground by the second half of the nineteenth century that they had virtually given up preaching, while their American counterparts struggled and won ordination before the turn of the century. Traditional answers which have been used to explain diminished roles for women in other situations - such as industrialization, the introduction of ordination, the acceptance of the Victorian stereotype of women and the church-sect typology which suggests that women often hold major roles in the sect phase of a

religious movement and lose these positions in later church development - are inadequate in this instance. These phenomena are common to both countries. It was necessary, therefore, to find another explanation, and I have turned to the different religious and political climates in Canada and the United States to provide the rationale.

The staff at a number of libraries and archives have assisted me in my research. Among these are the United Church of Canada Archives, the Ontario Archives, the McGill University Archives, the John Rylands University Library of Manchester, the City of Brampton Public Library and Art Gallery (Chinguacousy Branch), the Newcastle Public Library Board (Bowmanville Branch Library), the Regional Municipality of Peel Archives, the University of Prince Edward Island Robertson Library, the London Public Libraries, the Peterborough Public Library, the Congregational Library of the American Congregational Association, the United Methodist Church General Commission on Archives and History, and the staff at St Paul's United Church, Orillia. However, I am especially grateful to Norma Johnston and Jennifer Wheeler of the Faculty of Religious Studies Library at McGill University for their interest and support and whose assistance has been invaluable in tracking down obscure source material.

Several people have either provided me with useful information or suggested possible sources. At the risk of omitting men and women who have been helpful, I would like to thank Phyllis Airhart, Edna Borrowclough, Ginny Coleman, Heather Dau, Ruth Evans, Dorothy Graham, Howard Harris, Bill Lamb, Donald Smith, George Rawlyk, Wendell Sedgwick, Robert Shaw, Deborah Valenze, Betty Ward and Marilyn Whiteley. John Moir assisted by editing much of the material in Chapter IV, parts of which initially appeared as a chapter in *Canadian Protestant and Catholic Missions, 1820s-1960s*. David Braide has made the writing of this dissertation possible. Countless other friends have encouraged me in this endeavour. Finally, I express my appreciation to my supervisor, Ed Furcha, for his patience, support and suggested revisions.

I. INTRODUCTION

> Of late I've been requested in silence for to keep,
> Because I've grieved the Pastor and likewise his dear sheep;
> But if my Savior calls me to speak in his dear name,
> I can't obey the Pastor, although a man of fame.
>
> I do respect his person, his faults I can forgive,
> But to refrain from speaking, I cannot do and live;
> If I am called to speak for Jesus and his cause,
> I can't obey the people which make such human laws.
> ...
> I must join with Mary and tell to all around
> That Jesus Christ is risen, for I his grace have found,
> And if I am reproached because these things I say,
> My work is to forgive them and humbly watch and pray. Polly M. Stevens
>
> L.I. Sweet, *The Minister's Wife*, 107.

From its eighteenth-century beginning, English Methodism attracted a large number of women, and it was not long before they held leadership positions. Many of them became effective and popular preachers travelling and preaching throughout England and Ireland. Convinced that they had been called by the Holy Spirit, some of them engaged in intentional undisguised preaching of the gospel from a pulpit or a similar position. Other women prayed in public, exhorted and testified.[1] At the beginning of the nineteenth century, however, the English and Irish Conferences placed severe restrictions on their preaching activity because "there were enough preachers without them." Still they surfaced and were warmly welcomed by men and women in local areas. Indeed, studies indicate that they did the same work as effectively as male preachers, although generally, even

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[1] The Cyclopedia of Methodism ed. Matthew Simpson defines exhorting as a form of preaching, a "sort of probation to the ministry." At the end of the sermon, an exhorter aroused the people "to their sense of duty."

before the legislation, they had not been accorded similar official status. In 1835, the London Conference again expressed its disapproval of women preaching, and eventually women disappeared from the "pulpits" of the British Wesleyan denomination.

Scores of other women kept up the tradition as local and itinerant preachers in Great Britain and beyond, mainly in the more radical Bible Christian and Primitive Methodist movements. Some of these women came to North America, often as part of a "clergy couple," where they preached to overflowing congregations, rode circuits through field and forest, and endured the hardships of the new land. In the United States in the face of opposition and psychological abuse, Methodist women inched their way to ordination well before the turn of the century. In Canada, they met with greater resistance, and by mid-century, many of them had given up preaching.

In her recent study of five upper-middle class British women who emigrated or travelled to Upper Canada in the nineteenth century, the Canadian biographer, Marian Fowler, traces their development from dependent wives nurtured in the Church of England tradition to strong, assertive, independent pioneer women:

> These women had been programmed to be delicate and passive, to cling like sea anemones to their conjugal rocks. On the Canadian frontier, if they wished to survive, they had to be brave, aggressive, resourceful. Fragile silk was gradually replaced by strong canvas.[2]

By contrast, the Methodist women who responded to the early nineteenth century challenge of the New World as missionary preachers were not "fragile silk," but "strong canvas." Many of them had been raised in poverty and hardship. Convinced that they had been called to preach "the gospel," most of them had learned to be assertive, to overcome obstacles, and to rely on their religious faith for guidance and support. Nevertheless, within a few decades in Canada, only a handful of women remained who were preaching in the various Methodist denominations. Uneasy about the

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2 Marian Fowler, The Embroidered Tent (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 1982), 10.

propriety of their preaching in the first place, some of the women apparently came to accept the conventional theory that women were not suitable for this kind of activity and left the pulpit to their male co-workers. Others succumbed to a variety of pressures to stop preaching. By the late nineteenth century, their 'cloth' had taken on a more delicate texture.

There are a number of reasons why this devolution took place in Canada. The increasing urbanization and industrialization of society, the institutionalization of the church and the professionalization of the ministry were all factors, as was the social pressure placed upon women to fit into a more acceptable mould. These phenomena, however, were common to both Canada and the United States, and do not explain why Canadian Methodist women followed an essentially different path from their American counterparts. Much more decisive for Canadian women was the reactionary political climate in Upper Canada, and the increasing conservatism which permeated Canadian Methodism after the union with the British Wesleyans in 1833. In the late 1820s and early 1830s, the church leaders of the Canadian Methodist Episcopal body deliberately dissociated their denomination from the United States and affiliated themselves with the more traditional and conservative Wesleyan Methodists from Great Britain. As the more restrictive policies of the British denomination were adopted rather than the progressive attitudes of the United States, women were no longer tolerated as preachers in the largest Methodist body. Women were accepted on the preaching plans of the smaller and more radical Bible Christian and Primitive Methodist Societies for two or three more decades, until these denominations, too, became permeated with Upper Canadian conservatism.

It is difficult to estimate how many women preached in Upper Canada in the early nineteenth century. There is very little material available from the women themselves. Some of Elizabeth Dart Eynon's journals and letters were reproduced in Bible Christian periodicals and newspapers; a snippet remains from Eliza Barnes Case's diary; Elizabeth Peters' account of her family's sea voyage to Canada has been preserved; and Ann Copp Gordon's story was recorded by her daughter. But in the main, the letters, journals and autobiographies in archival collections are those of husbands

who quite often make no mention of their active wives, or do so in an anonymous fashion.

Records of early American women preachers are somewhat more plentiful. A few of their diaries and theological reflections have been published and we can read first hand about the experiences and struggles of preachers such as Jarena Lee, Dorothy Ripley, Phoebe Worrall Palmer and Margaret Newton Van Cott. Excerpts from both Ann Wearing's and Ruth Watkins' journals were reproduced in their denomination's magazine and a letter from Ruth is available. Sections from the William and "H. M." Knowles journal are signed by both husband and wife. On the whole, however, both in Canada and in the United States, we have to rely on brief references to these women found in magazine and newspaper accounts, other biographies, church records and early histories and archaeological evidence such as tombstones and memorial plaques, and piece together their lives as much as possible.

The problem of reconstructing their activity is compounded by the fact that much of the available material is unreliable. It has been written that "we don't know who discovered water but we're sure it wasn't fish," with the comment that we are all in relation to our own environment "in the same state of unawareness."[3] Methodist histories and early newspapers are riddled with this same contextual blindness. Evidently, most Methodist historians have been unaware that women were preaching both in their own and other denominations, apparently influenced by the proliferation of statements which denied that women were preaching when in fact the evidence quite clearly indicated otherwise. Indeed, recent studies have shown that prescriptions against women preaching are most plentiful during periods in history when women are most active in that arena, and as is often the case, prescriptions have been interpreted as descriptions. Many earlier historians have made the erroneous assumption that the norm for women in their particular epoch of society has always been the norm. As a result, the reality of women's lives was often in direct contradiction to the myths which developed and were recorded as history.

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3 Harley Parker, "Art and Pollution: A Proposal," Arts-canada April 1970, as quoted in John Robert Colombo, ed., Colombo's Canadian Quotations (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1974), 463. It is generally believed that the quotation originated with Marshall McLuhan.

In some instances, the facts have been obscured. Biographies, obituaries and memorials often acknowledge only part of the women's work, leaving out or playing down any reference to the women's preaching activity. Euphemistic phrases such as "she was very *useful* in the work" commonly referred to women (and men) who were active in the work of the church. Sometimes the phrase described women who went beyond the bounds of acceptable behaviour for women in the writers' context, and the "useful" designation was very often used in connection with women who preached. This was true, both for women who were contemporaries of the writers, and also for women who had been preaching at an earlier time.

Not only is it difficult to recover the existence and the work of these women, but it is exceedingly hard to discover much about their actual experiences, their feelings and expectations, since a lot of the information has been refracted through a Methodist hagiography. Accounts often inform us only of their piety and of their enthusiasm in doing the "work of the Lord." Conversely, a negative picture of the women's personalities sometimes emerges, depending on the writers' biases. One historian who believed that John Wesley had been treated badly by Grace Norman described her as "vain, selfish and supercilious" subject to "hypocondriacal and hysterical fits," whereas in other accounts it is said that she had "quick energy, natural tact, popular usefulness and devotion to the work of God" and was "attractive" and "capable."[4]

Given these limitations in source material, it is important to assess very carefully what has previously been written about women, and to treat much of it with suspicion. In setting contemporary standards for writing about women in history, Gerda Lerner has pointed out that it is not enough simply to reinstate women by slotting them into the gaps where they have been missing in our history. It is also essential, she notes, to re-assess our traditional sources in light of other information which has been recovered more recently.[5] For example, in considering Methodist history,

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[4] Charles W. Flint, Charles Wesley and His Colleagues (Washington, D.C.: Public Affairs Press, 1957), 63. V.H.H. Green, John Wesley (London: Nelson and Sons Ltd, 1964), 94.

[5] Gerda Lerner, The Majority Finds Its Past (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), passim, esp. 145ff. Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, In Memory of Her (New York: Crossroads Publishing Company, 1983), passim, esp. xxff. The latter develops

it is necessary to re-evaluate the numerous dissenting Methodist denominations such as the Primitive Methodist and Bible Christian movements. Traditionally, these smaller Methodist groups which were formed in protest against the institutionalization of the parent body have been treated as less valid expressions of Methodism, as aberrations beyond the fringe of the mainline church, and have been given little notice in Methodist histories. Yet all these movements are part of Methodist history, and may be truer expressions of the ideals of Methodism than what has been considered the principal denomination. And in Canada, it is primarily, though not totally, in these protest denominations that women were allowed to exercise their talents in leadership roles.

The following chapters recover the stories of a number of women who were preaching in different Methodist denominations in Canada, examine their religious heritage in Great Britain, compare their experiences with sister preachers in the United States, and explore the reasons for their discontinuity.

Chapters II III and IV examine in some detail the work of Canadian women preachers in the Bible Christian, Primitive Methodist, and Methodist Episcopalian churches. At the risk of being repetitious, I have deliberately dealt with each of these denominations separately and at some length for three reasons. First, because much of the resource material is fragmentary, it seemed necessary to include as much evidence as possible in order to indicate the extent of the women's work and the number of women who took part in preaching activity. Most of the information in these chapters is new data and is not available in any other known secondary source material. Secondly, separating the different traditions in Canada allows comparison with similar traditions in the United States more easily. And thirdly, although there are common elements in the women's stories in the different denominations in Canada, there are also important differences. Whereas many of the Methodist Episcopal women preachers spilled over into Canada from the United States, the majority of the Bible Christian and the Primitive Methodist women emigrated as part of a "clergy couple" from Great Britain. Most

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"hermeneutics of suspicion" for her reconstruction of the history of women in the early church and calls for an increase in "historical imagination."

women's preaching activity in the Methodist Episcopal tradition ceased abruptly in 1830, whereas in the other two denominations, women's activity gradually shifted over a few decades from an active itineracy to guest appearances in the pulpit.

In Chapter V, I examine the evolution of Methodist women preachers in John Wesley's Britain, tracing their rise and enormous popularity, and illustrating the continual resistance to them. Although there is little new empirical data in this section, an analysis of their British heritage helps explain their appearance in North America, and sheds light on their eventual decline in Canada.

Whereas Methodist women preachers virtually disappeared in Canada, in the United States they eventually achieved licensing and ordination after a lengthy and painful struggle. Chapter VI contains the stories of many of these American women, indicating both similarities to and differences from their Canadian counterparts. Since there are a number of excellent studies already on American women preachers, I have concentrated on women whose stories have been omitted in most histories and other monographs such as the Primitive Methodist women and Dorothy Ripley.

Chapter VII focuses on Barbara Heck, perhaps the best-known Methodist woman in North America. It is not the purpose of this section to discredit Barbara, but rather to show the nineteenth-century paradigm shift in normative behaviour for women in mainline Methodism in Canada and the United States. Barbara is not the subject as much as the evolving understanding and handing down of her story.

There are a number of reasons for the disappearance of women preachers in Canada in the nineteenth century, making a single explanation rather difficult. Many of the phenomena which affected women's lives were occurring in both Canada and the United States during virtually the same decades. These are explored in Chapter VIII. In the United States, however, Methodist women achieved significantly more success in gaining leadership status. In an attempt to explain this difference, I have elaborated on the political climate in Canada, and this country's reaction to Methodists and Methodism.

II. PARTNERS IN MINISTRY: BIBLE CHRISTIAN WOMEN IN CANADA

> Why do so many men laugh at and ridicule the idea of women having a voice in the management of the affairs of her country? Because laughter and ridicule are the strongest arguments they can bring against it.
> *Observer*, 16 January 1884

In 1883, on the eve of the union of the Bible Christian Church with the other Canadian Methodists, the denominational newspaper began a series of articles, "Delayed But Not Forgotten," excerpts from the diary of Elizabeth Dart Eynon. It was an attempt on the part of the editor to recover the contribution women had made in the Bible Christian Church - a part of its history which was all but forgotten. Elizabeth had been the first itinerant for the Bible Christian Church when it began in 1815 as a protest movement against an increasingly conservative and institutionalized Methodist Church in Great Britain. In fact, some considered her to be the best missionary the Bible Christians ever had.

The editor apologized for the delay in recognizing Elizabeth's work - first in England and later in Canada. This active yet delicate woman had died twenty-six years earlier, worn out from serving her God, her societies and congregations, walking and riding through the summer heat and the snows of winter, enduring the taunts of men and the rotten eggs thrown by mobs. The editor noted with dismay that, in the late nineteenth century, women's "place" was no longer on the circuit, but at home in front of the hearth, guarding the spiritual values of the nation. "It is often said that woman shapes the destiny of man," he continued. "Perhaps feminine influence in this respect is overestimated," he suggested. For in spite of the accepted thinking at that time, "research and observation" had not convinced him that the mother's influence in the home was "so much more potent" than that of the father. Was not the church guilty of perpetuating the idea that women should be only at home, he asked, by publishing excellent accounts of its male preachers, but none about the "heroic and

devout women" who had suffered and accomplished so much in earlier days?[1]

The Observer editor was not the only Bible Christian to comment publicly on that denomination's failure to include women's history in official church records. In his earlier account of the 1865 Canadian Conference at London, Ontario, James Ashton reported that the President apologized for leaving the notes for his key address, the Jubilee Sermon, in his study at Charlottetown. The speaker, Ashton wrote, introduced a number of illustrations of church leaders from the beginning of the Christian church up to late nineteenth-century Bible Christians, but omitted any mention of all the women "who figured so prominently, and were rendered so extensively useful." No doubt, Ashton quipped, "the women were in the papers left behind."[2]

One of the most prominent of these women had been Elizabeth Dart Eynon (1792-1857), an itinerant preacher in Great Britain for almost twenty years, and an itinerant and class leader in Upper Canada for at least thirty. Together with her husband, John, they were one of the first Methodist ministerial couples to arrive in North America.

In his detailed analysis of minister's wives from the sixteenth to the nineteenth centuries, Leonard Sweet suggests four stereotypes based on the work these women were allowed and encouraged to do: the companion - a ministering supportive angel; the sacrificer - who asked little and stayed out of the way; the assistant - who shared many pastoral responsibilities; and the partner - who ministered alongside her husband. It is the latter model, the partner, which best describes Elizabeth's activity and that of the numerous other Bible Christian ministerial wives who preached in England and Wales and later in Canada. In Sweet's study, most of the "partner" wives he describes were encouraged to become full partners only after their marriage. Almost without exception, the Bible Christian women were undertaking full ministries before their marriage, enthusiastically encouraged by their husbands to continue afterwards.[3]

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1 Observer, 28 March 1883, p.1, c.1.

2 Bible Christian Magazine, June 1865, p.384.

3 Leonard I. Sweet, The Minister's Wife (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1983), 3ff.

Elizabeth had never been physically strong. Often when she preached, her body was "racked with pain." Like most of the other women who preached, she believed she had been called by God and could not disobey. Yet, sometimes she was tempted to leave the "work" because she felt that there were others who could do it so much better. At such times, her belief in Christ sustained her and gave her strength, and she remembered the talents she had been given for ministry. When the doctor ordered her husband, John, to bed for several months in Upper Canada, it was Elizabeth, then forty-seven years of age, who attempted to supply his congregations as well as carry on with her own work. "No doubt the rigour of our climate, with the toils and exposure of pioneer missionary life, had the effect of hastening the collapse of her delicate physique," the Observer editor wrote in his testimonial to her. But even with recurring illness, including asthma for the last twenty years of her life, she had a lengthy ministry. There are records of her leadership in Canadian churches when she was sixty-two years old.[4]

Born into a farming family in the parish of Marhamchurch in Cornwall, England, Elizabeth was given a superficial religious training in the Church of England. Her parents were church members, and although considered by Elizabeth to be "moral in their habits," they were not deeply religious. She read the Bible and other books considered to be "good" reading for a child, and her invalid mother sometimes talked to her about "spiritual matters." Her father was more interested in the crops and livestock on his farm.[5]

Elizabeth was profoundly affected by her reading, at times reflecting so intensely on Christ that she could visualize him hanging on the cross as a sacrifice for sin. But it was not until she was nineteen years old that she joined a congregation, the decisive step which established the direction the rest of her life would take. She had a burning desire to attend church on Easter Day the year before, but her parents believed she was too young to be a communicant. Instead, she visited a sister, spending a miserable day surrounded by "people delighting in frolics and sports" and other Revel Sunday activities. A few days later, an elder sister invited her to go on another outing, but Elizabeth refused, explaining that "to see

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[4] Observer, 28 March 1883, p.1, c.1ff.

[5] Observer, 28 March 1883, p.1, c.1ff.

Time passing, Death coming, and Eternity hastening on" destroyed all her taste for such pastimes. She was drawn to Wesleyan Methodists preaching in her community, and she eagerly discussed religion with them. They confirmed her growing unease that "vital godliness" and "worldly sports" were incompatible.[6]

Elizabeth's diary reveals a spiritual struggle to feel accepted by God. Methodist conversion involved the experiential knowledge of forgiveness for sin, and she strove for some time to reach that inward experience. "Though some of my relatives told me I was good enough, I felt that I was inwardly defiled and deserved banishment from God," she wrote of her anguish. She prayed and read the scriptures, and in 1811, the year she joined a Methodist class, she experienced the acceptance she sought while walking through a field alone. She described the event in her diary:

> The blessed time I shall never forget. My burden of sin and fear of death were gone and Christ was my all in all.[7]

Still Elizabeth was not satisfied with her life. The goal of all earnest Methodists was sanctification, perfect love of God. All her work of "self-denial" and "consecration" was not done, she wrote. Her whole desire was to find "perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord." She read the writings by Hester Ann Roe Rogers of her spiritual journey. Hester Ann was one of John Wesley's most ardent workers, and one of the few people he had described as "perfect in love." Eventually, Elizabeth did believe that she reached this same level of spirituality one evening while she was on her way to milk her father's cows. Her elation at that moment is revealed in her words:

> God came very near to me, and all His works appeared glorious. Everything seemed vocal with His praise.

Yet all her life, Elizabeth was painfully aware of her shortcomings and fought a feeling of despair and unworthiness. Years later, when she was

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6 Observer, 4 April 1883, p.4, c.3ff.

7 Observer, 11 April 1883, p.4, c.3ff.

itinerating in Cornwall, she recorded that the one big mistake she had made in her life was being too concerned by the results of her actions instead of simply doing what she perceived to be her duty and "leaving all results to God."[8]

On October 9, 1815, Elizabeth was one of twenty-two men and women who gathered together in a farm house at Shebbear to form the first Bible Christian Society in England. According to her diary, she had been speaking in public a few months before the Society began, even though the Wesleyan Methodists had imposed their first ban on women preaching twelve years earlier. In March, she had led in prayer and had given short exhortations. In June, at Tregoin where she began dressmaking to earn a living, she held some public meetings and evidently for the first time, "met some male opposition." Like most of the women preachers, she began hesitantly and reluctantly. It was hard for her even to lead in prayer. In her diary she admits that she had "a great struggle" before she could decide "to speak for Christ in a public way."[9]

In spite of ill health, frequent spiritual depression, and a genuine belief that others could preach much more successfully, Elizabeth became the first Bible Christian itinerant in 1816 and one of the most effective. In 1825, the Methodist preacher Zechariah Taft included her in his study of women preachers, although most of the women he portrayed were Wesleyan Methodists. She was partly responsible for a large revival which took place at the close of the fledgling Society's fifth Quarterly Meeting on January 1, 1817. In a large crowded barn, a "love-feast" had turned into a revival with scores of "penitents" still on their knees at two o'clock in the morning. Elizabeth and other preachers prayed with them, talked to them and offered comfort and hope. Adjourning to the farm-house, they kept on praying until seven, ate a hearty breakfast, and continued until two that afternoon. About fifty men and women "found peace with God" and several claimed to have experienced sanctification. Elizabeth ministered to the sick; trudged through "storms and opposition, frosts and floods" sometimes with severely blistered feet; preached outdoors; and some weeks, walked

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8 Observer, 11 April 1883, p.4, c.3ff.; 23 May 1883, p.4. Works of Wesley, letter to Lady Maxwell, London, 8 Aug. 1788.

9 Frederick William Bourne, The Bible Christians, Their Origin and History (n.p.: Bible Christian Book Room, 1905), 1ff. Observer, 25 April 1883, p.1, c.1-4.

forty miles. By 1819, she was listed on the preachers' plan "to travel as her health will permit." Still she continued. She began a Society in Bristol, and was responsible for the movement's success in Wales, although she travelled mainly around Devon and Cornwall.[10]

Elizabeth has been described as an effective speaker. It was noted later in Canada that as a preacher she was "superior" and "free from ostentation." She was constantly sought after, and had great success in winning converts. Her voice was not timid. When she was ministering in Bowmanville, Ontario, the local historian James Fairbairn wrote that her voice could be heard out on the street when she was holding a prayer meeting in her small frame house. The Bible Christians, noted Fairbairn, "were not afraid of the gospel they believed." She was literate, fond of books, and described as a "woman of strong intellect and sound judgement." Methodists were encouraged to keep diaries, and hers is well-written. Fairbairn states that the Bible Christians who came to Bowmanville at that time were "among the most intelligent" of the population. The English historian F. W. Bourne held her in high regard, explaining that "she added a transparent simplicity of character, a quaintness of manner, and a power of sympathy which increased her personal charm and her public usefulness." It is said that she never spoke ill of anyone. A Canadian writer remembered her as a "splendid woman."[11]

Almost eighteen years after she began as an itinerant for the Bible Christians, Elizabeth accepted the challenge of working in the Canadian

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10 A "love-feast" is a fellowship meal or representation of a meal which originated as part of the early Christian eucharist or communion service, but became separated from it. The love-feast was introduced into early Methodism after a practice of the Moravians. F.W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, passim, esp. 41f. Observer, 2 May 1883, p.4, c.3ff.; 9 May 1883, p.4, c.4.; 23 May 1883, p.4, c.3f.; 30 May 1883, p.5, c.1f.; 25 July 1883, p.4, c.3f.; 1 Aug.1883, p.4, c.3ff. Wesley believed that sanctification or perfection was possible in this life, although he was aware of few people who had reached that level of spirituality. In that state, the believer willfully committed no sin. Note: Throughout this thesis, distance is reported in miles. One mile is equal to 1.61 km.

11 Jas B. Fairbairn, History and Reminiscences of Bowmanville (Bowmanville: Bowmanville Newsprint, 1906), 42. F.W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 346. Bible Christian Magazine, 1833, her letter dated 3 May 1833. D. McTavish, Religious Romance and Reminiscences: An Interesting History of James Street Church, Exeter (n.p.: n.d.) Ontario Archives, 6. Observer, 2 May 1883, p.4, c.3ff.; 23 May 1883, p.4, c.3f.; 11 April 1883, p.5, c. 4, letter from Mary Greene.

mission. On June 19, 1833, she reached the Port of Quebec on board the brig Dalusia, one of eight immigrants to Canada. Also on the Dalusia was her husband of two months, John Hicks Eynon. John had been converted in Wales through Elizabeth's preaching, and in 1826, he had been received on probation as an itinerant minister.[12]

The Bible Christians had begun their missionary activity beyond Great Britain in 1831 by sending John Glass to Upper Canada and Francis Metherall and his family to Prince Edward Island. The Metheralls' trek to the New World was not easy. When their ship reached Newfoundland, it sprang a leak, and they put back to Ireland for repairs. The next year they set sail again, this time landing at Bedeque, forty miles from their destination of Charlottetown. Leaving his wife to look after their children in a strange pioneer country, Francis set off on foot for Charlottetown, blazing a trail to make it easier for his next hike, this time with his family, carrying one of the children most of the way. Nine months after they had left the coast of England the second time, they were settled in their new Canadian home, but as Francis wrote to the English Society the next year, it was not ideal. "I very much want a better house to live in," he told them. "That which we now occupy is neither *wind* nor *water* proof." But at least the Metheralls did remain. In Upper Canada, John Glass found the work too difficult. Discouraged, he soon returned to England. John Hicks Eynon, still a bachelor, volunteered to replace him.[13]

John Eynon was a thickset determined Cornishman, seemingly well-suited to the rigours of the new climate, the long journeys and the treacherous roads. On one occasion on a visit to New York a gentleman whom he met said to him, "Well, sir, you look as if you were a regular John Bull." "I am, sir," John replied, "and I glory in it." Yet, John needed all his determination to reach Canada. After setting sail from Liverpool in October, 1832, his ship was tossed about on the seas and blown to the coast of Ireland. Here all his possessions were stolen. He returned to England where Elizabeth and he were married the next March, and on the first of May they set sail from Padstow for Canada as a missionary couple.

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12 Cobourg Star, 3 July 1833, p.196. F.W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 152, 175. Bible Christian Magazine 1833, John's Journal, passim.

13 Francis Metherall Biographical File, United Church Archives. F. W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 210. Bible Christian Magazine, April 1834, p.214.

Storms forced them back to port, yet they persevered and set sail again five days later.[14]

John's journals describe the terror of their ocean crossing. Much of Elizabeth's journal of the voyage was not published in the denomination's magazine because, the editor noted, it was similar to John's. The Bible Christian Magazine did, however, publish a portion of "On Solitude," a poem that Elizabeth found in one of the books she took with her on her voyage and which expressed the terrible loneliness she felt:

> "Ye winds! that have made me your sport,
> Convey to this desolate shore,
> Some cordial endearing report
> Of a land I shall visit no more.
> My friends! do they now and then send,
> A wish or a thought after me?
> O tell them, I yet have a friend
> Though a friend I am never to see!"

For forty-two days, they were "tossed up and down upon the raging sea." The ocean "swells like mountains," John wrote. "It looks awful, and yet very grand." At one point in the voyage, the wind carried away the ship's fore-boom and main trisail gaff. Later they learned that ten vessels had been ship-wrecked that spring because of ice. John described "Betsy's" loneliness, fear and nausea, his own headache and sore stomach. At times he could barely hold up his head. They both tired of the salted provisions and longed for fresh fish.[15]

By the time they reached Quebec, John's head was so bad that he was advised to take medicine before going up river where the fever and ague were prevalent. On the afternoon of June 23, they arrived in Montreal where a year earlier the well-known British immigrant, Catherine Parr Traill, also en route to Cobourg, had battled the deadly cholera. John and Elizabeth had passed eleven ships under quarantine. Twenty-nine people had already died on one of the vessels. Immigrants were particularly susceptible to the disease after the fatigue and poor nutrition of a long

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[14] Christian Guardian, 6 April 1904, p.2. John's picture is on the front page. Bible Christian Magazine, 1833, pp.18, 218.

[15] Bible Christian Magazine, 1833, pp.27, 218f., 349f., letters from Elizabeth and John, and John's diary.

sea voyage. In 1832 alone, one-twelfth of Canada's population had died from cholera, many of them from among the fifty thousand men, women and children who had thronged to the pioneer country from across the seas.[16]

By July 7, Elizabeth and John had reached their new mission, the booming town of Cobourg. In 1827, the community had consisted of three hundred and fifty pioneers. Since then the population had tripled, and Cobourg was regarded as one of the "most brilliant and polished" societies in Upper Canada. A harbour had been built in 1832 and fast sailing steamers were plying Lake Ontario. A railway was planned to Peterborough, although this was not completed for two decades. There was a new circulating library of eight hundred volumes and an amateur dramatic society one-year old. According to Catherine Parr Traill, it was a "neatly built and flourishing village," containing many good stores, mills, a banking house, and printing-office with "a select society." The "handsome and commodious" Anglican church was being improved when the Eynons arrived; the "ladies" had made and arranged new crimson hangings for the pulpit. A visitor to it the previous year, however, had found rows of empty pews on the main floor and three people in the gallery. Tenders were being called for a Presbyterian church to be built of stone. The Methodist Society was holding Temperance meetings, and plans were being made for a Wesleyan Methodist chapel.[17]

It was into this prosperous and fast-paced social and economic centre that Elizabeth and John brought their sober theology and plain dress. But they were not without friends, many of whom had recently emigrated as well from the West Country in England.

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16 Bible Christian Magazine, 1833, pp.26ff., 71, 349ff. Catherine Parr Traill, The Backwoods of Canada (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Ltd, 1966), 25ff. Clara Thomas, Ryerson of Upper Canada (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1969), 50f.

17 P. Baskerville, "The Entrepreneur and The Metropolitan Impulse: James Grey Bethune and Cobourg, 1825-1836", in Victorian Cobourg, ed. J. Petryshyn (Belleville: Mika Publishing Co., 1976), 57ff., 109. Cobourg Star, 8 Jan. 1833, p.239; 2 July 1833, p.214; 7 Aug. 1833, p.239; 6 Oct. 1833; 4 Dec. 1833, p.2 c.5; 18 Dec. 1833, p.3 c 5. Traill, The Backwoods, 32f. Edwin C. Guillet, Cobourg 1798-1948 (Oshawa: Goodfellow Printing Co. Ltd., 1948), 18. Edwin C. Guillet, Pioneer Days in Upper Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1933), 172.

The theory that social and economic disruption is reflected in a need for "irregular" or anti-ritualistic religion can be borne out by the missionary couple's ready acceptance in the Cobourg area. Cholera epidemics, a developing bourgeoisie and the acceleration of a shift from an agrarian to an urban society indicated an unstable environment in the early 1830s, ripe for a religious reform movement such as the Bible Christian denomination.[18]

Yet even with this fertile ground, Elizabeth and John had to seize every opportunity to push the work forward. As soon as they arrived, they held a local preachers' meeting for the Cobourg station, and preached to the people. The work, however, proved to be more taxing than in the home mission. One day that summer, John walked more than thirty miles in the blazing sun. "I find I must have a horse," he declared, "or shorter journeys." Between the heat and the "Misquitos," John wrote, "I have scarcely known what to do." Even with a horse, travelling was almost impossible. Catherine Parr Traill had written in the fall of 1832 that although she had heard how bad the roads were in Canada, she was not prepared for what she had to travel on around Cobourg. Another traveller who journeyed from Cobourg to Peterborough described the trip as "thirteen miles of bad road, a lake blotted by weeds and seven miles of barely navigable river." In 1834, Catherine remarked that the roads were still not improved and "a few miles' journey seems an awful undertaking." In some areas, one had to navigate over root, stump, stone, mudhole and "corduroy" trails.[19]

Elizabeth was expecting her first child, but was far from idle. She preached her first sermon a few days after they arrived, and that summer walked or rode in a one-horse carriage to appointments as far away as Whitby, a distance of forty-five miles. Often she and her husband went their separate ways on a two hundred-mile circuit, speaking in fields,

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[18] See Carroll Smith-Rosenberg, Disorderly Conduct, (New York: A.A. Knopf, 1985), esp. ch.3; also Smith-Rosenberg, "Women and Religious Revivals: Anti-Ritualism, Liminality, and the Emergence of the American Bourgeoisie" in Leonard I. Sweet ed., The Evangelical Tradition in America (Macon, Georgia: Mercer University Press, 1984), passim, for details of the proposed connection between social and economic disruption and anti-ritualistic religion.

[19] Bible Christian Magazine, 1834, p.29, letter from John Eynon. Traill, The Backwoods, 105, 48ff. Baskerville, "The Entrepreneur," 58.

barns, homes, woods and schools. At times th r conducted services together. She quickly felt at home except for the strange custom of seeing so many people going without shoes and stockings. In her work Elizabeth often felt afraid and inadequate, but had learned to trust in the "power" of the Lord. "I walked about six miles through the woods; on entering which I was tempted that fear would overcome me; but after I proceeded some distance, I felt not the least fear, and my soul was so filled with heaven and God, that I felt all within was joy and love," she wrote after one journey. She was sensitive to her environment, recording in her journals the beauty of the woods and the waters. "These things lead me to reflect on the power of the Creator, and the valuable purposes they serve," she noted.[20]

Elizabeth was ill their first winter in Canada, suffering particularly from chest pains. In January, when she was almost forty-two years old, she lost a daughter at childbirth, her first and only child. Still she kept up a rugged pace. Elizabeth and John held open-air meetings, led revivals and protracted meetings. Elizabeth, herself, was responsible for at least one protracted meeting in Cobourg while her husband was away on other parts of their mission. They ministered to converts in the Upper Canadian towns and villages of Cobourg, Bowman'svale [sic], Darlington, Whitby, Cavan and Dummer. In March, 1837, they opened a chapel in Cobourg, forty-two by sixty feet with an eight-foot high basement, lit by lamps and with hot air heating. In 1842, they were both working at Drummer, "witnessing the greatest reformation" they had ever seen in the province. They reported that more than fifty people "obtained salvation" at that time alone.[21]

John found the journeys long, the summer heat intense, the winter cold severe, and the work hard. By 1839, he had been ordered to bed for several months by his doctor, and Elizabeth did as much of his work as she could along with her own responsibilities. Her faith kept her going and sustained

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[20] Bible Christian Magazine, 1834, pp.109ff. Elizabeth Muir, "Elizabeth Dart (Eynon)," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography 8, gen. ed. F.G. Halpenny (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985).

[21] F. W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 220, 310. Bible Christian Magazine, 1834, John's journal; 1835, pp.50f.; 1856, letter from J. Tapp. Protracted meetings were emotionally charged religious services similar to camp meetings but which were held indoors and lasted for lengthy periods of time from a few days to a couple of weeks. Note: measurements used are lineal; one foot equals .3 metres.

her. Earlier, she had explained that the source of her strength was her trust in Christ. It is only through the "blood of Christ" that "I can conquer all my foes," she wrote in her journal. "If I let go of this prop I am undone forever." By 1846, however, both Elizabeth and John were in need of a rest. John had a painful leg as a result of riding and standing so much and Elizabeth was in a "delicate state." Both exhausted, they spent some time in Kingston, and in 1848, returned to England for a visit where they spoke extensively on the Devon and Cornwall circuits. They were accorded a magnificent welcome and their addresses and prayers were said "to be pervaded with a sacred glow of spirituality."[22]

There is little information about Elizabeth's activities in the late 1840s and the early 1850s, although it appears that her ministry was severely curtailed. She became known affectionately as "dear Mother Eynon," and from 1852 to 1855, her name appears in the Cobourg church elders' minutes occasionally in the role of a mediator and never as a preacher. One year, John, as pastor, had written letters to two of his parishioners about their deteriorating relationships with each other. Four months later, Sisters Higgins and Gilbard were still not speaking and Elizabeth was asked to bring about a reconciliation. On another occasion, as the membership was becoming lax in its observance of class and church attendance, she was asked to try to persuade two women and one man to return to the society as "full" members. There is no conclusive evidence that Elizabeth was not preaching at this time, but it appears to be the case. She was not in good health, but neither was John, and both were advancing in age.[23]

Elizabeth died in 1857, sixty-five years old. The inscription on the marble column in the Bethesda cemetery near Bowmanville reads:

Elizabeth Dart
Born in Cornwall, England
April 1792
Entered the Bible Christian Itinerant

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22 F. W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 302. Christian Guardian, 6 April 1904, pp.2, 6. Bible Christian Magazine, 1834, p.110, letter from Elizabeth; 1848, letter from Henry Ebbot, 1 Jan. 1848.

23 Minutes of Elders' Meetings, Cobourg, 28 April 1852, 18 Oct. 1854, 24 Jan. 1855. Bible Christian Magazine, 1857, p.244.

Ministry 1816
Married to the
Rev J. H. Eynon
Mar 18, 1833
And Proved a
Devoted Wife, Zealous Christian
And generally beloved
Died In
Little Brittain [sic]
Jan 13, 1857.[24]

The prodigious amount of work she had accomplished as an itinerant, however, was quickly forgotten by the denomination. The tombstone inscription which suggests a difference in John's and Elizabeth's work is likely from a later era after the acceptance of the use of the term "Rev." Whereas she is referred to as "Elizabeth" in the "itinerant Christian ministry," John is "Rev. J. H". But even in 1857, when the Bible Christian Magazine noted her death, she was described only as the "wife" of John Hicks Eynon and a "devoted Christian." The denominational paper, the Canadian Statesman mentioned that she was a "very devoted Christian," a "superior woman," and a "superior teacher," making no reference to her itineracy. As time went on, she generally received even less recognition. The 1878 history of the Bible Christians by William Luke notes five women briefly by name but with no details. Elizabeth is not one of the women. The series of Observer articles in 1883 pointed out this gap in the official church records, placing Elizabeth's contribution to the Bible Christian church before its readers. But in a memorial to John who died in March, 1888, the Canadian Statesman referred to her briefly and anonymously only as a "heroine in the missionary cause." The West Durham News devoted two long columns on its front page to John's life and work in the "christian Ministry." Elizabeth, however, is described as a "young lady" who "went from place, to place, warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come" and who became John's "useful" wife. She was a "great worker, and untiring in her effort to do good" and a "fit companion" for John, the newspaper continued. The Minutes of the London Methodist Conference also paid tribute to John, and noted that a "lady evangelist" who later became his

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24 Cemetery visited by author.

wife was "his fellow-labourer", and gave him "advice, encouragement, and aid in proclaiming ... the message of Divine mercy." Who she was, it does not say. According to the article, however, John was in "the ministry." The distinction between evangelist and minister was evidently important. Other accounts suggest that evangelism was a step along the way to "the ministry" and therefore of a lower order. At that time, there were other unordained evangelists, but no unordained "ministers." In a later biographical sketch of John, complete with photograph, in the Christian Guardian in 1904, there is no mention at all of Elizabeth.[25]

Not all historical accounts, of course, omitted references to Elizabeth's ministry, or gave her such limited credit. The 1891 Centennial of Canadian Methodism, published by the General Conference, noted that "Mrs Eynon took work as regularly and as successfully as her husband," preaching and "sustaining the services." In his history of Canadian Methodism, J. E. Sanderson mentions that Elizabeth preached and itinerated, and F. W. Bourne provides a full account of Elizabeth and other women in the Bible Christian ministry, especially in Great Britain.[26]

There is no concrete evidence that Elizabeth was discriminated against in Canada because of her sex. Only a few extracts from her Canadian letters and journals are extant and there is a legend that when she was challenged as to whether she had been ordained to preach, she replied, "No, but I was fore-ordained." But Paul Robins, another Bible Christian itinerant, wrote from Peterboro [sic] in 1847 that the Society there would not tolerate a woman in the pulpit. "The Sunday I am in the country there is no person to address the people but Sister Heard and my wife," he explained, "and there seems to be a prejudice against female preaching."[27]

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[25] Canadian Statesman, 12 Feb. 1857, p.1; 24 March 1888; 11 April 1888, p.8, c.1. West Durham News, 20 April 1888, p.1. Methodist Conference, Minutes (London: 1888). Christian Guardian, 6 April 1904, pp.1,6. William Luke, The Bible Christians, Their Origin, Constitution, Doctrine and History (London: Bible Christian Book Room, 1878), passim.

[26] Centennial of Canadian Methodism, (Toronto: Wm Briggs, 1891), 210. Sanderson, The First Century, Vol.2, 427 ff. F. W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, passim.

[27] J. E. Sanderson, The First Century of Methodism in Canada Vol. 2 (Toronto: William Briggs, 1910), 427. Bible Christian Magazine, 1848, p.123, letter from Paul Robins, 2 Dec. 1847.

Paul Robins' wife, Ann Vickery (1800-1853), ministered at the same time as Elizabeth in England, appearing on the Conference itinerants' roster first in 1820. Like many of the women preachers she had been converted at age nineteen. Like Elizabeth, she suffered from ill health but maintained an active ministry in London, the Norman Isles, and other towns and villages throughout the country. Paul experienced her as a stubborn person. He wrote that "Divine grace triumphed; and when she did submit, she submitted fully." Certainly she was an energetic woman. After her marriage in 1831, Ann kept on preaching, many times carrying an infant to an appointment miles from her home, and handing it to one of the congregation while she conducted the service. Afterwards, she picked up the child, and walked with it back home. A nineteenth century 'superwoman,' she did all her own housework except for a brief period after her second child was born. She prepared her Sunday meals in advance to avoid "bustle on the Sabbath," and she filled in for itinerants making special arrangements for the care of her family. She preached, visited the sick, led classes and prayer meetings. She had no sympathy for preachers who were "held back because of disagreeable weather."[28]

Ann, Paul and their sons emigrated to Canada in 1846, when Ann was forty-six years old. John Eynon met them at Peterboro [sic] in May, and noted that Paul and the children were well, but Ann was not in good health. In the Canadian winter, Ann suffered even more. A thick cake of ice covered everything they put in their indoor cupboards; their breath froze on their bed clothes. They had no well of their own, and Ann carried water from her neighbours. She cared for Paul when he became critically ill soon after he arrived, even though she herself was sick with rheumatism brought on by the frost and snow. Yet she took her share of preaching on the circuits in Peterborough, Cobourg and Darlington, at field meetings, in homes and at protracted meetings. Her preaching engagements were fewer than Elizabeth's, but Elizabeth had no children to care for. The Bible Christian historian, F. W. Bourne, regarded Ann and Paul as a ministerial team, for in describing their work in Canada, he uses the pronoun "they." A strong and outspoken woman, Ann met with resistance, and from 1850 on is mentioned only as a class leader, although leading both men and women.

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28 Bible Christian Magazine, 1853, p.474f., memorial tribute by Paul Robins.

Indeed, even in this position, people reacted to her with strong feelings. In 1852, a class member, Maria Carr, was rebuked for leaving the class she had been assigned in order to attend Ann's. Another member, Brother Cosper, felt slighted when Ann chose someone else to lead her class in her absence, instead of choosing him. Ann died shortly afterwards, in 1853. The next year, Paul visited England where he married a "much esteemed" preacher Mary Ann Taylor, but there is no account of Mary Ann working on any of the Canadian circuits after they returned to Canada.[29]

By the late 1840s, the Bible Christians in Upper Canada were well on their way to respectability. Whereas the population of Upper Canada doubled in the decade from 1841 to 1851, the membership of the Bible Christian church more than tripled from 1845 to 1855. After the 1833 union of the Methodist Episcopal Church with the British Wesleyans, and again in 1847, the Bible Christian Church provided a welcome option for some of the more radical Canadians and Methodist immigrants who were disaffected by the conservative elements in the mainline church. An increase in Bible Christian members, however, resulted in a need for more and better meeting places and a more structured organization. This in turn led to more formal practices and less spontaneity. In 1853, the Canadian mission became a self-governing Conference, and although it continued to attract members, it began to resemble more closely other more conservative Methodist denominations. Its growth slowed from 1855 to 1865, not quite doubling in numbers. In 1841, Bible Christian preachers were granted licences to marry, and the denomination could secure chapels and burying grounds, giving it the recognition the members had been fighting hard to achieve. The type of meeting held in their church communities was also changing. Even in the 1850s, members were becoming irregular in their church attendance. By the early 1860s, structured Sabbath Schools were emphasized, and there were far fewer protracted meetings, class meetings, and prayer meetings. Indeed, on April 12, 1860, the Cobourg elders' meeting had to pass a resolution that the "Females" in the church be asked to hold weekly prayer meetings.

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29 Bible Christian Magazine, 1847, p.40, letter from John Eynon of 21 May 1847, pp.200, 399; p.403, journal of Paul Robins; 1853, p.475, memorial by Paul Robins. F. W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 519f. Minutes of Elders' Meetings, Cobourg, 24 Jan. 1852, 21 Feb. 1852.

Ministry had become more formalized and professionalized, and that year, Conference developed a course of study for its ministers. By 1869, ministers were allowed to use the title Rev., although Paul Robins objected strongly to this. "If a man has real worth, he does not require this prefix," Paul declared. The 1872 Conference recorded that several District meetings had noted "among our sisters, a deplorable conformity to the world in vain attire." The denomination was becoming increasingly conservative, blending more completely into an increasingly conservative country. It was no longer a radical option. In 1884, when the Bible Christians entered the final Methodist union in Canada, they brought with them six thousand, nine hundred and eighteen members, only one-and-a-half times the membership they had had two decades earlier.[30]

Elizabeth Dart Eynon and Ann Vickery Robins were only two of the many Bible Christian women preaching in Canada, some of them still active in the 1850s and at the beginning of the 1860s as local preachers. Few of their Canadian diaries and letters have been preserved and their activity is visible mainly through brief comments by their husbands or other male itinerants. Most of them belonged to clergy couples, and the women had had an active preaching ministry before their marriage.

Elizabeth Trueman Hoskin (1807-1882) preached for some time in Cornwall before emigrating to the Huntingdon area, probably in the early 1830s. She began the Bible Christian Society there and preached for a number of years, "as long as her health held out." In fact, she was held in such high esteem that she was known to her community as Rev. Mrs Hoskin. Years later on her death in 1882, there was some embarrassment that she had been preaching, possibly because she was known as "Rev." The memorial tribute to her in the Observer read very much like an apology, noting that she had preached because there was no one else to provide the early settlers with the "means of grace."[31]

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30 Minutes of Elders' Meetings, Cobourg, 1851-1860 esp. 12 Apr. 1860. Minutes of the Canadian Bible Christian Conference (1872), 8 as quoted in A. Burnside, "The Bible Christians in Canada 1832-1884," D.Th. diss., Toronto Graduate School of Theological Studies 1969, 114, 116. Bible Christian Magazine, 1841, p.237. Observer, 27 October 1869.

31 Observer, 15 March 1882, p.3.

Elizabeth A. Adams emigrated to Prince Edward Island in the 1830s before going on to Upper Canada where she preached around Exeter in 1834. Elizabeth and her husband were responsible for a great revival in the Bedeque area of Prince Edward Island. Sister Heard was preaching in the Peterborough area in the spring of 1848. Sarah Rippin (1824-1883) and her husband George, both preachers in Devon, emigrated to London and later Putnamville in Upper Canada in 1846, before proceeding to Ohio in the fall. Later in 1851 in St. Thomas, they were two of eight local preachers. Ruth Stovold Woodger (1818-1889) had been preaching in the 1840s in England for the Bible Christians where she earned the disapproval of members of the Church of England. A male minister wrote to her expressing his surprise that "one so modest" should be "guilty of the impropriety of preaching." Ruth emigrated with her husband to Woodstock where she preached for the Primitive Methodists, assisted at a number of revivals there, and in 1853 joined the Bible Christians in Mitchell where she was well accepted in the pulpit, although how regularly she preached, we do not know. Susan Nan(ce)kivell who had preached in the Cornwall area in Great Britain was listed as a local preacher at Orono near Oshawa in 1857, and Mary Nicholls Green preached with her husband and sometimes supplied for him around Pickering in 1859. Mary had been an itinerant in England at the beginning of the Bible Christian movement.[32]

In the later years, some of the women appeared only as guest preachers on special occasions. The widowed Mrs Andrew Cory was invited to participate in the dedication services for a new church at Darlington. The small original chapel built in 1848 had been turned into a vestry for a much larger brick one in 1855. It was reported that as part of the celebrations, Mrs Cory "made remarks," whereas Mr Draper and Mr Frayner

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[32] Bible Christian Magazine, 1835, p.146; 1847, pp. 39, 80; 1850, letter from R. L. Tucker; 1859, p.43. Observer, 18 Apr. 1883, p.4, c.5. John Harris, The Life of the Rev. Francis Metherall and The History of the Bible Christian Church in Prince Edward Island (London: Bible Christian Book Room, 1883), 32ff., 49f. Burnside, "The Bible Christians," 64. Christian Guardian, 24 April 1889, obituary of Ruth Woodger. Biographical file of Thomas Green, United Church Archives. F.W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 114.

"preached." Two Sundays later, however, there were three special "sermons," by Mr John Hooper, Mr Henry and Mrs Cory.[33]

A number of Bible Christian women had an active ministry in Prince Edward Island, although the denomination never maintained much of a foothold there. Mrs Abbott and her husband held services in their house. The Bryentons and Mr and Mrs Adams were both considered talented preaching couples by the first missionary Francis Metherall. Martha Jago Sabine (d.1930) created "quite a stir" in Charlottetown by preaching in the market-house in the early 1840s, although she "did much good." She and her husband Thomas later preached in Tweed and western Ontario. Frances and William Calloway and Isabella Armstrong Harris and her husband William arrived later in 1844. Isabella preached for a few years, but soon was widowed with a small child. The Calloways returned to England in ten years, but while they were in Canada, both preached extensively. According to William's journals, Frances took a number of engagements, drawing particularly large congregations. She appears to have been more adept at preaching than at some household chores, according to William's description of her efforts to put up a "Moschetto blind around the bed." Frances was "not so well skilled in putting them up as the Americans are," William wrote, "for numbers of them [mosquitos] found their way in, just as it was getting light." Another preacher,Sister Buxton, led revivals as late as 1860.[34]

On board the ships on their voyages to Canada, women as well as men conducted religious services, which suggests that the women had expectations of continuing this activity when they reached their adopted country. Twenty-nine-year old Elizabeth Peters described her journey on

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[33] Bible Christian Magazine, 1857, p.42f. Canada West Missionary Chronicle, 16 Sept. 1855, 5 Oct. 1855.

[34] Harris, The Life of the Rev. Francis Metherall, 32ff., 49f., 64, 74. Bible Christian Magazine, Canadian Missionary Reports: 1845, letter from Richard Cotton; 1847, passim; 1848, p.401, passim; 1858, passim; 1860, passim. New Outlook, 5 Nov. 1930, p.1091, obituary of Mrs M.J. Sabine: Her obituary notes that she was eighty-three years old at her death which would make her birthdate approximately 1847. However, Harris remembers her preaching in P.E.I. in 1843 and according to the Bible Christian Magazine 1845, p.275, she was preaching there at that time. Either she was around one hundred years old at the time of her death, or there were two women with a similar name - perhaps mother and daughter. Biographical file of William Harris, United Church Archives.

the brig Friends in the spring of 1830, three years before Elizabeth Dart sailed. Elizabeth and William Peters, their three young sons, Thomas, William and Nicholas, along with Elizabeth Trick Henwood (1801-1872) and her husband Charles, and Maria and Thomas Hoskin(g) emigrated together from England to Upper Canada. Elizabeth Henwood, Charles, Thomas and William shared the services during the voyage. We do not know whether Maria or Elizabeth Peters were also preachers. During the voyage, Elizabeth Peters was kept busy nursing her 20-month-old son, cooking meals on the stove provided, sewing, knitting, writing in her diary and caring for her other active children.[35]

After they arrived in Canada, the Henwoods preached for a number of years. Elizabeth had been one of the first itinerants officially recognized by the Bible Christian Church in England in 1819. Later when she was preaching in Canada, it was said that she was as inspiring as the earlier saddle-bag preachers, and created as much interest. In 1860 and 1861, both Elizabeth and Charles were listed on the Cobourg Circuit plan as preachers, Charles third in seniority and Elizabeth fourth out of a list sometimes as long as twenty-nine. From January to July and October to December, 1860, and from January to July, 1861, months when preachers' plans are available on which they are both listed, Elizabeth was assigned only sixteen preaching appointments, whereas Charles was allotted forty-one. The discrepancy could have been due to the fact that Elizabeth gave birth to twelve children, including one set of twins, and much of her time would have been spent managing the large household. However, in 1860, the youngest children were the twins, then fourteen years old, well able to care for themselves and help with domestic chores. Three of the other preachers who are listed with initials for their first name on those same plans may have been women. Generally at that time, only last names were used for the men and last names and initials for the women. Later, one of Elizabeth's daughters, Jane Henwood Harris, also preached for the Bible Christians.[36]

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35 Elizabeth Peters and William Peters, The Diaries of William and Elizabeth Peters Recounting the Voyage to the New World on the Good Brig Friends in 1830, ed. Howard H. Finley (Berwyn, Illinois: Howard H. Finley, 1942), passim.

36 Bible Christian preachers' plans, United Church Archives. Trick-Henwood Papers, private collection of Howard Harris: Two of Elizabeth's children died in infancy.

John Williams' journals reveal that he was part of another group of Bible Christian preachers who arrived on the brig Andus in the spring of 1848. His wife, Elizabeth Riden, his sister-in-law Sister Parker, and another Sister Riden all preached during the voyage as much as John himself, to the delight of the captain and the crew.[37]

The story of Ann Copp Gordon (1837-1931), whose exploits did find their way into twentieth century Canadian newspapers, is interesting from the point of view of how expectations within the Bible Christian church and in Canadian society coloured her own attitudes to speaking and preaching, and how men and women reacted to women in the pulpit in the late nineteenth century. Ann appears to have been the only Bible Christian woman preaching as late as the 1870s.

Ann considered that she had been ordained in Devon in 1855 when she was designated a Bible Christian preacher. Her father disapproved of her career, but when he finally heard her preach on the eve of her departure to Canada in 1857, he was overawed. "Had I known my Annie had such ability, she would never have gone to Canada," he declared.[38]

Unlike many of the early Bible Christian women preachers, Ann was from a reasonably well-to-do family background, brought up in a large stone house in Bideford in the north of Devon. Her father was a master builder, a "pillar" in the Established Church. Ann was the "belle of the parish." She was drawn to the Bible Christian denomination, although fearing her father's wrath, she entered their chapel only after her conversion at age sixteen. Like Elizabeth Dart, Ann's spiritual struggle had been long. One night on her knees in her own home, she prayed in despair that she would not rise until she had been blessed by God. Almost instantly, she felt a presence at her side, "a vision of the Saviour, clear and unmistakable." The "weight" she had borne for months "lifted like the sun breaking through the cloud," and she was filled with a "light" which she

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Newspaper clippings from 1928 describe Elizabeth as a "regularly ordained Local Preacher in the Wesleyan Church," and her daughter Jane as preaching from "Wesleyan pulpits." This is highly unlikely.

37 Bible Christian Magazine, 1848, p.321ff. Biographical file of John Williams, United Church Archives. Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 41.

38 Annie R. Gordon, "Whither Thou Goest - Ann Copp, A Devon Maid," United Church Archives, 1,16.

claimed never left her through "persecution, loneliness and years of dire poverty."[39]

Ann joined the local class and like many other English women who were converted to Methodism was forced by her father to leave home. Methodist literature has many stories of "courageous" young women who were beaten or banished because they attended religious services, and these stories were held up to women as models to emulate. Soon after her conversion, Ann was entered on trial as a preacher in March 1854. Her speaking ability and deep spirituality were quickly recognized by the Bible Christians. A year later, she was "ordained a lay preacher" and walked seven miles to chapels to teach, preach and lead services. The effort was exhausting, and in two years when she was twenty, she set sail for Canada to regain her health and visit a brother in London, Ontario.[40]

On the London circuit, Ann was welcomed as a preacher. She and Brother Heard led a six-week revival in Dereham which was so successful that the members planned to build a second chapel in the township, although they had only recently opened their first one. She joined Paul Robins' church, and in 1859, married Andrew Gordon, Paul's assistant. Ann and Andrew shared services as a ministerial couple and some said that Ann was much superior to her husband. Her preaching was quiet but "convincing" and always "with an evangelistic note." She preached in the country and in towns, in Tweed and Port Hope, and in 1868 preached the Conference sermon to the assembled ministers in a black silk dress she had made for the occasion. Even though she was a successful preacher, a few male ministers suggested that "it was too much to ask of the little woman," but others said "let the little woman win her spurs." And "win her spurs" she did.[41]

Ann and Andrew caused a "bit of a flurry among other established Methodist bodies," preaching in the streets in Belleville in 1870 and 1871. Around this time, she preached the anniversary sermons on Sunday and gave an address the next Monday at Lindsay, Ontario. The sermons were easy for her, but the thought of making an "address" was terrifying. At

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39 Gordon, "Whither Thou Goest," 10, 14.

40 Gordon, "Whither Thou Goest," 15f.

41 New Outlook, 9 Sept. 1931, p.8. Bible Christian Magazine, January 1859, pp.79, 202. Annie R. Gordon, "Whither Thou Goest," n.p.

that time, it was more acceptable for women to deliver a guest sermon than to make a public speech to mixed audiences. A guest sermon was similar to the work of an evangelist and within the purview of a talented spiritual woman, but an address conveyed a more authoritarian tone. Ann was even more frightened when she discovered that she was sitting on the same platform with Chief Justice Benson of the Supreme Court of Canada. Quickly she slipped off the platform and ran to the parsonage where she gulped down the whites of two eggs - one whipped, and the other plain. She had heard that the white of an egg loosened "muscular tension," but was not quite sure how the white should be eaten. Judge Benson introduced her as "the first woman he had ever heard speak on a public platform."[42]

Like other women preachers, she managed her own housework and cared for a family in addition to her career. She brought up five children, clothing them in made-over garments which she sewed at night "so fast that her needle became heated and shone like a bar of fire." Economy had been stressed as a virtue "particularly becoming and useful in the female," and a minister's wife needed to be economical. After her husband's death, she became active in the Temperance movement and often spoke in concert with the women's rights and temperance leader, Nellie McLung, in the early twentieth century.[43]

Ann died in Winnipeg when she was ninety-seven years old. By then she was quite well-known. The local newspapers had printed a story about her almost every year on her birthday when she was in her nineties. They referred to her preaching career, noting that she had often preached at three circuit points on Sundays. The stories indicate, however, that society has a short memory about women preaching. Believing that women preachers were almost unheard of in the early days of Methodism, the writer of one of the articles explained that as one of the first women to preach, Ann attracted wide attention. Indeed, one of the writers noted, she was probably the first woman to preach in Canada. In fact, Ann was one of the last of the nineteenth-century Methodist women to preach both in

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42 Gordon, "Whither Thou Goest," n.p. Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 205: Sweet noted that it was more acceptable for women to engage in public speaking which was "topical" than preach which was "exegetical." In Ann's case, the reverse appears to be true, indicating the complexity of the resistance to women speaking and preaching.

43 Gordon, "Whither Thou Goest," n.p. Christian Guardian, 4 Dec., 1830, p.10, c.4.

Great Britain and in Canada, beginning her career in both countries in the late 1850s. Only very few women in both the Bible Christian and Primitive Methodist groups were still active in the pulpit at that time. The newspaper stories also emphasized Ann's role as a mother and homemaker, for this was where society believed women were meant to be and should be. "Outside the Church the centre of her life was in the home, which she loved and cared for, and here was where she really reigned," one biographer wrote. Another indicated only that she took "the pulpit herself when the need arose - which she did for one whole year." The idea that a woman would preach other than to fill in in an emergency had long disappeared.[44]

How many Bible Christian women preached and exhorted, led classes and prayer groups cannot be determined. Few journals and letters survive to tell their story. But those which remain describe or suggest a vast amount of activity and results equal to their male counterparts. Most of them belonged to clergy couples sharing the work load, successes and failures, and it is clear that their husbands encouraged them and took a great deal of pride in their accomplishments. In the late 1840s, some of the members of their church resisted their preaching. At the mid-point of the nineteenth century, few women were preaching regularly, and by the latter half of the century, records of their work had virtually disappeared.

In an 1884 issue of the Bible Christian Observer, a few months after the completion of the biographical series about Elizabeth Dart, Mr S. J. Allin defended women, declaring that they had shared equally with men "the honour of preaching and sending the gospel to others." What women do, he wrote, is of supreme importance, for "what woman is, we may truly say, is largely what the measure of civilization is." And in his final address to the 1884 Bible Christian Conference just prior to the last Methodist union in Canada, the President reminded the delegates of women's contribution, which by then had all but been forgotten. "Where God has endowed a woman to preach, don't let us keep her out of the pulpit," he pleaded. Yet at that time, women were not encouraged in the pulpit, and it was not until 1936 that the first woman was ordained in the

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44 Andrew Gordon Biographical File, United Church Archives.

United Church of Canada, the denominational heir of the Bible Christian denomination.[45]

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[45] Observer, 16 Jan., 15 June, 1884.

Ann Copp Gordon (1837-1931), Bible Christian preacher, and her husband Andrew. Photo courtesy United Church Archives.

Tombstone in Bethesda Cemetery, Bowmanville, commemorates Elizabeth Dart Eynon(1792-1857). Photo courtesy the author.

THE BIBLE CHRISTIAN PREACHERS' PLAN

FOR THE

COBOURG CIRCUIT.

1861.

Read 1st Thess., 3rd Chap. Faithful Ministers are much concerned about the success of their labors. When they see converts stand fast in the Lord, it gives vigor to their bodily spirits and life to their very souls. Hence their anxious prayers for their perseverence, that enduring to the end they may be presented faultless before the eternal throne, in the day of the Lord Jesus.

PLACES.	Time.	January.			February.				March.					Apr.	Preachers' Names.
		13	20	27	3	10	17	24	3	10	17	24	31	7	
Cobourg,	2½	19	S	2T	1S	1*	14	11	12	1A	24	2	13	1	1. Chapple.
"	6½	21	2	2S	1	21*	2	2	1	1	2L	S	1	1	2. Stevens.
Friday,	7½	1		2E		1		2		1		2		1	3. Henwood.
Precious Corn'r,	10½	21	13	6	1S	T1*	14	s2c	15	20	25	2	13	5	4. E. Henwood.
Monday,	7	1		2		1		2		1		2		1	5. Cullis.
Guideboard,	10½	2	1S	s1T	24	*2A	19	1	8c	2	18	1	24	2	6. Hoar.
"	6	5	1	26	14	23	25	21	2c	3	12	14	2c	18	7. Cole.
Thursday,	7		2		1E		2		1		2		1		8. Gilbard.
															9. Brown.
Zion,	10½	12	1T	26	2A	16*	1S	21	2c	3	1	14	2	1S	10. Doidge.
"	6	23	1S	15	9	2*	22	15	24c	9	16	1	12	24	11. Gidday.
Tuesday,	7		2		1E		2		1		2		1		12. M. Giles.
Port Britain,	2½	9	*1T	3	24	1S	24	14	s2c	22	17	25	21	2	13. Ward.
Monday,	7		2		1E		2		1		2		1		14. Jex.
Camborne,	2	21	2T	5	1	21	2*	2s	A1c	21	2	13	1	25	15. Giles.
"	6½	14	13	20	13	5	7*	19	11c	21	25	21	19	20	16. Williams.
Tuesday,	7	1		2		1E		2		1		2		1	17. Doney.
Port Hope,	10½	5	3	2T	12	1S	24*	14	26	1A	24	25	19	1	18. Jewell.
"	6½	2		1T	2	1L	1*	1	8	2s	1	2	21	2	19. Snelgrove.
Friday,	7½		2		1E		2		1E		2		1E		20. Kay.
															21. Roberts.
Plains,	10½	14	2T	25	s1*	5	2A	5	1c	14	2	21	1	11	PROBATIONERS.
"	6	14	7	25	20*	19	10	13	19c	14	7	13	6	11	22. Tamblin.
Wednesday,	7	1		2		1E		2		1		2		1	23. Harness.
Ainley's,	2½	2	26	1T	14	s2*	25	1c	24	2	18	1	15	24	24. Wade.
Wednesday,	7		2		1E		2		1		2		1		25 & 26 To be Supplied.
Trelawney,	2½	22	9	23	2s	15	1*	3	18	23	1c	22	2	9	

References.—L. Lovefeast, S. Sacrament, T. Renewing Tickets, C. Chapel Collections, * Quarterly Collections, E. Elders' Meeting, A. Sabbath School Services.

☞ The next Preachers' and Quarterly Meeting will be held (D.V.) at Port Hope, on Monday, February 18th. Preachers will meet at 9½, the Society and Circuit Stewards at 10½, A. M. At 3 P. M. a sermon will be preached. A large gathering of the friends from all parts of the Circuit will give great pleasure to the Pastor and others.

☞ As the Sabbath School Services have been so well attended they will be continued. Observe the reference: publish and make arrangements.

☞ Missionary Sermons will be preached at Cobourg, Port Hope, Camborne, Guideboard and Zion, on Sunday, January 20th. Public Meetings same places that week.

The 1861 Bible Christian Preachers' Plan lists Elizabeth Trick Henwood (1801-1872). Courtesy United Church Archives.

III. FROM ITINERANT TO GUEST PREACHER: CANADIAN PRIMITIVE METHODIST WOMEN

> Shall Woman Preach? Of course let her preach. She has the talent, the heroism and the perseverance for the work ... Where shall she preach? Anywhere throughout the world ... Has she the authority to preach? Yes, undoubtedly ... Shall she be ordained? Now, we come to a pause... *Christian Journal*, 23 January 1874, p.l. c.5

As in the Bible Christian Church in Canada, women played a prominent role in the early days of the Canadian Primitive Methodists. Some of them were itinerants as they had been in England, but most of them preached only part-time or as guest preachers. However, women such as the Canadian-born Jane Woodill Wilson (1824-1893) and Mary Ann Lyle (1797-1862), an emigrant from England, were among the most gifted and popular preachers in nineteenth-century Upper Canada.

"My mother had little respect for girls who sat with their toes in the fire waiting for some man to take care of them," Jane Agar Hopper, the Canadian Primitive Methodist historian, pointed out in her memoirs. Girls and boys had to share equally in chores, Jane continued, and all the members of her family were expected to take their turn leading worship at home. The situation was the same in early Primitive Methodist churches in Upper Canada. Men and women were both called upon to serve as itinerant and local preachers. The British historian, William Townsend, noted that women were used extensively not only as local and itinerant preachers in the Primitive Methodist tradition, but as missionaries as well. And Nathaniel Watkins and his wife, the first official missionaries to Upper Canada, were also the first "clergy couple" to serve the denomination in that country. Nathaniel's wife, however, had a very limited preaching role in the new country.[1]

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[1] Jane Agar Hopper, Primitive Methodism in Canada 1829-1884 (Toronto: William Briggs, 1904), 74, 255. W. J. Townsend, H.B. Workman, and George Eayrs eds, A New History of Methodism (n.p.: Hodder and Stoughton, 1909), 585.

The Canadian Primitive Methodist Society had begun after William Lawson preached in the market square at York, Upper Canada, in 1829. A gifted speaker, he had attracted a large crowd, and a small Society was formed. William had had a chequered religious career. He was brought up in the Church of England, yet as a teenager, he was attracted to the Wesleyan Methodists and began preaching for them at Brampton, England, when he was twenty years old. He was soon expelled for attending a camp meeting, and in 1822, joined with the Primitive Methodist Society, a protest Methodist movement which had begun in England eleven years earlier. On April 14, 1829, William, his wife Ann Atkinson, a bonnet maker, and their children set sail from Maryport, Cumberland, on board the brig Dykes for the Port of Quebec. Almost two months later, they arrived in York, and by September, William was leading a class of seventeen Primitive Methodist men and women in his house. Ann, a gifted singer, helped with the services by taking charge of the music, although with seven children surviving infancy and four who died, there must have been little time for other work.[2]

The new Canadian Society asked the parent body in England to send out a missionary preacher, and in August 1830, one year after the first contingent of Primitive Methodist missionaries had been sent to New York, Nathaniel Watkins and his wife arrived in Upper Canada. Nathaniel claims to have had successes in increasing the membership, doubling the size of the Society in a few months. Both he and his wife preached to congregations described by Nathaniel as "attentive." But he was not cut out for pioneer life. He quickly became discouraged by the climate and the impassible roads, and in 1831, joined his sister, Ruth Watkins, who was working as a missionary in Philadelphia and New York. William Lawson and other Primitive Methodists in York probably encouraged his departure. While they admired Nathaniel's zeal and diligence, they considered him to be so illiterate that it was "painful to sit under him."[3]

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2 Edith Firth, "William Lawson," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography 10. Hopper, Primitive Methodism, 20, 32. Perkins Bull papers, United Church Archives, n.p.

3 John Petty, The History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion From Its Origin to the Conference of 1860. The First Jubilee Year of the Connexion (London: John Dickenson, 1880), 312. Primitive Methodist Magazine, March 1831, pp.94f. Letters from Wm. Lawson et al. at York to Hugh Bourne, 1 Oct. 1830 and to Wm. Summersides, 2 Dec. 1830, United Church Archives.

Both the new Canadian and American Societies were plagued with lack of support from the English body. Rumours were rife, and charges flew back and forth across the sea. In 1835, Ruth Watkins referred to a report which was circulating in England from Canada, and which evidently made derogatory comments about some of the workers on the American mission. In Upper Canada, the itinerant William Summersides and other Primitive Methodists met on September 6, 1836, to discuss a letter they had recently received from England, accusing the Canadian Society of being "rebellious." They agreed that they still needed help from England simply to maintain their present position, but they wondered about joining with the Methodist Episcopals who had remained separate when the rest of the Canadian Methodists joined with the British Wesleyans in 1833. They decided against it, and even with their problems, the Canadian Society flourished. Like the Bible Christians, they, too, attracted disatisfied Methodist Episcopal members to their ranks after the 1833 union with the British Wesleyans.[4]

In 1833, another "clergy couple" emigrated from England, becoming of much greater assistance to the young Society than Nathaniel Watkins and his wife had been. William and Mary Ann Lyle arrived in York with their children after an extremely fatiguing journey. It had been hoped that the sea voyage would help William recuperate from an attack of cholera. They were both preachers. William had begun as a Bible Christian minister in England, afterwards teaching school before joining the Primitive Methodists. Mary Ann had attended both Wesleyan and Bible Christian services, but was converted in the Bible Christian denomination when she was twenty, through hearing a woman preacher. She preached for the Bible Christians, and married William when she was twenty-six.[5]

Mary Ann continued to preach in Canada, although her appointments were sometimes infrequent. On the "Sunday Plan" of the Canadian Brampton Mission in 1836, William was assigned thirty-two preaching spots as the number one preacher. Mary Ann was number seven, with only one service scheduled. On the 1839 preachers' plan of the Toronto mission,

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4 Letters from Ruth Watkins ca. 1835 and William Summersides ca. 1837. The John H. Rylands University Library of Manchester, England.

5 W.F. Clarke and R.L. Tucker, A Mother in Israel; or some Memorials of The Late Mrs. M.A. Lyle (Toronto: W.C. Chewett & Co., Printers, 1862), 4f.

however, Mary Ann was listed as a preacher, although one of the most junior, eighteenth out of nineteen. William was set down as an exhorter and was scheduled to speak between two and four times every Sunday between April and June, a total of thirty-two appointments. Mary Ann was limited to seven preaching engagements. In 1843, on the Brampton circuit, William was again number one on the list of preachers with a very full schedule, and Mary Ann was number twelve with only a couple of assignments. Presumably the household demands on Mary Ann's time were greater than on William, although their lifestyle was indeed simple. At the beginning of their Canadian ministry, Mary Ann, William and their three daughters and one son lived on the Etobicoke circuit in a humble shanty covered with slabs. One room contained study, kitchen, dining room, parlour and bedroom. In 1836, William received approximately $288.00 to cover his salary, house rent, expenses to maintain a horse, and an allowance for four children. By contrast, William Summersides, also with four children, was allotted $341.40 the same year. It is reported that Mary Ann and William had a combined income of only $240.00 in 1837, although records available do not note how much of this was designated for Mary Ann.[6]

The first Canadian book of Doctrines and Disciplines published in 1833 for the young church had advocated a frugal and simple lifestyle. There were general rules for the conduct and dress of all its members, and some specifically for local and itinerant preachers, both men and women. Like the other early Methodist societies, the Primitive Methodist Church demanded a plain, simple, hard-working and sober existence, and serious conversation. No man or woman was allowed to remain in the Society who attended "vain and worldly amusements," wasted their time at public houses, bought "unaccustomed [luxurious] goods" or was dishonest. Plain dress was "strongly recommended" for all members but a requirement for preachers. Male travelling preachers were instructed to wear single-breasted coats, plain waistcoats, and their hair in a "natural" form. Female travelling preachers were admonished to display "patterns of

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[6] Christian Journal, 16 May 1862, p.2, c.l; 1 Jan. 1874, p.2, c.4; 30 Jan. 1874, p.2, c.5. Preachers' Plans, United Church Archives and John Rylands University. Letter from William Summersides, ca. 1837, John Rylands University. Minutes of the 21st Annual Conference of the Primitive Methodist Church in Canada, 1874.

plainness of dress." Local preachers had to be properly certified. Itinerants were required to keep and submit regular journals. Preachers' salaries varied. A single man was to be paid from £4.4.0 a quarter, to £5.7.0 or from $67.30 to $85.60 a year, while a woman's salary was set at significantly less, £2.10.0 per quarter or $40.00 a year. It is probable that only single women were paid. In addition, both men and women on salary received room and board. A married man was to be paid twice the single man's salary, but any male itinerant whose wife carried on their business while he travelled, received less. Presumably it was felt that his financial need was not as great. However, the assumption was that women were quite capable of looking after business concerns.[7]

There is nothing to indicate how long Mary Ann Lyle remained on the preaching schedule. Later on, it appears that she was invited to speak mainly on special occasions. She preached at the opening of the chapel in the Nassigoway township on the Guelph circuit in 1846, and again at the opening of a church in Claremont, where she took the theme, perhaps appropriately, of "wood, hay and stubble." She was affectionately called "the venerable mother in Israel" and when she died in 1862 in her sixty-fifth year near Clareville on the Etobicoke circuit, the funeral procession for her is said to have extended more than a mile in length. The Christian Journal paid tribute to her, reporting that four male ministers conducted the funeral services on "this impressive occasion," but no mention is made of her preaching. In a funeral tribute, one of her sons-in-law called her a "prophetess" and noted that she had "a position of some prominence" in her church. However, the memorial for William in the Christian Journal in 1874 virtually ignored her, except for one reference to an illness in England, and to her death which left him "homeless," the implication being that a home without a wife was simply not a home.[8]

Another Primitive Methodist preaching couple, Mary Ann and William Towler, had gone to the United States from England in 1846. William was

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[7] The Doctrines and Disciplines of the British Primitive Methodist Connexion [Canada] (York: W. J. Coates, 1833), passim. Letter from Sarah Ann Beattie, Perkins Bull Papers, Ontario Archives.

[8] Primitive Methodist Magazine 1833, Journals of William Summersides; 1843, pp.302f.; 1846, pp.29, 426, Journal of M. Nichols. Christian Journal, 16 May 1862, p.2, c.l; 1 Jan. 1874, p.2, c.4; 30 Jan. 1874, p.2, c.5. W.F. Clarke and R.L. Tucker, A Mother in Israel, 4f. Hopper, Primitive Methodism, 29.

in that country as a general superintendent only a short time when he became ill, and soon died. In addition to taking care of seven children, Mary Ann looked after William's extensive correspondence and preaching when he was sick. Soon after his death, she moved to Toronto where she opened a day school in 1848 and continued to preach on special occasions. In June of that year, she was the guest speaker at the anniversary of the Yorkville Sunday Schools, and later preached at least three times at the opening of a chapel on the Hamilton mission, on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday. Each successive appearance seems to have drawn larger crowds than before, yet her audiences continued to be astonished at her "calmness and ability." In 1851, she was still sought after, and preached the anniversary sermons for the Hope Chapel Sunday School. Other Methodist groups accepted her as a speaker, for at least on one occasion she appeared on the same platform with Wesleyans and members of the New Connexion.[9]

The most popular couple preaching for the Primitive Methodists in Upper Canada at that time may have been Jane Woodill and Isaac Wilson. Isaac began exhorting and leading prayer meetings at age seventeen, and crowds gathered to hear him. When Jane was appointed to preach in her home church, it, too, was always packed, and it was even said that she was intellectually "superior" to her husband. Like the other itinerants, Jane always dressed in gray, brown or black and wore a plain bonnet without any flowers on it when she preached.[10]

Jane's father was a zealous "Ranter" as the Primitive Methodists were called, and his religious enthusiasm and disciplined life-style were ridiculed by some of his neighbours. A silly rhyme was circulated:

> Robert Woodill killed a pig
> To make the Ranters fat and big
> When they all sat down to eat
> Robert had to eat the feet;
> When the pig was eat and all
> Robert swore his share was small.

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9 Hopper, Primitive Methodism, 29. Evangelist, January 1848, p.14; July 1848, p.95; October 1848, pp.134, 138; December 1851, p.191. John A. Acornley, A History of the Primitive Methodist Church in the United States of America (Fall River, Mass: R.R. Acornley & Co., 1909), 48f.

10 Hopper, Primitive Methodism, 52f.

When Robert and his son-in-law were building a new barn, they agreed not to serve the customary alcoholic beverages at the barn-raising. The neighbourhood turned out to "watch the fun," certain that the barn would never be built. A Presbyterian minister, William Proudfoot, had raised a barn on his farm in Middlesex County in 1833, and reported that although ninety men came to the three-day "bee," about two-thirds of these came for the sole purpose of drinking whisky and never once helped to lift a log. "Many of them got drunk," he complained, "and there was such a quantity of swearing and low buffoonery that the whole thing was very painful." Yet, at the Woodill's "bee," even though Jane served only sandwiches and coffee, the barn went up before dark. As the workmen went away, they shouted, "Hurrah for the temperance barn!" Among the Primitive Methodists, Robert was highly respected. His name appears on the Etobicoke circuit as a preacher in the 1840s, and he was the local postmaster.[11]

Robert Woodill and Mary Pickering had emigrated from Yorkshire, England, to "muddy York" in 1819. Five years later, they moved north where they cleared one hundred acres of land and gradually put up farm buildings. Jane was born that year. When she was eighteen, her name first appeared on the Etobicoke Circuit Plan as a preacher. Seven years later, she married a first cousin, Isaac Wilson. Isaac had also emigrated from Yorkshire, but later than the Woodills. His family settled in the Toronto area in 1831, and five years later, they too moved north to what was by then known as Woodhill. Isaac experienced a religious conversion in his teens, and at once became an exhorter and prayer leader.[12]

Jane and Isaac led a busy life, supporting each other in their ministry. They had four daughters and one son, and often when Jane was away preaching, Isaac kept the youngest with him in his Sunday School class. In fact, Isaac held the position of Sunday School superintendent for thirty-

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11 Perkins Bull Papers, United Church Archives, n.p. Perkins Bull Papers, Ontario Archives, letter from Hannah Elizabeth Thomas. Preachers' Plans, United Church Archives. Fred Landon, "The Common Man in The Era of the Rebellion in Upper Canada," in F.H. Armstrong, H.A. Stevenson, and J.D. Wilson, Aspects of Nineteenth-Century Ontario (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), 158.

12 Perkins Bull papers, Ontario Archives, Thomas letter. Hopper, Primitive Methodism, 52. Memorial to Jane Woodill Wilson, Betty Ward Papers. Christian Guardian, 13 Jan. 1909, obituary of Isaac Wilson.

one years. The family were all active in church activities, playing the organ, singing in the choir, and the children carried the organ from their home to the church and back every Sunday. Both circuit preachers, Jane and Isaac were often separated from each other. They travelled long distances north, and Jane's Spanish spotted horse Toby achieved a certain notoriety. He was as gentle "as a kitten" when Jane rode him, but every time Isaac tried to ride, he would run away. Jane thought nothing of riding thirty miles and preaching two or three times on Sunday. Their home was a haven for other clergy and Jane became known as "Mother Wilson". She cared for the sick and the poor, and had a reputation as a good and fearless nurse. When a local Wesleyan family fell ill with scarlet fever, Jane was the only person who would help. She changed her clothes in the woodshed after each visit to prevent the spread of germs. Not long afterwards, in 1876, because of its financial plight, the local Wesleyan church asked to join with the Primitives, and Jane's care of that family is said to have been partially responsible for that unusual union.[13]

Although Jane and Isaac travelled, much of their ministry was at the Salem Church north of Tullamore. They began the first class in the kitchen of their home and such large religious revivals took place there that, in 1848, a log church was built on their farm. By 1862, this had been replaced by a small but substantial brick building, with all the materials and much of the labour donated by the members. The stone for the church had come from the Wilson's property.[14]

As with the Bible Christian movement around the Cobourg-Peterborough area, this was the zenith of Primitive Methodist activity around Toronto, and good preachers were in demand. New chapels which were being built were rapidly paying off their debts. Both Jane and Isaac had numerous appointments. In 1854, Jane preached the opening sermons at the Bolton church, and nineteen years later, was asked to lay the cornerstone for a more modern church there. There were love feasts,

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[13] Hopper, Primitive Methodism, 100. Perkins Bull Papers, Ontario Archives, letters from Beattie, Thomas, and Mary J. Rodwell. Their children were Mary Jane Rodwell, Hannah Elizabeth Thomas, Ellen Woodill Killam, Sarah Ann Beattie and William Thomas Wilson. William later became a preacher.

[14] Perkins Bull Papers, United Church Archives. Perkins Bull Papers, Ontario Archives, Beattie, Rodwell and Thomas letters. Beth Early, Criteria For Preservation, Salem United Church (n.p.: Caledon Heritage Committee, 1985),1f.

church openings, prayer meetings, field meetings, ticket meetings, services inside and outside. In the 1850s, as well, camp meetings were still popular. Jane Agar Hopper described one held in the Township of Blenheim in June, 1853, from Wednesday until the next Monday when the meeting broke up early because of wet weather. Families lived in tents in the bush "like a little worshipping village," she noted. At six in the morning, the first bell was rung to prepare for breakfast. At eight it rang for family prayer in the tents. At ten, two and seven, the people were called to public worship at a large square in the centre of the tent-village. At ten at night, everyone retired, but some could be heard praying and singing throughout the night. Just before they broke up the camp, the participants marched around the camp-ground singing, "Now here's my heart and here's my hand, To meet you in the heavenly land..."[15]

Unlike the Lyles, Jane and Isaac appear to have been reasonably comfortable and financially secure. When the congregation at Salem wanted an organ, it was Isaac who went to Toronto to buy it and kept it in their home. They added land to their farm in 1868. And when the neighbouring Wesleyan church was in disrepair, Isaac offered that congregation $500.00 of his own money to repair it. The donation had to be refused because no other funds could be raised. In later memoirs, their children mention that they always had a maid as Jane was often away. The Woodill's were "well-connected." One of Jane's relatives was "Squire" Woodill, and among the guests invited to his home for salmon fishing in the summer and hunting in the winter were the parliamentarian D'Arcy McGee and the journalist George Brown.[16]

Even though Jane's preaching appointments were apparently limited in her later years, she was remembered as a preacher. A plaque in the brick church built on their farm reads:

> Sacred to the memory of a
> Beloved mother

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15 Hopper, Primitive Methodism, pp.53, 122f., 177. Perkins Bull Papers, United Church Archives, n.p.

16 Perkins Bull Papers, United Church Archives, n.p; Beattie and Thomas letters, Ontario Archives. George S. Tavender, From This Year Hence - A History of the Township of Toronto Gore, 1818-1967 (Brampton: Charters Pub Co., 1967), 94f.

Jane Wilson
Who was for 40 years teacher
preacher and class leader
in this church
Born in little York now Toronto
Feb 20 1824
Fell asleep in Jesus July 17 1893
She was truly a Mother in Israel
Being full of the Holy Ghost
And of faith.[17]

There were a number of women in the Primitive Methodist tradition who preached in Canada, although it is difficult to determine their names from the Preachers' Plans available as generally the initials of the preachers were listed instead of first names. Thomas Adams' journals in the 1844 Primitive Methodist Magazine mention that his wife began a "female class" in the Niagara district were he was stationed, and Sister Murray was helping "push the work forward." Ruth Woodger (1818-1889) preached at Woodstock in 1851 where she was well accepted until she joined with the Bible Christians. Jane Agar Hopper gives a number of illustrations of women as money collectors, prayer leaders and exhorters. Mrs Markham exhorted in the 1840s; Mrs C. Orny and her daughter, Mrs Harper, led in prayer at revivals; and Hannah Ward and Mrs Jacob Camplin both led in prayer. Mrs Stephenson, Jane wrote cryptically, "had great help in her husband." Unfortunately, there is no indication of what she did except that she "brought much of the early Primitive Methodist fire across the ocean." She does tell us how her husband helped her: "he could arouse a prayer-meeting or class-meeting wonderfully." Even in 1881, Ann Swales and Jane Fletcher were listed on the Pickering Circuit as preachers, numbers five and sixteen respectively, out of fifty-one preachers. However, an examination of the plan available from April to July of that year shows that no preaching appointments had been scheduled for either woman.[18]

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17 Perkins Bull Papers, Ontario Archives.

18 Primitive Methodist Magazine, 1844, pp.255, 298. Christian Guardian, 24 Apr. 1889, obituary of R. Woodger. Hopper, Primitive Methodism, 102, 210, 217f. Preachers' Plans, United Church Archives.

It is quite clear that women were taking an active role in the Primitive Methodist denomination for a few decades after it was transplanted to Upper Canada. Yet as in the Bible Christian groups, a shift is noticeable in the kind and quantity of women's activity which parallels a change in the structures and customs in the denomination itself. Jane Agar Hopper points out that in the 1850s, the term "Rev." was very rarely used, but it became commonplace in the next decade. Camp meetings were popular in the 1850s, but by the 1860s, more energy was being put into a new newspaper and a Book Room, and in the Minutes of the 1863 Conference, for the first time, the delegates were listed separately as lay and ministerial. Local preachers were still used, but they were accredited only after writing out their doctrinal position. A theological institute began, and the ritual of laying on of hands for ordination was being considered. Jane Hopper writes that by 1860, the earlier simplicity of the Society was lost. However, even as early as the late 1840s, women were becoming restricted in their church activity. In a report of a meeting in an 1848 issue of the Primitive Methodist Evangelist, the writer noted the "superb style" in which the "ladies" managed a tea after the speeches. In an 1851 issue of the same newspaper, a "young, lovely and sensible mother" explained to the writer of a report on Missionary Societies that "I am a missionary in my nursery." A more Victorian role model was being held up to women. On the 1856-7 winter Toronto City Circuit Plan, only one class out of twelve was led by a woman, Sister Kent.[19]

In the 1860 "Ladies Department" of the Primitive Methodist Christian Journal, women were advised to "read newspapers" so they would "have something to talk about." An exegesis of a well-known Biblical passage about women's relationship to men, I Corinthians 11:10, described the position of women as one of "curiously subordinated equality." What women could and could not do was being hotly debated, and in September of the same year, a defense of women entering the medical profession appeared in the paper on the strength of a report that a Mrs Winslow, a "nurse and physician" for thirty years, had compounded a soothing syrup

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19 Hopper, Primitive Methodism, 122f., 163, 250. Perkins Bull Papers, United Church Archives, n.p. Evangelist, Sept. 1848, p.122; Jan.1851, p.15. Preachers' Plans, United Church Archives.

for teething children. The 'logic' behind this argument was the importance of the discovery. It was believed that many children died each year during the process of teething, or at least became "debilitated" or "diseased." It was common to print sermons for women in newspapers, and the next year, a front page "Sermon To Young Women" by a Primitive Methodist minister in Philadelphia set out the responsibility of women to society: "domestic economy" and the "economy of grace." The future of the nation, he wrote, depended on the spiritual piety of women. The Canadian Primitive Methodist newspapers echoed the conservative Canadian attitude towards women and their station in life. Women were expected to function in their proper sphere, that of housewife, mother, and spiritual guardian of the home. Gone apparently was the early concept of equality in the home and in the church which Jane Agar Hopper described.[20]

Some of the male preachers found it difficult to accept women in a preaching role, believing that femininity and preaching were not compatible. As James Garfield, later president of the United States, responded in the 1850s to Antoinette Brown, the first woman ordained in the United States:

> There is something about a woman's speaking in public that unsexes her in my mind, and how much soever I might admire her talent, yet I could never think of the female speaker as the gentle sister, the tender wife or the loving mother.[21]

At Mary Ann Lyle's funeral in 1862, her son-in-law, R. L. Tucker, also a Primitive Methodist preacher, expressed a concern that "*female preachers*" often lacked "*meekness, charity* and *domestic* qualities." This was not the case, he pointed out, with his mother-in-law. Even though she "occasionally expounded the Word, and exhorted sinners to flee from the wrath to come," he noted, she was never "dictatorial and assuming" but always "modest and diffident." Tucker continued that it could be useful for a woman to be "public" occasionally as long as she could also "blend" this

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20 Christian Journal, 14 July 1860, Ladies' Dept; 18 Aug. 1860, Ladies' Dept; 8 Sept. 1860, p.3; 6 Apr.1861, p.1.

21 Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 140.

with a domestic life and a "meek and quiet spirit" and be a pattern of an exemplary wife and mother. His mother-in-law, he explained, was so correctly "diffident" that she was "unwilling to address the public while ministers were present" and "for many years she refused to preach in the presence of her own husband." If indeed this were true, it could explain why her preaching appointments in Canada were so limited. Another son-in-law and preacher, William Clarke, confirmed that Mary Ann was "modest and retiring," and although she "*frequently* addressed public assemblies ... she looked upon this as a sort of exception to God's usual way of working, and only felt justified in it when there was apparent need for her help," he added. "Only a sense of duty," he reported, "could have overcome her natural diffidence and nerved her for this work."[22]

A controversy over whether or not women should be allowed to preach appeared in the pages of the Christian Journal the next decade. A talk given by the American, Luther Lee, was reprinted in 1873 under the heading "Woman's Right to Preach the Gospel." Luther, a Wesleyan Methodist minister who had preached the sermon for the first woman to be ordained in the United States, argued in the affirmative, pointing out that the scriptures did not forbid women to preach. Indeed, he stated, the scriptures gave sufficient proof to allow it, and he noted that women possessed all the qualifications necessary for the ministry the same as men. A few months later, a "lady contributor" raised the same issue, arguing that without question women should be allowed to preach anywhere throughout the world. They have the "talent, the heroism and the perseverance," the writer pointed out. It was not even necessary for women to be licensed, she went on, for they had been commissioned and given the authority to preach eighteen centuries earlier. In a strangely illogical manner, however, the author continued that women should never be ordained, for the Bible was "explicit and unequivocal" in its refusal to ordain women. Had Jesus intended to begin a "female ministry" the writer stated, one of the Marys mentioned in the New Testament would have been given a place among the twelve disciples.[23]

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22 W.F. Clarke and R.L. Tucker, A Mother in Israel, 6f., 14f.

23 Christian Journal, 26 Dec. 1873, p.1, c.3; 23 Jan. 1874, p.1, c.5.

In his 1880 History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, J. Petty presented the history of the denomination without mentioning the contribution of any of the women preachers or itinerants. Eight years later, H. B. Kendall's history was almost as exclusive, although he did refer to Sarah Kirkland, the best-known of the English itinerants, and "Miss Watkins." Even Jane Agar Hopper, whose study of Canadian Primitive Methodism recovered a number of the women, confused Ruth Watkins and her brother Nathaniel. Jane wrote that the English Conference had replied to William Lawson's request for a missionary for Upper Canada by sending "Rev. R. Watkins, who was then in New York," and on the same page referred to this person as "Mr. Watkins." Ruth Watkins had been in New York as one of the first missionaries sent to America, but it was her brother Nathaniel and his wife who had come to Canada from England the next year. Like the Bible Christians in Canada, the Primitive Methodist Society became permeated with Upper Canadian conservatism in the latter half of the nineteenth century, and the records of the Primitive Methodist women's extensive and successful labours were all but lost.[24]

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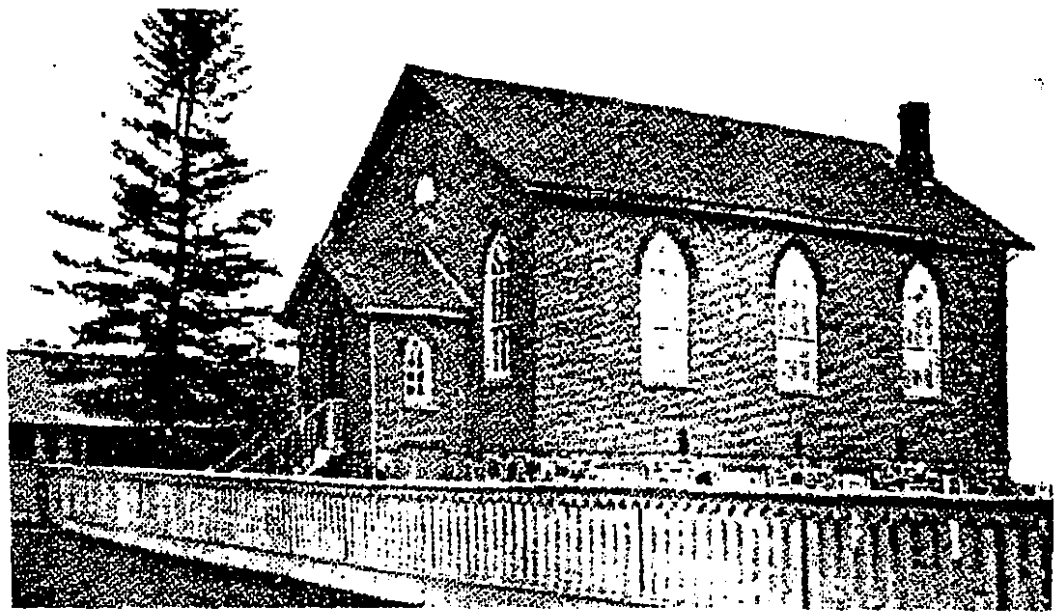
24 H. B. Kendall, History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion (London: Joseph Toulson, [ca 1888]), passim. Petty, The History of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, passim. Hopper, Primitive Methodism, passim, esp. 22.

Jane Woodill Wilson (1824-1893), Canadian Primitive Methodist preacher.
Photo courtesy Betty Ward.



Salem United Church, where Jane Woodill Wilson preached, began as a Primitive Methodist Church in 1861. Photo courtesy Betty Ward.

SUNDAY PLAN of the BRAMPTON MISSION.—Upper Canada.—1836.

Beware of False Prophets.—MATT. vii. 15.

PLACES OF PREACHING.	HOURS.	OCTOBER. 2	9	16	23	30	NOVEMBER. 6	13	20	27	DECEMBER. 4	11	19	25	PREACHERS.
Willington's	10	—	A	—	BC	—	A	—	C	—	A	.	J	—	A. W. Lyle
Smith's	2	—	AS	—	C	—	AT	—	F	—	A	.	D	—	B. D. Berry,
Churchville	6	—	A	—	—	—	A	—	—	.	A	.	.	—	C. M. Smith
Hemphill's	10½	A	.	F	—	AS	—	BT	—	A	—	B	.	A	D. W. Lawson
Springfield	3	A	.	1	.	A	—	B	—	AC	—	B	.	A	E. W. Smith
Streetsville	6	A	.	1C	—	A	—	B	—	A	—	D	.	A	F. T. Turley
Whitsall's	10	—	D	—	1C	—	E	.	B	—	H	.	E	—	G. M.A. Lyle
Paisley's	2	—	D	—	1T	—	E	.	BC	—	E	.	B	—	H. M. Watson
Churchville															
Clarage's	2	F	.	E	—	F	—	DC	—	J	.	F	.	G	
Woodhill's	10	C	.	2	—	D	—	AC	—	C	.	A	.	D	REFERENCES.
Rains,	2	C	.	2	—	D	—	AC	—	C	.	A	.	D	
Albion	6	—	.	2	—	—	—	A	—	—	.	A	.	—	C. Collection.
Nichols's	10	B	.	J	—	B	—	C	—	BC	.	D	.	B	S. Sacrament.
Heglar's	2	B	.	—	—	B	—	—	—	BC	.	.	A	B	T. Tickets.
Tecumseth,	10	—	.	—	2	—	B	—	AC	—	B	.	A	—	
Loyd Town	6	—	FS	—	2	—	FT	—	A	—	B	.	A	—	

A Day's Meeting will be held at Streetsville, Oct. 16th, No: 1 D F G. Quarterly meeting at Loyd Town Oct. 9th. At Hemphill's Oct. 30th. And the preparatory Quarter-day at Lawson's Nov. 24.

Mary Ann Lyle (1797-1862), Primitive Methodist preacher, is listed on the 1836 preachers' plan. Courtesy United Church Archives

IV. WOMEN SETTLE DOWN: THE CANADIAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

> The *good wife* is one, who, ever mindful of the solemn contract which she hath entered into, is strictly and conscientiously virtuous, constant and faithful to her husband; chaste, pure, and unblemished in every thought, word and deed; she is humble and modest from reason and conviction, submissive from choice and obedient from inclination; ... she makes it her business to serve and her pleasure to oblige her husband ...
> The *good husband* ... attributes [his wife's] follies to her weakness; her imprudence to her inadvertency; he passes them over therefore with good nature and pardons them with indulgence ...
> *Christian Guardian*, 28 November 1829, p.13

It is ironical that the Canadian Primitive Methodist and Bible Christian movements which allowed women preachers, at least for a few decades, were spawned in British conservative society, while the Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church, which appears to have offered little encouragement to women as leaders, came into Canada from the more liberal atmosphere of the United States.

There is, however, some evidence of women preaching in the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, especially in the early years. Other women, while not actively preaching, held leadership positions, and indeed may have been more active than the available information describes. Records indicate that a few male pastors were sympathetic to women preaching. One intriguing conversation between an American Quaker minister and a Methodist in 1819 suggests that there were Methodist Episcopal men who were trying to persuade women to preach. After a visit to a Methodist meeting house close to Yonge Street in York, the Pennsylvania preacher, Edward Hicks, wrote in his memoirs:

> I was led to speak of the rights of women - that they were one in Christ with men, and entitled to equal privileges, and that I had heard the Gospel

> preached by them in greater sweetness and power than I had ever heard from the lips of men. There was a precious silence covered the meeting, which seemed only interrupted by the suppressed weeping of some of the women. After the meeting ended, our kind Methodist friend took me by the hand and said in substance, "Dear brother, you ought to preach that sermon a dozen times over. Why we have been contending with our women about their right to preach."[1]

In 1810, not long before this conversation took place, the American-born Ellen Bangs Gatchell (d.1857) was exhorting in the Niagara region "like a streak of red-hot lightning." Her speaking gifts evidently surpassed those of her husband, Joseph Gatchell, and this is said to have pleased the members of their congregation. It is likely that he, too, found Ellen's abilities attractive when he was first posted as a Methodist itinerant to the Niagara circuit that year. Joseph had been brought up as a Quaker, a denomination which had encouraged women leaders from its beginning in England in the seventeenth century. He was more radical than many of his co-workers, "impassioned" and "excitable," and later was the only itinerant to vote against the 1833 union of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada with the more conservative British Wesleyan stream. For this, he suffered severe censure. The 1835 Conference Minutes reported that he had withdrawn "under very dishonorable circumstances" and was dropped from their records "without further notice." Ellen's brother, Nathan Bangs, also supported women speaking in public. Nathan had married Mary Bolton who chafed at the restrictions put upon women in the New Testament Pauline writings. And he was a life-long friend of the American evangelist and

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1 A.G. Dorland, The Quakers in Canada: A History, 2nd ed. (Toronto: Ryerson Press, 1968), 130f. Quaker women participated extensively in their denomination in Upper Canada. Quaker women were speaking in Upper Canada in the 1830s, and in 1837, a Quaker woman preached the funeral sermon for Joshua Doan, executed after the 1837 rebellion: 166f., 227, 278. In 1821 and 1822, two women and two men from England and United States led forty-five services and travelled twenty-two hundred miles in the province: Phoebe Roberts, "Phoebe Roberts' Diary of a Quaker Missionary Journey to Upper Canada" ed. Leslie R. Gray, Ontario Historical Society 42 (January 1950): passim. A Quaker woman debated with the Methodist itinerant Alvin Torrey: Alvin Torrey, Autobiography of Alvin Torrey, ed. Wm Hosmer (Auburn: Wm J. Moses, 1865), 40f.

preacher Phoebe Worrall Palmer. Nathan and Phoebe had attended the same catechetical class as children, and later he had acted as an unofficial president at the crowded weekly theological discussions in Phoebe's house. "Why should any one oppose another, even though a female," Nathan exclaimed in his journal. "I cannot but rejoice in whatever instrumentality God shall use for the salvation of souls," he wrote.[2]

Ann Dulmage Coate McLean's (b.ca.1777) story has some similarity. She, too, emigrated to Canada from the United States and her first marriage was to Samuel Coate, also a Methodist itinerant with a Quaker upbringing. Ann and Samuel were a stunning couple, the most "handsome pair" in Canada, reported to have superior intelligence and outstanding talents. The historian George Playter has compared Ann to Abigail, an Old Testament woman described as being "of good understanding and beautiful," and likened Samuel to the Biblical Absalom, who also was admired for his beauty and especially, his long flowing hair. An extremely popular preacher, Samuel won converts by the hundreds in Canada until ill health forced him to leave the itineracy. He eventually became debt-ridden and died in England, leaving Ann and one daughter in Canada. We do not know precisely what role Ann had in Canadian Methodism, but when they were first married before she had children, she accompanied Samuel to his appointments, and in 1804, travelled with him to the Baltimore Conference. She also held meetings for women in her house. It was not uncommon in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in the United States for Methodist women to travel on circuits with their itinerant husbands and help in the services. Because of his debts and desertion of his family, Samuel, like Joseph Gatchell, became an embarrassment to Canadian Methodists. Some historians later ignored the

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2 John Carroll, Case and His Cotemporaries or The Canadian Itinerants Memorial Vol. 1, (Toronto: Samuel Rose, 1867), 223f. Nathan Bangs Biographical File, United Church Archives. Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada Minutes, 1863. Abel Stevens, Life and Times of Nathan Bangs (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1863), 351. Sanderson, The First Century, Vol. 1, 200. C.B. Sissons, Egerton Ryerson - His Life and Letters, Vol. 1 (Toronto: Clarke and Irwin and Co. Ltd, 1937), 47f.: The British Wesleyans under Henry Pope were particularly interfering and aggressive in the Niagara region, attracting Methodist Episcopal members to their denomination, and Gatchell may well have harboured resentment.

preaching successes he had had as a Methodist itinerant in Canada earlier in his life, while others referred to him as a "charlatan."[3]

Margaret Bowes Taylor (1806-1859) is remembered better than either Ellen Bangs or Ann Dulmage, but the details of her work are just as elusive. Born in Ireland in 1806, she came to Canada with her brother when she was eighteen, eventually marrying the Toronto merchant, Samuel E. Taylor. Her brother, John George Bowes, served a number of terms as Toronto's mayor. Margaret was repelled by the noise of camp-meetings, but at the same time was drawn to them, and at a camp-meeting in 1825 on the Yonge Street Circuit underwent an intense religious experience. This was the beginning of a deep commitment to Methodist activities, resulting in her involvement with the evangelist Phoebe Worrall Palmer and her husband Walter at camp-meetings in Ontario in the 1850s. Presumably, Margaret participated in the services with them, for she is described as "!abouring" with the Palmers. With at least one Methodist itinerant, she entered taverns and basement rooms to pray with the "denizens" of one of the "dirtiest" streets in Toronto, and led as many as four Methodist classes at one time. She had a "remarkable gift of prayer," and when the Methodist Indian missionary Peter Jones was ill in 1856, it was noted that she prayed "most fervently" for his recovery. On her death in 1859, the Christian Guardian compared her spirituality to that of two renowned British Wesleyan women, Hester Ann Roe Rogers and Mary Bosanquet Fletcher. The men and women in her funeral cortège sang hymns all the way from her home to the church where the service was held. Margaret had requested that there be no mourning at her funeral.[4]

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3 References to Abigail and Absalom are found in 1 Samuel 25:3, 2 Samuel 14:25. George F. Playter, The History of Methodism in Canada (Toronto: Anson Green, 1862), 55f., 100f. Carroll, Case and His Cotemporaries, Vol. 1, 19f, 174ff. Sanderson, The First Century, Vol. 1, 59f. Thomas, Ryerson, 26. Methodist Magazine 1811, p.475, letter from Samuel 11 Dec. 1810. Christian Guardian, 25 Aug. 1858, letter from Ann; 25 May 1859, p.81, c.7. Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 117ff.

4 Christian Guardian, 13 April 1859, p.1, memorial to Margaret Taylor. W.G. Ormsby, "John George Bowes" in Dictionary of Canadian Biography 9. W. H. Pearson, Recollections and Records of Toronto of Old (Toronto: Wm Briggs, 1914), 288. Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, Vol. 2, 5.

However, the best documented woman preaching in Canada in the Methodist Episcopal tradition was Eliza Barnes (1796-1887), a dynamic and energetic Indian missionary teacher who came from the New England States in the 1820s and later married William Case, Superintendent of Indian Missions. The historian John Carroll wrote that she preached in a number of places after her arrival in Canada, and was responsible for at least one revival. Carroll places her in the tradition not only of the fairly restrained English Wesleyan preacher Mary Bosanquet Fletcher, but also of the popular and rebellious Irish preacher Alice Cambridge and the equally iconoclastic English preacher Mary Barritt Taft. In fact, both Alice and Mary Barritt were still preaching when Eliza began taking part in Canadian revivals.[5]

Eliza was born in Boston, Massachusetts, November 11, 1796. Most historians record her arrival at the Canadian Indian missions in May, 1828, when William Case returned from a fund-raising tour to the United States. But Eliza had been working at the missions at least a year earlier. In July, 1827, the Christian Advocate reported that she was at Grape Island superintending the women in "knitting, sewing, and manufacturing straw hats." In October of that year, she visited the mission from an unknown place and she spoke in Albany, New York, sometime before April 17, 1828, about her mission work. The newspaper noted that she had been "proclaiming the glad tidings of salvation" at Grape Island among the Indians the previous year. And the 1827 Missionary Society Report notes that a salary of £14.0.0 had been paid to a "female teacher" who had been working for six months at the Credit Mission that year.[6]

In her first years as a missionary, Eliza travelled from mission to mission, supervising Indian women, organizing benevolent societies, teaching children and adults. She made at least one trip annually to the

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5 Carroll, Case and His Cotemporaries, Vol. 3, 169.

6 Christian Guardian, 11 May 1887, p.299, c.3, obituary. Christian Advocate, 24 Aug. 1827, p.201, c.4, report from W. Case; 4 Jan. 1828, p.70, c.2, report from W. Case; 9 May 1828, p.141, c.2, report from J. Davis. Information from the United Methodist Church Archives Biographical Files indicates that Rev. Dan Barnes (1784-1840), who may have been a relative of Eliza Barnes, was working with the Oneida Indians in New York State sometime between 1810 and 1835. A Rev. Barnes contributed to one of her fund-raising campaigns: Christian Advocate, 14 Sept. 1832, p.12, c.5.

United States to raise funds and make reports. The year 1829 is typical of her constant activity. In February, she travelled north with male missionaries on an exploratory trip to Holland Landing to discuss establishing a mission on Snake Island in Lake Simcoe. In March, she set out on a two-and-a-half month tour of the New England States to raise funds and arrange for translation. By the middle of May, she was at the Rice Lake Mission, and two months later, began a mission tour of Lake Simcoe and Lake Huron. In September she was working at the Grape Island Mission. In October she was at York collecting supplies for the Credit River Mission, and in December she organized a benevolent society for the Indian women at that mission.[7]

Eliza was a successful fund-raiser. In July, 1830, she arrived back from the United States "richly laden." She had been to New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Boston, and had collected $1300.00 as well as donations of clothing and furniture. In March of the next year, she collected money for a mission house on the Grand River. She organized women's Dorcas Societies to raise money to spread religion among the native Indians. Dorcas Societies, named after the New Testament woman Dorcas who was "full of good works and acts of charity," were common in the United States. Eliza obtained the materials the Indian women in these societies needed to make moccasins, gloves, straw hats and brooms, and when the products were finished, she took them to city bazaars. She was a much-admired well-known tireless worker, and in 1832 an anonymous donor gave $20.00 to "constitute Miss Barnes, the lady who is living among the Indians, teaching their little ones to read the good book", a life member of the Missionary Society. In fact, in James Youngs' 1830 History of the Rise and Progress of Methodism in England and America, "Miss Barns" [sic] is one of the few Canadian missionaries mentioned by name.[8]

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[7] Carroll, Case and His Cotemporaries, Vol. 3, 219, 279. Sanderson, The First Century, Vol. 1, 219. Peter Jones, Life and Journals of Kah-Ke-Wa-Quo-Na-By (Toronto: Anson Green, 1860), 205, 216, 263. Christian Advocate, 6 Mar. 1829, p.106, c.2, report from W. Case; 15 May 1829, p.145, c.5. Christian Guardian, 12 Dec. 1829, p.27, c.3.

[8] Jones, Life and Journals, 278f. Carroll, Case and His Cotemporaries, Vol. 3, 286. Christian Guardian, 28 May 1831, p.114. Christian Advocate, 10 Feb. 1832, p.95, c.3,4. James Youngs, History of the Rise and Progress of Methodism in England and America (New Haven,Conn.: H. Daggett and Co., 1830), 417. In addition to Rev.

Of all Eliza's skills and accomplishments, historians were most impressed by her preaching ability. At one time she created a "sensation" preaching in York. There had been a number of revivals at the Missions from their beginning in 1823 until 1827, and it was possible that Eliza was a part of this activity. Upper New York State, familiar territory for Eliza, was ablaze with religious revivals as part of the Second Great Awakening, and women were taking a leading role. Peter Jones' journals refer to a number of occasions when Eliza "addressed," "preached," or "exhorted" on the Indian missions in Canada in 1828 and 1829, and on her American tours in 1829 and 1830. When Eliza and her friend Hetty Hubbard (ca.1796-1829) arrived together at the Grape Island mission in May, 1828, both of them spoke, Eliza at a prayer meeting the first evening and Hetty the next day. Eliza's speech was described as "much to the feelings of the assembly," and it is said that she spoke very "fluently." At a camp-meeting in Haldimand in June, she gave a theological "discourse" which covered a wide range of Christian thought - the "incarnation, death, resurrection and ascension of our Lord and Saviour." Again her hearers reported that she spoke fluently, with a strong voice, and "very figuratively." She was responsible for a great religious revival, such as was not seen again in the area for thirty years, and it may have been this sermon which precipitated it. She undertook a number of speaking engagements in 1829, and caused a mild "Pentecost" at Yellowhead's Island in Lake Simcoe. The Indian missionary Peter Jones wrote of that occasion that it seemed as if "the very gates of heaven were opened to our souls, and the spirit of God descending upon our hearts." Jones saw a footpath appear "like a blaze of fire" and the whole camp, he wrote, "manifested the presence of God." One evening, in February, she preached to a large gathering of Indians at Holland Landing "with her usual eloquence," and also exhorted. Later that month, she "addressed" the "whites" in the Mission House at a meeting on Grape Island, although it is recorded that at the same time Peter Jones "preached" to the Indians in the chapel. And in May, she spoke in the John Street Church in New York City to the Dorcas Missionary Society about her "trials and sufferings" on the Indian missions.

Barnes, Dr. Hubbard of Lowell, Mass. contributed to Eliza's fund-raising campaigns. He may have been a relative of Hetty Ann Hubbard: Christian Advocate, 14 Sept. 1832, p.12, c.5. Dorcas is mentioned in Acts 9:36.

The next year, she spoke twice in that same church with "simplicity and artlessness" and so "fervently" that many of the congregation were reduced to tears.[9]

John Carroll wrote that Eliza was "tolerated" as a preacher. But the Methodist educationist and temperance worker, Letitia Youmans Creighton, reported that Eliza had been a successful preacher in the United States, and when she came to Canada she was greatly sought after for camp-meetings and services in private homes. Letitia recorded the reminiscences of one woman whose doorway became the "pulpit" for one of Eliza's sermons. The inside of the house was filled with women; the men stood in the large yard in front of the house. The text Eliza took was from Ezekiel's "vision of the waters," the woman recalled.

> "When the preacher [Eliza] spoke of the spread of the Gospel, and quoted in raptured accents, *the waters were still rising*," said the old lady, "I fancied I could still see the waters of life flowing in until the earth was filled with the *glory of God*."[10]

Letitia pointed out that in spite of Eliza's popularity, a number of the male preachers objected to her speaking "in the Church," especially William Case who at first refused to sit on the platform with her. There are no references to Eliza preaching after 1829 in Canada, and only two speaking engagements recorded for her later in the States, both in 1830. John Carroll wrote that she "settled down" soon after she came to Canada. In 1833, Eliza married the widowed William Case at the home of a friend in Belleville. She referred to her wedding very briefly in her diary, and somewhat perfunctorily:

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9 Carroll, Case and His Cotemporaries, Vol. 3, 177, 184, 220, 227. Playter, The History, 342. Jones, Life and Journals, 139f., 157, 162, 216. Elizabeth Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse: Methodist Episcopal Missionary Women in Upper Canada, 1827-1833," chap. in Canadian Protestant and Catholic Missions, 1820s-1960s, eds John S. Moir and C. T. McIntyre (New York: Peter Lang Pub. Inc., 1988), 25. John Webster Grant, Moon of Wintertime (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 75f.

10 Letitia Youmans Creighton, Campaign Echoes (Toronto: Wm Briggs, 1893), 64.

> [August] 13th. Tuesday I went in company with Mr Case to Belleville, where I stopped until the 28th. There we were married.

Her entry a week earlier had noted that "her trials were neither few nor small," but what her trials were can only be speculated. A gifted preacher, Eliza stopped preaching abruptly and "settled down." Unlike the Bible Christian, Elizabeth Dart Eynon, whose preaching activity continued after marriage, Eliza Barnes was thrust into a "companion" stereotype of minister's wife in the more conservative Methodist stream. Eliza's first and only child, Caroline Hetty, was born the next year and named after her friend Hetty Hubbard, Case's first wife; but Caroline died almost eleven months later. Eliza continued teaching household and "domestic duties" at the missions where they lived. After William's death in 1855, she lived for five more years in their house in Belleville until she could no longer maintain the mortgage payments. She died April 16, 1887, at the age of ninety-one.[11]

Eliza was not the only female Indian missionary who spoke in public. Susannah Farley Waldron (1802-1890) and Hetty Ann Hubbard were both considered to be extremely gifted, with "rare gifts in speaking and prayer." Like Eliza, Susannah was from the New England States and had been teaching at Grape Island even before 1828 when official records note the beginning of female teachers. Perhaps she, too, had imbibed New England revivalism, and like many of the American women had been encouraged to preach in the United States. Hetty Ann was from Springfield, Massachusetts, about seventy miles from Eliza's birthplace, and had been baptized at age twenty into the Congregational Church. She, too, was a competent speaker, but a more retiring and less public figure than Eliza, and most of her work appears to have been confined to teaching home economics and singing at the Grape Island Mission School. In his diary, Peter Jones refers to her speaking only once, when she arrived at the Indian missions in May, 1828, with William Case and Eliza. Possibly

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[11] Creighton, Campaign Echoes 65. Carroll, Case and His Cotemporaries, Vol. 3, 169, 227f.; Vol. 4, 268. Sanderson, The First Century, Vol. 2, 86. Christian Guardian, 15 Oct. 1834, p.195, c.5; 9 Sept. 1835, p.175, c.3; 11 May 1887, p.299, c.3, obituary.

William's aversion to women speaking in public had some influence on her. A year after she arrived at the Grape Island Mission, she married him in New York City. Eliza was part of the small bridal party as her only bridesmaid. The next year, Hetty had one daughter, and she never regained her strength. She died only two-and-a-half years after her marriage, about thirty-five years old.[12]

Eliza, Hetty and Susannah are only three of some twenty-five women mentioned in early record books, newspaper and journal accounts who held leadership positions on at least six of the Methodist Episcopal Indian missions in Upper Canada from 1827 to the early 1830s. How many of them preached we do not know, but they led worship, initiated and supervised women's groups and taught school at the River Credit, nineteen miles west of York; at Grape Island in the Bay of Quinte, six miles from Belleville; at Rice Lake, twelve miles north of Cobourg; at the Lake Simcoe Mission at the "Narrows" to-day known as Orillia; on the south side of Lake Huron at the Sah-geeng; and at the Muncey Mission on the River Thames. Many of them are recorded without first names; most have left few details of their activities: Sally Ash (Mrs Sabine Frazer); Miss Bayles; Mrs John B. Benham; Nancy Brink; Sophia Cook (1798-1849); Margaret Dulmage (1803-1873) (Mrs Sylvester Hurlburt); Phoebe [Phebe] Edmonds [Edwards]; Miss Farley, a sister of Susannah Farley Waldron; Miss French; Miss Huntingdon; Miss Kunze; Sarah Lancaster; Mercy Miner Manwaring (1809-1891) (Mrs Andrew Moffatt); Mrs McMullen; Miss Pinny; Miss E[mma or Elizabeth] Rolph; Sarah Rolph (1797-1829) (Mrs George Ryerson); Miss Sealy; Eliza Sellicks [Sillick, Scelec]; Miss Stockton; Miss Verplanck; and Miss S. Yeomans. Undoubtedly other women were actively involved whose names are lost, perhaps forever.[13]

That Eliza was considered different from the other women is evident from the fact that her exploits were recorded in greater detail. The Missionary Society recorded her salary under the special heading "Miss

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12 Playter, The History, 342. Christian Advocate, 15 May 1829, p.145, c.2; 24 Oct. 1828, p.30, c.1. Carroll, Case and His Cotemporaries, Vol. 3, 171, 202, 229, 233. Jones, Life and Journals, 139f, 269. William Case Biographical File, United Church Archives.

13 Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 23.

Barnes" rather than the usual designation "female Teacher," even though she received a female school teacher's wage.

Eliza also appears to have been more aggressive than most of the other women, but no more daring. Women who chose a missionary career in that era needed courage and a spirit of adventure, for they had to endure great hardships, and often risked their lives. Indeed, only those missionaries who were physically fit were able to tolerate the conditions the mission field imposed, for any length of time.

Travel was hazardous, and the work demanded frequent trips by land and water between the missions. Margaret Dulmage Hurlburt worked for twenty-one years as a missionary. At times in the late fall she was so drenched by water on canoe trips that gloves would freeze to her hands. Eliza Barnes and Miss Verplanck were thrown from a wagon travelling between Rice Lake and the Credit Mission, and Eliza and Phoebe Edmonds had a terrifying moment when a sudden gale almost capsized their schooner on "Lake Koochecheeng" [sic] en route to visit mission sites.[14]

Housing was often primitive, supplies were scarce, and loneliness was a part of many of the women's daily existence. Susannah Farley Waldron was often short of food. Once she was unable to offer a visiting clergyman anything at all to eat. She lived on Indian missions for twelve years, and on one trip from Whitby to the Muncey Mission she travelled with two children by canoe and on horseback through mire and bush and over logs, harassed continually by mosquitoes, only to reach a vermin-infested mission house which had to be turpentined completely to be made livable. Mrs John B. Benham taught school in a bark "wigwaum" at the Sah-geeng Mission on Lake Huron in 1831, sixty miles from the closest white settlement, without seeing another white woman for a year. The New Yorker, Miss Bayles, was isolated at her school half the year in 1833 because of ice. Sally Ash and Eliza Barnes taught in a seventeen-foot square school house on Rice Lake in 1828. The six-foot high sides and roof were made of ash and cedar bark fastened to upright posts. Indian women wove bark carpeting and the men built a clay oven. Sally and Eliza not only taught twenty-five girls "domestic economy" and how to read, sew, knit

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[14] Christian Guardian, 29 Oct. 1873, p.351, c.2, obituary; Jones, Life and Journals, 229, 289. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 25.

and braid straw in this tiny building, but they lived in it as well. Shortly after it was built, the house caught fire, and the women had a narrow escape. That summer, Eliza lived in a wigwam on an island because of virulent fever on the mainland. In his early history, James Youngs reported a fire at the Mission on "Lake Simco" [sic] which forced the missionaries to flee to canoes in the water, and it may have been that Eliza was threatened again. Mercy Manwaring shared one room with seven of her female students.[15]

Health care was inadequate. Infant mortality was high and women often died in childbirth or suffered ill health as a result of the rigours of their existence. The Grape Island Mission near Belleville boasted a log hospital for women as early as 1828 and the River Credit settlement had a hospital building twenty feet by forty feet at least by 1829. Generally, however, physicians were distant. The closest doctor was forty miles from the Mission on Yellowhead's Island. Missionary women who became ill, or those who married and became pregnant might be bundled off to in-laws, friends or relatives. Often, however, the missions took their toll. Credit missionary Sarah Rolph Ryerson, the sister of the prominent Canadian physician and politician John Rolph, was the first woman to die exhausted from the work. Her husband, George, was still devastated by the loss three years after her death. Sophia Cook taught for two years at the Credit Mission when ill health forced her to return to her home in Rochester, New York, in 1834, although she did return to the Alderville Mission to spend the last years of her life there in the 1840s. Susannah Farley Waldron was left alone on a remote mission with a three-day old baby in convulsions while her husband, Solomon, began a week's tour of the missions. Missionary husbands had little time to devote to family crises, for the demanding work of the missionary cause came first. "Itinerants'

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15 Youngs, History, 417: It is likely that there was only one fire, and that Youngs is mistaken in referring to a second fire. Solomon Waldron, "A Sketch of the Life, Travels and Labors of Solomon Waldron, A Wesleyan Methodist Preacher," United Church Archives. Christian Guardian, 14 Aug. 1833, p.158, c.3; 3 Dec. 1890, p.779, c.2. Christian Advocate, 19 Sept. 1828. p.10, c.2,3; 1 March 1833, p.106, c.3; 12 July 1833, p.182, c.4; 13 Dec. 1833, p.62, c.3. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 25f.

indifference to their own well-being was matched only by their insensitivity to the welfare of their families."[16]

The classroom work, itself, was demanding. Classes were large and the work hours long. Sophia Cook taught reading, writing, arithmetic, geography and grammar to almost fifty children at the Credit. Miss Pinny taught approximately fifty as well, and Miss Huntingdon had thirty students in her classes. There were thirty-eight girls in the school at the Lake Simcoe Mission in 1832, and Hetty Hubbard had thirty in her class on Grape Island four years earlier. Mercy Manwaring taught fifty Chippewa boys and girls in her school at the "Narrows" in 1833, and planned to leave unless she received an assistant. Andrew Moffatt was sent there to help, and Andrew and Mercy taught together, evidently with much compatibility, for they were married in December, 1834. The women were not only in charge of week-day schools, but also instructed adults in the evening and organized a full program for Sunday. Their days began at five o'clock in the morning in winter-time, four in summer. On Sundays there could be as many as six sessions - prayer meetings, preaching services and classes.[17]

Although newspaper accounts and missionary reports described the North American Indian as wild, savage, barbarian and dangerous, these stories were no doubt highly exaggerated, and in fact the missionaries faced greater danger from travelling. There was some concern, however, at one time for the safety of the teacher at the Muncey Mission because of an initial resistance to the school by the Indians who were afraid that "white" schooling would prevent their children from learning how to hunt. Miss Farley was assaulted there by a drunken half-breed who came to the school, "stove in the door," seized her and tore her dress to shreds, and her

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16 Waldron, "A Sketch," 32. Christian Advocate, 24 Oct. 1838, p.30, c.1; 3 July 1829, p.173, c.5; 26 Mar. 1830, p.118, c.2. Christian Guardian, 21 Nov. 1829, p.2, c.1, obituary. Egerton Ryerson Papers, United Church Archives, letter from George Ryerson to Egerton Ryerson, London, England, 29 Mar. 1832. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 26f. John Webster Grant, A Profusion of Spires (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988),158f. Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 60.

17 Orillia Times, 15 Oct. 1891, Pioneer Families. Peter Jones Letters, United Church Archives, letter to Eliza Field, 10 July, 1834. Christian Advocate, 24 Oct. 1828, p.30, c.1; 13 April 1832, p.130, c.3; 1 Mar. 1833, p.106, c.3. Christian Guardian, 13 Feb. 1830, p.98, c.3; p.99, c.1,2. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse,"27.

brother-in-law, Solomon Waldron, faced a knife-wielding man in the church. But these appear to have been isolated instances.[18]

Not only were the women required to tolerate physical hardships, but there were strict moral and spiritual demands as well. Methodism was a 'serious' business, and missionaries were expected to be paradigms of piety and sobriety. Indian children were praised for their serious and prayerful deportment. "Those who play when they are young, will play when they are old" was a Methodist motto. But the women, especially, were called upon to be exemplary, and Methodist hagiography portrays the female teachers as living up to that ideal. Phoebe Edmonds was described as a "pious girl." Sarah Rolph Ryerson was depicted as an "accomplished, amiable lady, meek, kind and generous." Sophia Cook was said to be "a burning and shining light" "actively and zealously engaged in works of faith and labours of love." Eliza Barnes' diary displays an emotionally controlled formality. Three weeks after she married William Case, she was still referring to him in her diary as "Mr Case." Not until a month after her wedding does she mention "my dear husband." And Eliza referred to her sister teachers, with whom she had worked for several months, as "Miss Verplanck" and "Miss Cook" without first names.[19]

Bells, horns, and regular meal times were part of an extremely structured and rigid missionary lifestyle, since order, stability and diligence were understood to be external marks of internal grace. Neatness, too, was supremely important. A high ranking visitor to the school at Grape Island in 1828 reported that the operations were in perfect order. "There was a place for everything, and everything was in its place," he wrote. Two years later, Peter Jones made a detailed inspection of all the houses there and found Margaret Dulmage Hurlburt's house "all neat like a white squaw's house" should be, "except that the tea kettle was out of place." The fact that she was sick in bed was no excuse! The Canada Conference of the Missionary Society noted the importance of

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18 Waldron, "A Sketch," 21. Christian Advocate, 12 May 1827, p.141, c.4. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 27f.

19 Nathan Bangs, The Methodist Episcopal Church, Vol. 1, 238. Peter Jones, Life and Journals, 151. Christian Guardian, 21 Nov. 1829, p.8, obituary of Sarah Ryerson; 19 Dec. 1849, obituary of Sophia Cook. Eliza Barnes' Diary excerpt, United Church Archives. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 28.

setting an example of industrious labour for the Indians. Only in displaying "settled habits of industry" could this trait be encouraged in the Indians, and the accepted missionary theory was that settled tribes were more easily taught Christian precepts, educated and civilized. "A roving life" exposed the Indians to temptations and reduced the chances of the "indolent savage" becoming an "industrious Christian." For all Methodists, however, settled habits were part of godliness. The denominational newspaper, the Christian Guardian, urged all men to stay at home as much as possible. "As a bird wandereth from her nest, so is a man that wandereth from his place."[20]

High demands were placed on all the women, but minister's wives, as many of the missionary teachers became, were enjoined to be the "holiest" and "most spiritual" women in habits, conversation, and in their whole deportment. "Her prudence should equal her piety," explained the Christian Guardian. An early London Methodist Conference had spelled out the requirement that they be patterns of cleanliness and industry as well:

> Let nothing slatternly be seen about her; no rags; no dirt; no litter. And she should be a pattern of industry: always at work, either for herself, her husband or the poor.[21]

Indeed, it seems as if missionary women were not allowed any human frailty, although occasionally there is a glimpse of something less than perfection. In his autobiography, Solomon Waldron mentioned that there had been disagreements between some of the missionaries and particularly between Eliza Barnes and Hester Ann Hubbard, both of whom were "passionately fond" of William Case, and both in turn his wife. Only when Hester Ann died, did the "painful struggles" between the women cease. And Solomon noted that his wife, Susannah Farley, gave up tea, tobacco and

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[20] Christian Advocate, 5 Sept. 1828, p.2, c.3; 26 Mar. 1830, p.108, c.2. Christian Guardian, 12 Dec. 1829, p.12, c.1,2. Jones, Life and Journals, 284. Grant, Moon, passim. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 28f.

[21] Christian Guardian, 5 Nov. 1831, p.208, c.2. London Conference Methodist Minutes, 1780. Muir, 'The Bark Schoolhouse," 29.

alcohol in 1835. Evidently she had been using those stimulants for some time previously.[22]

Nor were the women permitted discontent. Public reports emphasized over and over again that they were "happy in their employment." For example, Mrs Benham was "healthy and happy" in her isolation surrounded only by one hundred and fifty "Indian souls." When Sally and Eliza lived in wigwams on an island in Rice Lake in the summer of 1828, they were said to be "contented and happy in doing good." The women, however, can no longer speak for themselves, and we do not know if this was indeed the case. Their letters and diaries are not extant except for a brief extract from Eliza Barnes' journal in August 1833, the month she married William Case. In terse, short sentences, she wrote of unspecified problems. Three years earlier, when she had spoken at the John Street Church in New York City, it was reported that she talked about "her trials and sufferings" while "labouring" on the Indian missions. Most of the women stayed only a short time at one station, but it was a Methodist practice to move ministers regularly from circuit to circuit, and this may have been a factor in their frequent moves. In addition, ill health often forced them to leave a mission after a short stay.[23]

Even with the harsh working conditions, however, it should not be surprising that these women were in the forefront of this new missionary endeavour, converting and "civilizing" the Canadian Indians. First of all, the American and Canadian Methodist Societies had adopted Wesley's practice of separating sexes in worshipping congregations and in classes, although in sparsely populated pioneer communities this segregation could not always be enforced and gradually disappeared. But when the Canada Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church set up Indian schools in 1825 to "tame the savages and Christianize the heathen," the authorities thought it 'proper' that female missionaries be sought to teach the women and girls apart from the men and the boys. Secondly, many of these missionary women were Americans, coming from a culture which accepted and encouraged an active role for women in many of its religious denominations, particularly during the nineteenth century religious

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22 Waldron, "A Sketch," 14. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 29.

23 Christian Advocate, 1 Mar. 1833, p.106, c.3. Jones, Life and Journals, 217. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 29f. Playter, The History, 358.

revivals. Eliza Barnes, Susannah Farley and Hetty Hubbard, apparently the first women to arrive at the missions, were from the United States, and many of those who followed had either lived in that country for a number of years or had been born there and emigrated as young children to Canada. Sophia Cook, Mercy Manwaring and Mrs John Benham were New Englanders by birth and had lived there for some time. We know that at least Eliza was preaching in that country before coming to Canada, and possibly Hetty and Susannah as well, as the latter two were reported to be gifted speakers. Hetty spoke briefly after she arrived in Canada, and later in the United States when she and Eliza went there on fund-raising tours for the Canadian missions.

The polity of the Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church required the active participation of these women, but the acceptable norms of the church placed severe limitations on their activity. Never progressive in its attitude to careers for women outside the home, the main body of the Canadian Methodist church was becoming increasingly more conservative in that area. In spite of Eliza Barnes' obvious success and popularity among the people, by the end of the second decade, preaching was clearly considered by church leaders to be out-of-bounds for women. Women promoted Christianity by the "eloquence which flows from subjection," noted the Christian Guardian in 1829. A woman preaching was considered to be an "eccentric effort," out of her "sphere." Even leading family devotions in the absence of one's husband was a "privilege" for women and not a right, the paper pointed out. Women had a different role. Ladies "preach the precious gospel" by sewing gloves and moccasins, knitting mittens, making baskets and brooms, "Rev. Mr Ryerson from the [Canadian] Mohawk mission" explained to the Dorcas Society in New York at its Anniversary service in 1831. "Kindly affections and benevolence" were "doubly attractive when exercised by females," he suggested. After 1830, there are no more references to any of the missionary women preaching or speaking in public, and it is reported that Eliza Barnes "settled down" not long after her arrival in Canada.[24]

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[24] Christian Guardian, 5 Dec. 1829, p.21, c.2; 12 Dec. 1829, p.29, c.12. Christian Advocate, 5 May 1829, p.145, c.2; 1 Apr. 1831, p.122, c.5: The article does not specify which Ryerson spoke, but it was likely Egerton. Carroll, Case and

Other boundaries were imposed on the women. Most of the female missionaries were restricted to a teaching role and within that profession to a clearly defined area: instructing women and children in elementary education and "domestic economy" or how to keep house. At Grape Island in 1830, Miss French taught the girls to make their own clothing; the boys learned arithmetic, English grammar, writing and geography under a male teacher. Mercy Manwaring had the care of the younger boys as well as the girls there in 1833 during the summer months while the male teacher took the older boys into the field to teach them agriculture. In 1834 she taught only girls, although she had been teaching both sexes while waiting for an assistant. At the River Credit in 1828, Sarah Lancaster, described as a "pious young lady from York," taught her pupils to read, sew, write and knit. Much of the women's time was taken up with supervising the activities of the Dorcas Societies - groups of women who gathered together to make hand-crafted goods for sale. The money raised was used at the missions for school supplies and other expenses. Some of the women, in addition to Eliza Barnes, did have other responsibilities and were not as limited. Margaret Dulmage taught classes of men as well as women and travelled with her husband Sylvester on pastoral visits. In 1829, a woman, Miss Stockton, was hired to introduce the Pestalozzian method of instruction at Grape Island, a system which was to be used by both male and female teachers.[25]

For the most part, however, as the nineteenth century progressed, Episcopal Methodists became more inclined to define for women a role of submissive virtuous housewife and benevolent charity bazaar lady. Woman's proper sphere is in the home, the Christian Guardian assured its readers in 1829. Housework is a woman's "peculiar and appropriate employment" and demands her full attention, the paper noted. Week after week, the denominational newspaper hammered home the role of woman in Christian society.

His Cotemporaries, Vol. 3, 169,171, 202. Jones, Life and Journals, 140. Playter, The History, 342. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 32.

[25] Christian Guardian, 27 Nov. 1830, p.6, c.3; 18 Sept. 1833, p.26; 29 Oct. 1873, p.351, c.2. Canada Conference Missionary Society Report, 1829. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 32f.

> The wife is not expected to go into the field, the workshop or the counting house. To the middling class of life there is no female accomplishment more valuable than house-wifery.[26]

God had placed woman in the home to serve and submit, the newspaper pointed out, in order to eliminate the perpetual strife which would result from equality, but in any case, women were not considered to be strong enough emotionally or physically for the more rigorous outside jobs. Women are "subjected to the trials and weaknesses of a feeble constitution" wrote the editor of the Methodist Christian Advocate. The Colonial Advocate explained that:

> There is a delicacy of fibre in women, and a susceptibility of mind which make them feel more acutely than the other sex all external influences. Hence their whole system is often violently affected with hysterics and other varieties of nervous weakness.

And in the opinion of the Christian Guardian, a "Good Wife" makes it her business to serve and her pleasure to oblige her husband, whereas a "Good Husband" attributes his wife's follies to her weakness.[27]

Not all women were willing to fit into this stereotype and to accept the advice offered by the "Ladies Department" of Canada's best-known religious journal. One woman in 1829 who found the Christian Guardian's view of women offensive, summarized it in these words:

> Honour us; deal kindly with us. From many of the opportunities, and means by which you procure favourable notice, we are excluded. Doomed to the shades, few of the high places of the earth are open to us. Alternately we are adored, and oppressed. From our slaves, you become our tyrants. You feel our beauty, and avail yourselves of our weakness. You complain of

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[26] Christian Guardian, 21 Nov. 1829, p.5, c.2; 5 June 1830, p.230, c.3; 4 Dec. 1830, p.10, c.4. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 33.

[27] Christian Advocate, 9 Sept 1826, p.4, c.4. Christian Guardian, 28 Nov. 1829, p.13, c.4; 12 Dec. 1829, p.28, c.3. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 33f. Colonial Advocate, 12 July 1827, p.1, c.5.

> our inferiority, but none of your behaviour bids us rise. Sensibility has given us a thousand feelings, which nature has kindly denied you. Always under restraints we have little liberty of choice. Providence seems to have been more attentive to enable us to confer happiness than to enjoy it. Every condition has for us fresh mortifications; every relation new sorrows. We enter social bonds; it is a system of perpetual sacrifice. We cannot give life to others without hazarding our own. We have sufferings which you do not share, cannot share ...[28]

In 1833, two women wrote that women in other countries had much greater opportunities:

> Women in this country are not sufficiently considered, they who in every other land have attracted to themselves the consideration of all, have here been neglected and left in oblivion.

Much to the amusement of the Advocate editor, another woman wrote what was described as "a spirited letter of reproof" to that paper for publishing so many degrading lectures for wives and ladies and none for husbands and gentlemen.[29]

Given this climate, the Indian missions offered exciting alternatives for women to step beyond the commonly accepted mould even with the restrictions imposed on them by the official policy of the Episcopal Methodist Church. Even organizing Dorcas Societies enabled them to develop their leadership and organizational skills. And a salaried teaching career outside the home would be an appealing possibility - not only for women within the church, but in society as well. In her studies of Canadian schools in the nineteenth century, Alison Prentice points out that it was not until 1871 that an equal number of men and women were teaching in public or common schools in Upper Canada. In 1835, a small Upper Canadian government commission recommended that women should be trained as teachers because "that best fits" a woman "for that domestic

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28 Christian Guardian, 21 Nov. 1829, p.3, c.2. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 34.

29 Christian Advocate, 21 Mar. 1834, p.119, c.1. Christian Guardian, 17 Nov. 1833, p.108. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 34f.

relation she is primarily designed to fill." But even by 1851, only twenty percent of all teachers were female. Although women were considered to be more suitable for nurturing infants and very young children there was a question as to how effective they were in "governing" school-aged children. Indeed, before 1840, there were very few schools at all, and most education took place at home with voluntary instructors. Some women advertised in the Christian Guardian. The Misses McCord had a Day and Boarding School in 1831, and Miss Sarah Foster a similar establishment. But these situations, even in secular society, were few.[30]

The female missionaries were hired as teachers, and clearly differentiated from male missionaries in the missionary society account books. The women were paid less than the male teachers on the missions, but it was customary in society to pay women smaller salaries. In fact as more women entered the teaching profession in the public schools, their salaries declined as a percentage of men's. In 1851 in Toronto, a woman was paid sixty-nine per cent of a man's salary; by 1861, she was paid only forty-one per cent of his salary. It has been suggested that in the latter part of the century, school trustees discovered that they could hire two female teachers for the price of one male, and they began hiring more women, and paying them less proportionately. Something similar may have happened at the Mission Schools, although fewer women were hired in the later years than in the early 1830s. In 1832, non-Indian male school teachers were paid between £37.10.0 and £40.0.0 per year. Women were paid on the average £29.5.0 or approximately seventy-five per cent of the salary received by men. In 1850, a female teacher at the Grand River received only £15.0.0 per year, whereas the male teacher was paid £50.0.0. The woman received only thirty per cent of the man's salary. There is, however, the example of Sophia Cook who was paid £46.0.0 to teach at the Alderville Mission in 1844; this compares more favourably with the male teacher's salary of £50.0.0 per year. In any event, in 1832, the women at

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[30] Christian Guardian, 9 July 1831, p.139; 19 Mar. 1931, p.75. Alison Prentice, "The Feminization of Teaching" in S.M. Trofimenkoff and A. Prentice, The Neglected Majority (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1977), 49-65, and A. Prentice, The School Promoters (Toronto: McLelland and Stewart, 1977; 2nd ed., 1984), passim. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 35. J. Donald Wilson, "The Teacher in Early Ontario" in F.H. Armstrong et al., Aspects, 223.

the missions were paid more than the Indian missionary teachers. Both Peter Jones and John Sunday, who were internationally acclaimed missionaries, were paid only £25.0.0 a year to do the same work as their non-Indian brothers and sisters. Moreover, the female missionary teachers received a considerably higher wage than the female itinerants travelling in the same territory for the Primitive Methodist Church. These latter women received only £10.0.0 a year, although they were given free room and board in addition to their stipend. There is no record as to whether or not the Methodist Episcopal missionary men and women received free room and board, but one might assume this was indeed the case, considering the make-shift quarters in which they sometimes found themselves. (See Table 1)[31]

It is not possible to tell if all the female missionary teachers were paid, but it is probable that only the single women were. Many of the year-end statements list only "female teacher" beside the wage with no name. The first women to teach were single. Working on the missions provided an option, at least for a few years, to the norm of marriage. Generally, singleness was not well-thought of. Celibacy, the Christian Guardian noted, is like a fly in the heart of the apple. It is confined and "dies in singularity." On the other hand, marriage is like a "useful bee." It feeds the world "with delicacies" and "promotes the virtues of mankind."[32]

Leonard Sweet notes that marrying a minister in the nineteenth century was a passport to "influence, deference and power," and that many women considered themselves fortunate to be a minister's wife, although an itinerant's wife was not such a favourable prospect. Most of the women, such as Hetty Hubbard and Eliza Barnes, did marry on the mission field, although some like Sophia Cook - a respected career woman all her life - remained single. Many of those women who did marry, married missionaries or ministers, and it is likely that they would be expected to continue their work without pay, as part of the duty of a missionary's wife. Women such as Eliza Barnes who had been active before, found marriage in the Canadian Methodist Episcopal tradition not an opening to

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31 Prentice, "The Feminization," 61. Missionary Society Reports, 1825-1832, 1847-1851. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 35f.

32 Christian Guardian, 12 June 1830, p.236, c.2. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 37.

influence and power but a downgrading of their position and public silence.[33]

Table 1 - Comparison of Selected Male and Female Salaries in Upper Canada

	Female	Male
Secular school teacher, 1833		£37.10.0
Non-Indian school teacher, 1832 Methodist Episcopal Indian Missions	£29.5.0**	£37.10.0-40.0.0**
Non-Indian missionary, 1832 Methodist Episcopal Indian Missions		£50.0.0**
Indian teacher/missionary, 1832 Methodist Episcopal Indian Missions		£25.0.0**
Itinerant preacher, 1832 Primitive Methodist Church	£10.0.0*	£16.16.0-21.8.0*
Farm labourer, 1831		£26.0.0-36.0.0*
Millwright/engineer/artisan, 1831-33		£72.0.0-92.0.0
Domestic servant, 1831-1833	£9.0.0-* 18.0.0	£24.0.0*
Church of England clergyman, 1831		£100.0.0-300.0.0
Roman Catholic Bishop, 1827-43		£400.0.0
Average salary, 1851 School teacher, Toronto	£73.2.0	£105.0.0
Average salary, 1851 School teacher, province	£33.10	£55.2.0

*The itinerants and servants received room and board. The farm labourers were given board. **Possibly includes room and board.[34]

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33 Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 8.

34 Primitive Methodist Disciplines, 40. Prentice, "The Feminization," 60. Missionary Society Reports, passim. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 36f. John Howison, Sketches of Upper Canada (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1821), Reprinted (Toronto: Coles Pub. Co., 1980), 222, 224. J. Donald Wilson, "The Teacher," 222: Some teachers were evidently paid as little as £4.0.0. per annum. William

While it is true that teaching school on the missions permitted a career for Methodist Episcopal women, it is also the case that in society at large in Upper Canada, teaching was not a prestigious position. Some considered teachers to be on the same level as household servants. As late as 1835, it was said that a student respected a "school master" "just as much as one bear does" its hunters.[35] Although the female missionary teachers earned considerably more than female servants, they were paid salaries approximately the same as good experienced male servants and farm labourers. On the missions and in Methodist circles, however, the missionary teachers, and especially those who were also preaching, were highly regarded and experienced adulation in the workplace. Indians flocked to greet them when they arrived at missions. Indian children and other missionaries' children bore their names, and Missionary Society members revered them. Their obituaries depict them as being without fault, and they became part of a Methodist missionary hagiography while still alive.

There were other rewards for the women who worked on the missions besides the more tangible benefits of a career, salary and high praise. Devout Christians of that era had seized upon the idea of "rescuing" and transforming the "perishing" Indian as a romantic and glorious notion. Even more than that, converting the Indians assured the missionaries of rewards in heaven, for on the "great day of retribution" all those who had saved even one soul would be acknowledged. The women would be amply repaid for any sacrifices they had had to make.[36]

Missionary women often exhibited Indian children to awe-struck assemblies who marvelled at the children's ability to learn and at their metamorphosis. Psychologically, the teachers must have received

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Cattermole, Emigration. The Advantages of Emigration to Canada (London: Simpkin and Marshall, 1831), Reprinted (Toronto: Coles Pub. Co., 1970), 13, 20, 85, 94, 98, 205. Traill, The Backwoods, 7. Anna Jameson, Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada, Vol. 1 (London: Saunders and Otley, 1838), Reprinted (Toronto: Coles Pub. Co., 1970), 269, 312f. Kenneth Barker, From Indian Mission to City Church (Orillia: Dyment-Stubley, 1980), 68: claims that Mercy Miner Manwaring was paid £35.0.0 in 1833.

35 J. D. Wilson, "The Teacher," 222

36 Christian Advocate, 18 Nov. 1826, p.41, c.5. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 40.

tremendous gratification for the part they played in this transformation. It was not uncommon for school children to be examined in public for as long as three days at a time, but an examination of Indian children would have been a novelty. In the fall of 1827, at the third anniversary gathering of the Canada Conference Missionary Society, fourteen children from the River Credit school displayed samples of their writing, read from both the New Testament and the English Reader, spelled words of four syllables, and sang hymns and repeated the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments in English and in an Indian language. Next year, Hetty Hubbard "examined" twenty Grape Island school children in the Kingston chapel before a large, interested audience. A newspaper report of the event noted that the clean well-behaved children were very recently part of a tribe of Indians who had been "grasping at the intoxicating bowl" and "wallowing in filth about our streets." In 1829, Eliza Barnes and Hetty took six of their pupils with them to New England. In New York City, two thousand Sabbath School teachers and pupils listened to the Canadian eight-year old Indian boys and teen-aged Indian girls read from the New Testament, answer catechetical questions, and spell. One child spoke to the whole assembly. [37]

While the women were accorded high status in one context, and encouraged in their public appearances, they were often referred to only anonymously by Methodist officialdom. Mission reports tantalize with the paucity of detail about the women's work. There are passing references to faceless spinsters known only by their father's last name, or missionary wives identified by their husband's name. Male teachers and missionaries by contrast generally rated an initial or first name. In 1832, when Sylvester Hurlburt wrote to William Case from Grape Island on the progress of the mission, he noted:

> the female school was never doing better; the girls love and respect their teacher, and so they should, for she feels deeply interested for them, and takes much pains to instruct them and improve their manners. [38]

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[37] Edwin Guillet, Pioneer Days, 184. Missionary Society Report, 1827, 1. Christian Advocate, 8 Aug. 1828, p.195, c.3; 6 Mar. 1829, p.106, c.2; 3 April 1829, p.122, c.5. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 40.

[38] Christian Guardian, 24 Oct. 1832, p.199. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse," 38.

Typically, the teacher's name is not mentioned by Sylvester, nor by William who published the letter. She might have been Miss Verplanck or even Sylvester's wife, Margaret Dulmage. The Christian Guardian paid tribute in 1830 to an "anonymous pious lady" who laboured at several mission stations and travelled extensively to aid the society, in all probability referring to Eliza Barnes.[39] Perhaps the Guardian which advocated a more secluded existence for women was caught between wanting to give her the credit which was her due, and at the same time being loath to hold up her lifestyle as a model for other women to follow. As a result of the sparse and scattered references to the women's work, few of their lives can be pieced together, and most are known only as Indian teachers, such as Miss French and Miss Huntingdon.

Some women continued to work on the missions after 1833, although their numbers were substantially reduced. After 1833, the Methodist Episcopal Church merged with the British Wesleyans, the conservative stream of Methodism which had passed legislation in 1803 prohibiting women from speaking in the pulpit in the London Conference. The union disrupted the publication of the Missionary Society Reports, and when they appeared again, there were few references to salaries for women school teachers. Reports from the missions published in newspapers rarely mentioned women, and the extant journals indicate that most of the women who taught after 1833 were supportive wives of missionary husbands. Even Eliza Barnes restricted her activities after her marriage to the widower William Case in 1833. Described as a woman "possessed of a powerful mind" she, nevertheless, appears to have adjusted to the expected model of a Canadian Methodist Episcopal minister's wife, quietly teaching household and domestic science at the missions where they lived. As the Christian Guardian had pointed out, "Matrimony is a covenant ... But to one party at least, [it] is a state of submission." With at least one missionary couple, however, it appears that the wife was the more prominent church worker. When the Chippewa Indians were relocated from the Narrows to

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39 Christian Guardian, 14 Apr. 1830. p.309. Muir, "The Bark Schoolhouse." 38.

the Rama reserve in 1839, both Mercy Manwaring Moffatt and her husband Arthur resigned. Arthur went into business, and Mercy continued to be involved in 'church work'. Later, she was credited with establishing the first Methodist church and Sunday School there.[40]

By 1834, it seems that the brief period of heady activity for women in the Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church was over. Preaching women were no longer acceptable and American teachers had for many years been especially suspect of "inculcating habits of subordination" imbibed in the United States. Canadian Methodist Episcopal women settled into a more conventional Victorian existence in the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada, the name adopted by the union of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the British Wesleyan Methodists in 1833.[41]

The Methodist Episcopal Church, however, continued in Canada. Although Ellen Bangs' husband, Joseph Gatchell, had been the only itinerant to vote against the 1833 union, other Methodists had already severed their relationship and formed a continuing Methodist Episcopal stream. There is no doubt that this continuing denomination was perceived as being more liberal and radical, for the Canadian Primitive Methodists considered joining with them in 1836. Why they decided against it, we do not know. According to an American newspaper, the Northwestern Christian Advocate, Emma Richardson was licensed as a local preacher by the Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church in 1864, five years before Maggie Newton Van Cott in the United States. Evidently Emma soon preached only in the United States, for she appears to be known only in that country. She was still active in 1873 when her license was renewed by the American La Crosse District Conference.[42]

By the late nineteenth century in Canada, few Methodists in the newly-formed united Methodist Church would have argued with the Haligonian minister John Weir in favour of itinerant women preachers, even though a small number of women evangelists accepted invitations as

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[40] Orillia Times, 15 Oct. 1891, Pioneer Families. Christian Guardian, 7 Aug. 1830, p.298, Ladies' Dept.

[41] William Summersides letter, n.d., received in Hull, England, 2 Feb. 1837, John Rylands. Jane Errington, The Lion, the Eagle and Upper Canada. A Developing Colonial Ideology (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1987), 52.

[42] Northwestern Christian Advocate, 6 Aug. 1873, p.254, c.1.

revival speakers at that time. Weir suggested that both lay male and female preachers should be dispersed throughout the Methodist Church to combat the defections taking place to the Salvation Army, and that these preachers could come from their present ranks of male and female local preachers, exhorters and class-leaders. It is not clear, however, where those female local preachers and exhorters were, for at the time of union in 1884, even in the more radical groups such as the Bible Christians and the Primitive Methodists, few, if any, women preachers remained. The Bible Christian preachers had already been forgotten and it appears that the women listed on Primitive Methodist plans had no appointments.[43]

In the Methodist Church of Canada, a union of all the other Methodist denominations including the Wesleyan Methodists, most references to the preaching contribution of the women who had preached in the years before 1833 had disappeared. Susannah Farley Waldron's memorial in 1890 notes that she and her husband "toiled together" for forty years and that she "rendered valuable aid to her husband in the work of God" but makes no mention of any speaking. Earlier, in 1862, the historian George Playter noted only that Eliza Barnes Case was an adventurous missionary woman, although a few years later John Carroll did include scattered references to her work, and recorded that she made addresses. Her obituary in the Christian Guardian, however, pointed out only that she "labored for 8 or 10 years among the Indians at Grape Island as a pioneer missionary." And when Annie Stephenson wrote her history of Methodist Missions in 1925,

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43 S.D. Clark, Church and Sect in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1949), 409. The 1877 Minutes of the Montreal Conference of the Methodist Church note that James A. Gordon's "widow" was paid as a temporary supply on the Ottawa East circuit after his death, but they fail to mention her by name. Marilyn F. Whiteley, "Modest, Unaffected and Fully Consecrated - Lady Evangelists in Canadian Methodism, 1884-1900," in Canadian Methodist Historical Society Proceedings (1987), passim: At least twenty-five women were involved in evangelistic meetings between the beginning of 1885 and 1900, taking part in at least three hundred revival campaigns in the Methodist Church. They disappeared when evangelism became institutionalized at the beginning of the twentieth century. Weir may have had these women in mind.

she mentioned only that Miss Barnes was a teacher at Grape Island and Miss Hubbard at Rice Lake.[44]

In 1860, an anonymous writer who described Methodism in Canada from 1820 to 1860, noted that Methodist women "never presumed to *preach*." The "good" they accomplished, he wrote, was in visiting in houses, gathering together in classes, and praying at prayer meetings. A Methodist woman, he reported, might have read other women a sermon or added an exhortation of her own, but never had she stepped over the bounds of acceptable behaviour by preaching. Evidently the anonymous writer was not familiar with the long history of women actively preaching in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in Great Britain.[45]

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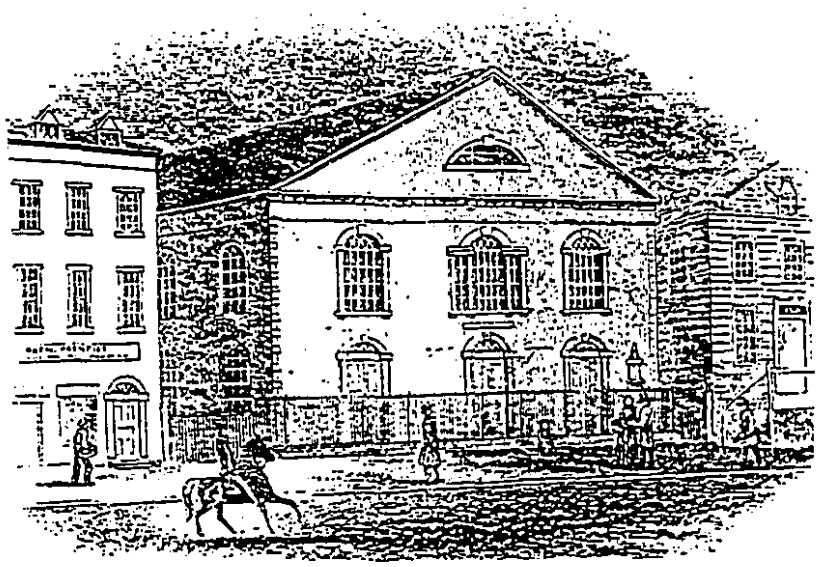
[44] Christian Guardian, 11 May 1887, p.299, c.3; 3 Dec. 1890, p.779, c.2. Mrs F. C. Stephenson, One Hundred Years of Canadian Methodist Missions 1824-1924 (Toronto: The Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, 1925), 70f.

[45] A Spectator of the Scenes, Past and Present or a Description of Persons and Events Connected With Canadian Methodism For the Last Forty Years (Toronto: Alfred Dredge, 1860), 49.

Methodist Episcopal preacher Eliza Barnes Case (1796-1887) and her husband William. Photo courtesy United Church Archives.

Mercy Miner Manwaring Moffatt (1809-1891), teacher at the Methodist Episcopal Indian Missions, and her youngest son, Charles Henry. Photo courtesy St Paul's United Church, Orillia.

Eliza Barnes Case and the other missionaries narrowly escaped a fire at the Canadian Indian Missions. James Youngs, p.417.



John Street Church, New York City, where Eliza Barnes Case preached during her American fund-raising tours. Wakeley, p.580.

V. THE EVOLUTION OF WOMEN PREACHERS: THEIR BRITISH HERITAGE

> Sir, a woman's preaching is like a dog's walking on his hind legs. It is not done well; but you are surprised to find it done at all.
> Boswell, *Life of Dr Johnson*, 31 July 1763

Bible Christian and Primitive Methodist women preachers had come to Canada from Great Britain where they had been accepted as preachers since the beginning of both movements. In fact, women had been preaching in the Methodist tradition since at least the 1760s, although with mixed reaction. Large numbers of women had been attracted to British Methodism since John Wesley began his first classes, and the doctrines and church organization of the Wesleyan movement soon assured a preaching role for many of them.

Women have usually been more numerous in religious revivals, and Methodism was no exception. In 1745, sixty-eight per cent of all the Society members meeting at the Foundry, the first official worship centre in London, were women - three hundred and fifty-two out of a total of five hundred and sixteen. This was also the case among the class leaders in the "Select Society" meeting there the year before. Again women accounted for sixty-eight per cent of the total membership, fifty-three out of seventy-eight members. Describing the Society at Newcastle that same year, William Briggs wrote John Wesley that he had had conversations with thirty-six women and nine men who had found "freedom from all outward sin" and wanted to be "delivered entirely from sin." The fact that William spoke with four times as many women as men suggests that considerably more women were involved in the Methodist movement there, as well.[1]

The burial list at City Road Chapel, the first recognized Methodist headquarters in London, contains the names of five thousand, four hundred

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[1] George J. Stevenson, City Road Chapel London and Its Associations (London: George J. Stevenson, 1872), 33ff. W.W. Stamp, The Orphan-House of Wesley (London: John Mason, 1863), 63.

and fifty-two men and women buried there between 1780 and 1858. Of these, sixty-two per cent were women. Five per cent of all the members on the burial list lived to be over eighty years old. Seventy-eight per cent of these were women, as were the only two people who lived to be one hundred years old.[2]

Evidence suggests that the situation was similar in the United States and in Canada. In New York City, at least thirty-five of the two hundred and fifty original subscribers for the first John Street Preaching House were women, surely a large number of financial donors for 1786. Recent analyses of the Second Great Awakening in the early nineteenth century in New York State indicate that between fifty-two and seventy-two per cent of all the converts at that time were women. The Sunday School agent, John McKillicam, noted in his 1862 Annual Report that in most places, religion was left entirely to women. His meetings were made up almost entirely of married women and a few young girls, he wrote, while the men sat outside "waiting to *escort* the young females home."[3]

While women are predominant in revivalistic movements, there were other factors which attracted women to Methodism. John Wesley's social assistance programmes, directed mainly towards women, were advanced for his time. In the 1740s, he organized a medical dispensary for the poor; he provided housing for a limited number of women; and he opened schools for orphans. He created employment opportunities for unemployed women, hiring them to knit woolen goods. The final products were delivered to the poor. Considering the poverty and desperate conditions of industrialized England, these opportunities would have been especially appealing. As well, Wesley demanded exacting moral standards of all his class members, which would help make women's life more bearable. In 1743, he expelled one-eighth of all the members in his fledgling society for violations of his strict behavioural code, including idleness and wife-beating.[4]

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2 Stamp, The Orphan-House, 607.

3 J. B. Wakeley, Lost Chapters From the Early History of Methodism (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1858), 69-73. Twenty-five of the contributors cannot be identified as to sex. Twenty-Fifth Canada Sunday School Union Annual Report, p.21. Smith-Rosenberg, Disorderly Conduct, 148.

4 Stamp, The Orphan-House, 33. L. F. Church, More About the Early Methodist People (London: Epworth Press, 1949), 180ff.

Large numbers of women in Methodism in its early days, however, would not ensure a preaching role for them. But this factor, coupled with Methodist polity and doctrine, resulted in scores of women in public leadership positions. Very quickly, these leadership opportunities evolved into preaching roles.

At the heart of the Methodist church organization was the small class meeting and the even smaller band. Wesley had seized upon the idea of the class meeting in 1742 as a result of trying to discharge a Society debt in Bristol. He had asked his helpers to visit a number of followers and collect a penny from each person. But on finding how negligent some of the men and women were in their spiritual devotions and moral behaviour, Wesley resolved to make the visitation a weekly exercise. This proved to be too time-consuming for his assistants and, determined to bring the people to the visitors, he set up small classes at regular meeting times and places. The arrangement was similar to the small group model used by the Moravians, a denomination Wesley greatly admired. Initially, the small meetings were not for fellowship, but to check up on the morality and spiritual progress of the men and women. Each class had approximately six or seven members with a designated leader. Smaller groups called bands, of no more than four people, were organized for prayer and spiritual growth.[5]

The main element in this system which worked in women's favour was the restriction of classes to either men or women, especially at the beginning of the Methodist movement. John Wesley believed that segregation of the sexes had been the practice in the early church, - another custom he inherited from the Moravians. Thus, we find large numbers of women immediately thrust into positions of leadership as leaders of women's classes. In April, 1742, there were forty-seven women who were class leaders at the Foundry, compared with only nineteen men.[6]

Men and women were separated not only in classes, but at church services as well, although there was later resistance to this seating

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5 Stamp, The Orphan-House, 28f. Nathan Bangs, The Methodist Episcopal Church Vol. 1 (New York: Carlton and Phillips, 1856), 291, 300.

6 Stevenson, City Road Chapel, 29ff.

arrangement. In 1770, the Methodist Minutes recorded the question: Is there any exception to the rule, "Let the men and women sit apart?" The answer was that in those galleries where they had already been sitting together, men and women could continue to do so. Everywhere else, the rule had to be observed. Ten years later, still trying to enforce this policy, the Conference asked an additional question: "But how can we secure their sitting apart?" In 1786, firm direction was given to segregate sexes during public worship or risk losing the privilege of being able to collect money for new buildings.[7]

John Wesley had initiated the policy of segregation, but he favoured flexibility. In a letter to "Miss B.," he asked if she would be willing to lead a small class at Bath where there had been a Society for thirty years. There were about thirty Methodists there, and half of them at least would meet with Joseph Harris. But, wrote Wesley, "I had rather that the single women in both Classes who desire it, should meet with you."[8]

Later Canadian and American Societies adopted segregation, but whether or not the classes were mixed was often dictated by circumstances and leadership availability. The 1836 Canadian Book of Doctrines and Discipline of the Wesleyan Methodist Church included the rule of segregation in church but not in classes, and early classes were often made up of men and women. The original 1803 Stanstead, Quebec, class consisted of a male leader, four women and four other men. The rule book stipulated, however, that bands must consist only of men or women, and more specifically, only of single or married people.[9]

Although class segregation was not always enforced or adhered to in the early Methodist movement, it provided not only an opportunity for women to assume leadership roles, but an obligation. Idleness, Wesley pointed out, was a sin. All Methodists, and especially preachers, were required to be diligent, never to be unemployed and never to be "triflingly employed." Talents, Wesley stressed, had been given by God to be used. "I

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7 Methodist Conference Minutes London: 1770, Question #69; 1780, Question #67; 1786, Question #22.

8 Methodist Magazine 1803, undated letter.

9 Bangs, The Methodist Episcopal Church, 205. Sanderson, The First Century Vol. 2, 213. The Doctrines and Discipline of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada, (Toronto: Matthew Lang, 1836), 76.

fear you are too idle," he wrote Elizabeth Bennis (1725-1802) in 1773. "Up and be doing!" he challenged. "Do not loiter. See that your talent rust not." The next year, he wrote again with a similar rebuke:

> You are not sent to Waterford to be useless. Stir up the gift of God which is in you; gather together those that have been scattered abroad, and make up a band, if not a class or two...

He repeated his message to Miss Furly in 1776:

> Now use all the ability which God giveth, and he will give more: unto him that hath shall be given ... it is the hand of the diligent that maketh rich.

By this time, Wesley was encouraging women beyond the sphere of groups confined to women. In replying to one of Miss Furly's questions, he agreed that she could certainly "meet with" a class of men if the leader and the class both wished it. This, Wesley explained, would not assume authority over men but would be an act of "friendship and brotherly love." In leading the group, he continued, she would be acting not as a superior, but as an equal.[10]

Talented women were encouraged to become class leaders, and as class leaders they developed their talents further. They took part in leaders' meetings, becoming skilled in interpersonal relationships and public speaking. Many likely gained a great deal of self-confidence. For most, it was probably an opportunity not open to them in other aspects of their lives. The early Methodists were from the lower economic strata, many of them unemployed. In 1772, one-third of Wesley's followers were without jobs. As the majority of the women's classes were scheduled for the evening, it is likely that most of the women worked outside the home during the day. Probably they were poorly paid. Almost half the women in the first classes were unmarried without family responsibilities, compared to less than one-third of the men. Many of the women in the

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[10] The Doctrines, 33. Wesley, Letters, 1 Apr. 1773; 18 Jan. 1774. C. H. Crookshank, History of Methodism in Ireland, Vol. 2 (Belfast: R.S. Allen, 1885-86), 20: Evidently Eliza Furly heeded Wesley's advice, for on her death in the United States in 1802, it was noted that she "had called people to repentance."

Society were young, and a number of them began preaching in their late teens.[11]

From class leader, it was a small step for the women to become preachers. Sometimes the classes were so large that they unwittingly found themselves in the role of public speaker or preacher. Sometimes their talents and spiritual gifts were so obvious that the people pressed them to speak, often because no other preacher was available.

Wesley, however, only gradually accepted women as preachers. The women themselves, partly because of cultural conditioning and partly from a genuine humility, hesitated to assume this role. Their correspondence with Wesley reveals their dilemma. In 1761, he answered Sarah Crosby's questions about whether or not she should speak in public by telling her that she had not overstepped the bounds of propriety. He advised her to tell the people of her difficulty, that Methodists did not allow women preachers and she did not wish to become one. Read them notes or sermons, he advised, and just tell them what is in your heart "as other women have done long ago." Eight years later, in 1769, he wrote to her with more advice, pointing out that he had already given this same advice to Grace Walton. First of all, he said, she should pray in public or private as much as she could. Secondly, she could mix prayers and exhortations, but she should keep away from preaching as much as possible. Never take a text, he advised, and never speak "in continued discourse" without four or five minute breaks. In fact, he said somewhat cunningly, tell them you'll have other "prayer meetings" at different times and places.[12]

By 1771, however, he had sanctioned her to preach. On June 13, Wesley wrote Sarah from Londonderry affirming that she had an extraordinary call to preach, as indeed had all his lay preachers. Methodism, he noted, was "an extraordinary dispensation" from God, and extraordinary things were bound to happen within it. Wesley believed that Sarah was an effective preacher. In a later letter to Jane Barton, he mentioned Sarah's "usefulness" in "exciting believers to go on to perfection." [13]

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11 Stevenson, City Road Chapel, 33ff.

12 Wesley, Letters, 14 Feb. 1761; 18 Mar. 1769.

13 Wesley, Letters, 13 June, 1771; 13 Nov. 1778.

In 1787, Wesley "and the Conference" authorized Sarah Mallet Boyce (b.ca.1764) to preach. Two years later, Wesley wrote to give her advice on how to speak effectively. By this time there was no suggestion that the service be disguised as a prayer meeting. He recommended that she limit her worship service to an hour, including singing, prayer and preaching. "Never scream," he wrote, "never speak above the natural pitch of your voice." Even before this, however, Sarah had been officially recognized as a preacher on the Norwich circuit. Another woman, Alice Cambridge, who was preaching in Ireland, was given Wesley's blessing in 1791. In January of that year, he wrote to her that when God commanded her to speak, she was not permitted to be silent. "If you want books, or anything," he offered, "let me know; I have your happiness much at heart." Wesley encouraged Ann Gilbert (d.1790) to "do all the good" she could, and she preached to crowds of up to fourteen hundred people even when she was almost blind. He referred to Elizabeth Reeve's preaching in 1790. She continued to preach until ill health forced her to stop. A bookseller, Miss Newman refused to stock novels, plays and romances after she was converted to Methodism. Wesley encouraged her to preach, and later approved of her marriage to Jonathan Cousins.[14]

Diaries, letters and journals reveal the remarkable careers of some of the women who were preaching and speaking in the latter part of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The records of other women are probably lost for ever.

Mary Bosanquet Fletcher (1739-1815), Sarah Crosby (1729-1804) and Alice Cambridge (1762-1829) are among the best known. Mary often had male ministers in her congregations, and at times, crowds of up to three thousand men and women. She shared a ministry with her husband John after they were married in 1781. In one typical year's work, Sarah walked or rode nine hundred and sixty miles, spoke at two hundred and twenty public meetings, led six hundred classes and bands, wrote many long letters, gave interviews and visited the sick. Most days of the week, she rose at four in the morning, conducted a service at five, and often held

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[14] Church, More About, 140ff. Robert Wearmouth, Methodism and The Common People of the Eighteenth Century (London: Epworth Press, 1945), 228. Crookshank, History, Vol. 2, 30ff. Zechariah Taft, Biographical Sketches of the Lives and Public Ministry of Various Holy Women (London: Mr Kershaw, 1825), 91, 49ff., 291.

others in the afternoons and evenings. "I hope you will always have your time much filled up," Wesley had written her in 1777, "for is not the harvest plenteous still?" Alice Cambridge did most of her work in Ireland, preaching even to soldiers in barracks where her message reduced them to tears. Crowds flocked to hear her, and Methodist chapels, Presbyterian meeting-houses and even an Episcopal church were opened for her meetings. Alice had broken an engagement to an "unbeliever" in order to devote herself entirely to her itineracy.[15]

Elizabeth Tomlinson Evans (1776-1849) stayed up until two or three in the morning mending lace in order to earn enough money to travel as an itinerant. She is memorialized in George Eliot's novel Adam Bede as Dinah Morris. Mary Barritt Taft (1772-1851) travelled more than most of her contemporaries, and wherever she spoke, conversions took place and often revivals broke out. She preached in barns, town halls, dye-houses, and malt-kilns. Mary even attended Conference meetings when they were held in Leeds or Manchester. One Conference meeting requested that she preach at it. Elizabeth Ritchie Mortimer (1788-1835) had so many appointments that she could barely keep up with her work. Mary Sewell (ca. 1764-1786) from Thurlton was officially listed as a local preacher on the Norwich circuit in 1785. Mary began preaching when she was twenty years old, but she died after two years of very intense activity.[16]

Most of the women preached because they could not help it. At the heart of Methodist doctrine was the experiential knowledge of the forgiveness of sin. When men and women felt the removal of their burden of guilt, sin and fear, they were filled with a happiness and joy which could not be contained and which had to be shared. When Elizabeth Wallbridge was converted in the story of the Dairyman's Daughter, she immediately sped the "good news of Christ's forgiveness" to her elderly

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15 Church, More About, chap. 4, esp.145, 151ff. Other details of the preaching careers of the three women can be found in Taft, Biographical Sketches, 19ff., 269ff., and Crookshank, History, passim. Letter from Wesley to Sarah Crosby, 2 Dec. 1777, in George Smith, History of Wesleyan Methodism Vol. 2 (London: Longmans, Brown, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1862), 420f.

16 Church, More About, 21,138-169. C.H. Crookshank, Memorable Women of Irish Methodism in the Last Century (London: Wesleyan Methodist Book Room, 1882), 193, 353f., 400. Crookshank, History, Vol I, 410. Taft, Biographical Sketches, 326. John Taylor, The Apostles of Flyde Methodism (London: T. Woolmer, 1885), 59.

parents and the rest of her family and friends. Elizabeth's letters and the story of her life were published at the turn of the century as a pattern for Methodist women to follow.[17]

Indeed, every Methodist in this sense was an evangelist. In 1776, Wesley had written Elizabeth Bennis (1725-1802) that if God had given her this "light," she must not hide it under a bushel. "It is good to conceal the secrets of a King," he wrote, "but it is good to tell the loving-kindness of the Lord." Everyone, Wesley said, should declare what God had done for them. It has been noted that conversion was a "vocational decision." It put women to work for the Kingdom.[18]

Many of the women preachers had outstanding gifts and received a large amount of popular acclaim. Those approved by Wesley must have met the three Methodist tests for people who thought they had been "moved by the Holy Ghost and called of God to preach." Their theology was "correct," they had obvious talents, and their lives indicated that they had been "well and truly converted."[19]

The women had organizational ability. Selina Shirley Hastings, the Countess of Huntingdon (1707-1791), prominent in the Calvinist branch of Methodism under George Whitefield, has been called the first "Methodist bishop." Critics named her "Pope Joan." She built chapels, appointed preachers to their circuits, and expelled those who were unfaithful. She established a theological college to train "her" preachers. Hannah Ball (1733-1792) started a Sunday School at High Wycombe in 1769, eleven years before Robert Raikes began his experiment, although it is Raikes who is generally credited with beginning the Sunday School movement in England.[20]

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17 Legh Richmond, The Annals of the Poor and The Dairyman's Daughter (London: F. Warne and Co., n.d.), 17ff. Church, More About, 166. George Smith, History of Wesleyan Methodism, Vol. 2, 264ff.

18 Wesley, Letters, 29 Mar. 1766. Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 89.

19 Methodist Minutes, London, 1753-1789, pp.564-5. John Kent, Jabez Bunting, The Last Wesleyan (London: The Epworth Press, 1955), 39f.

20 Earl Kent Brown, "Women in Church History: Stereotypes, Archetypes and Operational Modalities, " in Methodist History 18 (January 1980), 130. Gerald R. Cragg, The Church and The Age of Reason 1648-1789, The Pelican History of The Church, Vol. 4 (Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin Books, 1960), 152. H. F. Mathews, Methodism and The Education of the People 1791-1851 (London: The Epworth Press,

Grace Norman Murray Bennet (1718-1803), a woman Wesley at one time hoped to marry, was charged with the supervision of all the women's classes throughout England and Ireland. In 1743, she was appointed matron of the Orphan-House, the Methodist Centre in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. An extremely talented and spiritual woman, she was soon leading classes and bands. At one time, she held two separate classes for at least one hundred Methodists, and led a different band every day of the week. She visited several Societies in the neighbouring country, meeting with the women in the day-time, and the whole Society at night, and it was not long before Wesley put her in charge of all the women's classes in Great Britain. Grace generally travelled on horseback, often alone. She allowed no man to assist her into the saddle and had trained her horse to kneel down when she touched its shoulder. A colourful figure, Grace is described as springing "lightly into the saddle," waving her arm, and beginning her journey, "in a moment, was out of sight."[21]

Many of the women were well-educated and literate. John Wesley required all Methodists to be as well read as possible. Tutored at home by his mother Susanna Annesley (1669-1742), a writer of theological dissertations and expositions, Wesley had developed a keen appetite for learning. He not only encouraged his followers to study constantly, but he placed the resources at their disposal. He established Book Rooms where books could be purchased inexpensively, editing volumes of what he considered to be the best literature, making them readily available. Wesley's mother had insisted that girls be taught to read well, before they learned housekeeping skills, and Wesley encouraged women to be as proficient in academic subjects as men. He suggested a reading list for "Miss L.," recommending that she study for about four or five hours a day. The list included books on grammar, arithmetic, geography, logic, ethics, natural philosophy, history, metaphysics, poetry and divinity. That course of study, he noted, should take her from three to five years, depending on her health and previous education. He insisted that diaries be kept.

Women in the Methodist Movement," in Richard L. Greaves ed., Triumph Over Silence: Women in Protestant History (Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press, 1985), 153.

[21] Stamp, The Orphan-House, 47ff. Abel Stevens, The History of the Religious Movement in the Eighteenth Century Called Methodism, Vol. 2 (London: Wesleyan Conference Office, 1878), 124f. Stevenson, City Road Chapel, 29f.

Frances Mortimer Pawson wrote four volumes of hers in flawless French. He set high standards for his preachers, expecting them to read works by Sallust, Caesar, Cicero, Castellio, Terence, Virgil, Horace, Vida, Buchanan, Plato, Epictetus, Ignatius, Homer, Arndt, Boehme, Pascal and other authors. As Methodism developed, itinerants and missionaries were required to submit regular reports and journals. Canadian preachers were expected to read at least five hours out of every twenty-four, submitting a list of books they had read every quarter.[22]

In spite of this emphasis on education, however, literate Methodist women could evoke disbelief. George Stevenson described the activities of a Ladies' Working Society which met at the City Road Chapel in the early nineteenth century. He was amazed that as they sewed they read essays and held discussions which they recorded, and even more in awe that their conversation showed "mature judgement, intellectuality and deep spirituality." Perhaps this was because Wesley's educational expectations for women were considerably greater than was usual for well-bred English women at the time. Even young ladies given intensive education at home by their parents such as Elizabeth Gwillim, later the wife of Canada's Governor General John Graves Simcoe, spent far less time on academic subjects. Elizabeth's curriculum designed by her father consisted of English literature, a little geography, very little arithmetic, and a "smattering" of languages. At least half her time was spent on "accomplishments" such as painting, music, sewing, and deportment. The popular "courtesy books," read avidly by women, recommended "diffidence in voicing an opinion," a "tongue, often silent, and ears, always attentive." Bashfulness was much more highly prized than academic knowledge.[23]

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22 Church, More About, 49. Wesley, Letters, undated letter. Mathews, Methodism and The Education, 183. Valentine Ward, A Miniature of Methodism: or a Brief Account of the History, Doctrines, Discipline and Character of the Methodists (London: John Mason, 1834), 149. The Doctrines and Disciplines of the Wesleyan Church in Canada, 24ff., 56f. Richard M. Cameron ed., The Rise of Methodism: A Source Book (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954), 29.

23 Stevenson, City Road Chapel, 190f. Sermons to Young Women 4th ed. (London: 1767) and John Bennett, Letters to a Young Lady... Calculated to Improve the Heart, to Form the Manners, and to Enlighten the Understanding (Warrington: 1789), as quoted in Fowler, The Embroidered Tent, 21f.

Increasing Opposition

The women who preached received a wide measure of popular acceptance, but as they developed an enthusiastic following, they faced increasing opposition by some of the male preachers and the church administration. All Methodist preachers were subjected to hostility and harassment from many segments of British society, simply for being Methodist. Women, then, faced opposition on two fronts. Elizabeth Hurrel had been encouraged by Wesley to travel and preach, and the first Methodist missionary to the West Indies had been converted as a result of her preaching. But in the face of increasing resistance, she gave up her "work," although it is reported that "she repented before her death." The Methodist preacher William Bramwell explained in a sermon that there were not more women preachers because they were "not faithful to their call." Mary Bosanquet Fletcher announced meetings rather than preaching services because she felt that it was less ostentatious and gave her opponents less cause for offence. "I do nothing but what Mr Wesley approves," she added, "and as to reproach thrown [sic] by some on me, what have I to do with it, but quietly go forward saying, *I will be still more vile*, if my God requires it?"[24]

In 1789, Wesley had written Sarah Mallet Boyce that he was happy that opposition to her preaching was dying down. Two years later, he advised Alice Cambridge to give as little offence as possible. Never speak close to where a male preacher was preaching, he suggested to her, "lest you draw away his hearers." Ann Cutler (1759-1794), or "Praying Nanny" as she was affectionately known, did not preach formal sermons, but often spoke simply to people of God, sin and salvation. She was responsible for a number of revivals, and the Society approved her work. Yet, she offended some by the "loudness of her voice." Male preachers confessed to being extremely jealous of her success. "Wherever she went there was an amazing power of God attending her prayers," wrote the revivalist William Bramwell in a short account of her work. "This was a very great trial to

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[24] Taft, Biographical Sketches, 75. Church, More About, 145, 161.

many of us; to see the Lord make use of such simple means, and our usefulness comparatively but small," he admitted.[25]

Mary Barritt Taft began speaking before she was seventeen years old, and was so well-received by the people that she drained a neighbouring chapel eight miles away of its members. "It is at the peril of your soul that you meddle with Mary Barritt," one male minister was told by another Methodist. "God is with her - fruit is appearing wherever she goes." Mary received invitations from far and wide to preach, but concentrated her ministry among families. In 1802 when she was thirty years old, she married the Methodist preacher Zechariah Taft, and that year the two of them worked together in the Dover Circuit as a clergy couple. Mary attracted such crowds that the Connexion chairman ordered her to stop preaching, but she continued with Zechariah's support. Mary's refusal precipitated a nation-wide controversy which resulted in an almost total ban on women preaching.[26]

On July, 1802, the Methodist Irish Conference, meeting in Dublin, concluded that it was contrary to both Scripture and "prudence" that women should preach or exhort in public. Moreover, any woman who did was to be immediately expelled from the Society. The London Conference followed suit the next year, and although it did not categorically prohibit women from preaching, it made it complicated and virtually officially impossible. A vast number of people were opposed to women preaching, the Conference noted, and since the Methodists had an ample supply of male preachers who had been "accredited by God," women preachers were unnecessary. If a woman felt that she had an "*extraordinary*" call then she could speak to her "*own sex*," the Minutes recorded, but only under two conditions. First, she must have obtained the approval of the Superintendent and of a Quarterly meeting in order to preach in the circuit where she resided. Secondly, in order to preach in another circuit area,

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25 Crookshank, History, Vol. 2, 30ff. Church, More About, 155ff. Deborah M. Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters: Female Preaching and Popular Religion in Industrial England (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985), 52ff. Abel Stevens, The History, Vol. 3, 114ff. Taft, Biographical Sketches, 301ff.

26 Church, More About, 163ff. Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters, 56ff.

she must have received a "*written*" invitation from that Superintendent as well as a note from the Superintendent in her own circuit.[27]

Still the women continued to preach. By the end of 1803, Mary Bosanquet Fletcher wrote that her breath was short and she confined herself to her own "preaching room." Yet the people came there from "near and far" and she led as many as six or seven different meetings a week. In 1804, Elizabeth Tonkin Collett (b.1762) was preaching at a chapel her husband had built at St Erme. Diana Thomas (b.1750) was authorized in 1809 by the Quarterly meeting and by her Superintendent to preach around Lyonshall. Elizabeth Tomlinson Evans (1776-1849) preached with her husband Samuel - often in the open air - and kept on until her death. Both Elizabeth and Samuel withdrew in protest from the Connexion for a time, as her name was listed on the circuit with an asterisk instead of her name. Elizabeth had found a great deal of prejudice against her preaching until she married and her husband opened the way for her. Mary Dunnel was offered a pulpit on the Tunstall circuit in 1807 to keep her from speaking at a camp meeting. Sarah Mallet Boyce and her husband were still on the preacher's plan in York in 1825. Mary Woodhouse (b.1751) and her husband George Holder worked together as itinerants for thirty years. Generally Mary exhorted after George preached. In his book on women preachers, Zechariah Taft described the careers of a number who were still preaching in the 1820s, including his wife, Mary Barritt, who continued her ministry into the 1840s. In fact, he noted, of the eleven new preachers who were received at the Conference in Leeds in 1824, two of them had been converted as a result of women preaching. Zechariah continued to be an outspoken supporter of women, even calling their opponents "bigots." Whether or not this helped their cause, it is largely through his writings that the activity of many of these women has been preserved.[28]

Alice Cambridge was expelled from the Society in Ireland because she continued to preach. The American preacher Lorenzo Dow was appalled

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[27] William Smith, History of Methodism in Ireland (n.p.: ca 1828), 85. Methodist Minutes, (London: 1803): Q.#19. William Smith, A Consecutive History of the Rise, Progress and Present State of Wesleyan Methodism (Dublin: T. W. Doolittle, 1830), 85.

[28] Church, More About, 146. Taft, Biographical Sketches, 84ff., 145, 168f. Crookshank, History Vol I and 2, passim. Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters, 71ff., 95.

that she had been "turned out" of the Society for no other reason than "because in conscience she could not desist from holding public meetings." Indeed, her great work could not be ignored, and in 1811, Conference decided to readmit her. She continued to preach until 1830 in every county in Ireland, speaking to crowds of up to one thousand men and women. In some areas, entire congregations were left up to her. Ann Lutton began preaching in Ireland before 1802, and was still travelling around the country in 1838. She came from a "good" family and attracted aristocracy to her meetings. Her listeners included both Roman Catholics and Protestants. Apparently she spoke 'officially' only to women. A historian writing in the 1820s described Ann as a "pious, modest, diffident young woman" who spoke only to "her own sex." However, at one gathering in Tullamore, the women sat inside a meeting hall, while the men listened from the outside. The doorkeeper had deliberately left the door open so the men could hear.[29]

Most of the women were received enthusiastically by the ordinary men and women who made up the Methodist Societies. In fact, the legislation designed to stop their activity barely passed. Official Methodist publications, however, deliberately omitted most references to the women's preaching. The editor of the Methodist Magazine refused to print an account of the life of the popular preacher Elizabeth Tonkin Collett, even though it had been written by a minister and submitted by her son Richard. The editor returned it saying that it might set a "precedent to young females in the Connexion."[30]

Elizabeth had had a remarkable career. A mother of eleven children of whom eight survived her, she preached regularly supported by her husband. During her ministry at Roseland, seven Societies were founded and seven chapels built. She set up classes and led at least one revival. Diana Thomas, who had been officially authorized to preach in 1809, had travelled thousands of miles on a white pony in Wales and England as an

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29 Crookshank, History, passim. Wm Smith, History of Methodism, 85 f. Lorenzo Dow, The Dealings of God, Man And The Devil: as Exemplified in the Life, Experience and Travels of Lorenzo Dow (New York: Cornish, Lamport and Co., 1851), 150.

30 Church, More About, 156. Julia Stewart Werner, The Primitive Methodist Connexion Its Background and Early History (Madison, Wisconsin: University of Toronto Press, 1984), 144.

itinerant. Yet no mention is made of this work in the published memorial to her. Mary Barritt Taft was memorialized at her death with six sentences in the 1851 Methodist Magazine, leaving out all reference to her outstanding sixty-two year career in ministry.[31]

In 1835, the Wesleyan London Conference reiterated its stand on disallowing women to preach, evidently not for its own sake, but because of certain "concomitants". However, there is no explanation of these special circumstances. The Conference also specified that only male class leaders could attend special circuit meetings. Gradually women either ceased their work, or joined other Methodist denominations which were much more liberal and open to women itinerant and local preachers. Martha Williams (b.1790) had travelled throughout England since 1819, but about 1825, discouraged by the opposition, she and Ann Carr (1783-1841) formed an Independent Methodist Society where they employed local preachers and built two large chapels. Ann had been preaching before the 1803 prohibition with a style peculiarly her own. It is reported that she pointed a finger at each "sinner" one by one with "excellent results." Ann stood solidly against her opposition. "If God be for me," she is reported to have said, "no matter who is against me ... It is better to obey God rather than man." Mary Dunnel was soon refused the right to preach in Tunstall and elsewhere, and she became an itinerant for the Primitive Methodists. By the mid-nineteenth century, Wesleyan women were channeling their talents and energies into fund-raising activities such as the four-day Orphan-House Wesleyan School's Bazaar, which took thirteen months to plan, was staffed by ninety-six women, and produced a profit of over $7,000.00.[32]

Table 2

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31 Werner, The Primitive Methodist Connexion 137, 156ff., 171ff. Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters, 64, 144.

32 Church, More About,137. Methodist Minutes London, 1835. Taft, Biographical Sketches, 172ff. Werner, The Primitive Methodist Connexion, 27. Stamp, The Orphan-House, 296: The actual net profit was £1,784.11.3.

Year of death	Male	Female	Total
1780-1800	14	38 (73%)	52
1801-1820	32	52 (62%)	84
1821-1840	33	48 (59%)	81
1841-1858	23	31 (57%)	54

Methodist men and women buried at City Road Chapel, 1780-1858

The percentage of women in the Wesleyan Societies decreased, partly because other Methodist movements were more accepting of women in leadership roles, and therefore had more appeal. By the 1840s and 1850s, of those members buried at City Road Chapel, only slightly more than half were women, compared to almost three-quarters in the two decades before the turn of the century. (See Table 2) Women discouraged from preaching turned to other Methodist dissenting groups where they were warmly welcomed.[33]

The number of women who were class leaders also declined. By 1870 at the Chapel, there were thirty-four male class leaders, and only eleven female. This was not only because there were fewer women, but also because the classes were no longer segregated. Men led twenty-nine mixed classes, three all-male classes and two all-female classes. Women led only nine all-female classes and two mixed classes.[34]

Biographers and historians rarely referred to the women's preaching activity, or named it differently. Mary Bosanquet Fletcher's journals record that she was preaching from at least 1773 until 1811. Even at the age of 71, she held five meetings a week. Yet the biographer Henry Moore described her preaching as a "daily and hourly conversation." Indeed, he emphasized, she never "meddled with church government nor usurped authority over the man." Even writers who recognized the contributions women had made, were reticent to acknowledge the fact that they had been preachers. Gabriel Disosway wrote in 1861 that Mary held "public

33 Stevenson, City Road Chapel, 309ff, 607.

34 Stevenson, City Road Chapel, 28ff.

meetings" and "taught." Abel Stevens explained that Wesley considered the women not as preachers, but as deaconesses and prophetesses, and referred to Mary as a "public speaker." Matthew Simpson's Cyclopedia records that she "exercised her talents in publishing salvation in the name of Christ," and describes her in unflattering terms as being small and short, having "protruding eyes" and a "masculine" voice and manner.[35]

There are several reasons for this lack of official recognition.

With few exceptions, preaching women had not been part of the Church of England tradition. Wesley's mother had conducted worship services for her family and for at least up to two hundred neighbours. Zechariah Taft was aware of a Mrs Stevens connected to the Church of England who preached in her own chapel. But these were unusual occurrences. This was not the case, however, with many non-conformist groups which relied heavily on the skills of women members. For example, scores of Quaker women were speaking and travelling throughout Great Britain and around the world at that time. But as a Church of England clergyman, Wesley was insistent that Methodism was not a dissenting sect but a spiritual emphasis within the established church. He looked upon the movement not as something new, but as a revitalization of an existing denomination.[36]

In one sense, however, the Methodist movement did encourage a break with tradition. Conversion, a turning away from the past, was central to its doctrines, and this focus helped make it acceptable in the beginning for women to assume non-traditional roles. The format of the early spontaneous Methodist meetings also turned the tradition upside down. The open air rather than church buildings was the *locus* for worship and meetings took place at unaccustomed hours. However, as Methodism shifted from a radical group or sect within a church to a church in its own right, and developed regular places of worship and more formalized structures, traditional roles for women were re-emphasized. The subversion of the tradition had had a tenuous hold on the denomination.

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[35] Taft, Biographical Sketches, 26ff. Abel Stevens, The Women of Methodism (New York: Carlton and Lanahan, 1869), 12f. 56. Gabriel P. Disosway, Our Excellent Women of the Methodist Church in England and America (New York: J.C. Buttre, 1861), 45ff. Church, More About, 147. Matthew Simpson, ed., Cyclopedia of Methodism.

[36] Taft, Biographical Sketches, 13ff., 267.

The development from a charismatic sect to a denomination in the history of the Christian church has been predictable. As second generation church members are born into the tradition, less emphasis is placed on conversion. As the membership of the church broadens and increases, expediency demands administrative structures, rules, regulations and consistency of doctrine. Traditionally, ministry becomes more ordered, regulated and professional. In addition to relying on selection by the Holy Spirit, candidates for ministry are assessed on the basis of education and other tests. As the movement becomes a church, it loses its separate identity, conforming more closely to its cultural context. The behaviour and dress codes of society as a whole are adopted as the norm for the denomination, including acceptable roles for women.[37]

After Wesley's death in 1791, three factors hastened the process of the development from a Wesleyan Methodist sect to a church: the insistent demands of the Methodist membership for an autonomous church; the prevailing social and political upheaval in Great Britain; and the ultra conservatism of Jabez Bunting, the dominant Methodist leader in the early nineteenth century, secretary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society for eighteen years, president of Conference four times, and president of the Wesleyan Theological Institution for twenty-four years. While he was in control, he used his influence to discourage all the "liberal and radical elements" in the Society.[38]

The nineteenth century was a time of flux. Everywhere, society was changing, although the most concrete and dramatic examples of the destruction of the existing order in the late eighteenth century were the French and American Revolutions. Rebellion, however, was in the air. Thomas Paine's radical The Rights of Man (1791-1792) shook the British establishment, but it reflected the desire for democracy which was "creeping over" a number of countries. Women became vocal, demanded their rights, insisting on equality. Deploring the status of women, the

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37 For a detailed analysis of the shift from sect to church see: John S. Moir, "Sectarian Tradition in Canada," in John Webster Grant, ed., The Churches and The Canadian Experience (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1963),119-132; S. D. Clark, Church and Sect in Canada (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1949), passim; Ernst Troeltsch, The Social Teaching of the Christian Churches, Vol. 1, tr. Olive Wyon (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1931), esp. 330ff.

38 C.B. Sissons, Egerton Ryerson Vol. 1, 141.

English educationalist Mary Wollstonecroft cried out for justice in her Vindication of the Rights of Women in 1792. Horace Walpole called her a "hyena in petticoats." Mary Hays argued against marriage and in favour of women's sexual freedom in an Appeal to the Men of Great Britain in Behalf of Women, and later, in 1803, compiled a six-volume biography of outstanding women. Mary Radcliffe repeated the challenge in An Attempt to Recover the Rights of Women From Male Usurpation in 1799. The Bluestockings, the first literary society in London, encouraged this kind of radical thinking and publication. Across the Channel in France, Olympe de Gouges insisted on greater freedom in her Declaration of the Rights of Women.[39]

Dissension was rife within the Methodist ranks. Society members agitated to receive communion in their own chapels instead of only at Church of England worship services. Lay leaders resented what appeared to them as heavy-handed control by some of the more prominent Methodist leaders. Faced with rebellious and sometimes defiant members, Methodist leaders responded with restraining and conservative legislation. Much of British society reacted negatively towards the Methodist followers, and these reactionary policies were in part a response to counteract these negative attitudes.[40]

Ever since John Wesley and George Whitefield had been forced to preach out-of-doors because Church of England churches were closed to them, Methodists had been harassed. They were subject to taunts, ridicule, some physical violence and press-gangs. Their services were interrupted by mobs of ruffians with musical instruments, noise-makers, cowbells or other irritating distractions. Preachers were sometimes run out of town. No doubt such treatment was in part a human response to the "other," as well as a defensive reaction on the part of lukewarm church members to the critical statements made by the very presence of more enthusiastic Methodist worshippers. Insisting that their meetings were a legitimate part of Church of England worship, however, Wesley had refused to register his chapels as dissenting meeting places under the Toleration Act.

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39 Mary Wollstonecraft, A Vindication of the Rights of Woman, ed. M. B. Kramnick (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books, 1975), 17. Judy Chicago, The Dinner Party, A Symbol of Our Heritage (New York: Anchor Books, 1979), 177ff.

40 Werner, The Primitive Methodist Connexion, 4ff.

Had he done so, the early Methodists would have been afforded some measure of protection from this kind of abuse.[41]

After Wesley's death, the persecution the Methodists faced was less physically violent, but more intimidating to their leaders. Members of the British Parliament feared that the tide of republicanism and democracy which threatened to swamp the English nation had some relationship to the enthusiastic "fanatical" Methodists. Rumours circulated that there would be reprisals in the form of legislation restricting freedom of worship. Pamphlets insinuating Methodist disloyalty were common. The fact that Methodists were champions of the poor and desired to disassociate themselves from the established church was for many, enough proof of the Society's treasonable intent. In an effort to be politically and socially acceptable, Methodist leaders delivered sermons and wrote articles for official periodicals affirming Wesleyan loyalty to the crown and advising their members to stay clear of reformers. It was a preview of what would take place in Canadian Methodism a few decades later under the leadership of Egerton and John Ryerson. Guided by right-wing leaders such as Jabez Bunting and Thomas Coke, the Irish and English Conferences enacted reactionary legislation which resulted in four major secessions between 1796 and 1815, and a number of other minor conflicts. The Independent Methodists were formed in 1796, the Methodist New Connexion in 1797, the Primitive Methodists in 1811, and the Bible Christians in 1815.[42]

In 1796, itinerants were forbidden to publish articles or books without the sanction of a Conference book committee. Four years later, Conference resolved that all meetings were to be conducted with a strict adherence to order and regularity. In 1802, preachers were required to undergo a public examination as to their suitability. That same year and in 1803, legislation was enacted which attempted to stop women from preaching. In the latter year, as well, permission was required in order to hold "love feasts" and band meetings. Four years later, camp-meetings were prohibited, and only accredited preachers were to be allowed in Wesleyan pulpits. By 1818, Wesleyan ministers were using the title of

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41 Alec R. Vidler, The Church in an Age of Revolution, The Pelican History of the Church, Vol 5 (Harmondsworth, England: 1961), 34ff.

42 Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters, 19ff. Werner, The Primitive Methodist Connexion, 4ff.

"Reverend," a custom sanctioned by Conference in 1821. In 1836 ordination took place by laying on of hands. Decision making in the Church was shifted almost totally away from the laity to the ordained ministers. Lay readers lost their function. Jabez Bunting explained to Egerton Ryerson in 1840 that it was

> very well for men to spend their strength in preaching and let others [laymen] read the prayers, when Methodism was only a Society supplementary to the Church; but having in the order of Providence grown up into an independent and separate Church, the preachers were something more than mere preachers of the Word - they were ministers of the Church, and ought to read as well as preach.[43]

Spontaneity was rapidly erased from the heart of Wesleyan Methodism and brakes applied to liberalism in order to create a more respectable denomination. This respectability did not include women in the pulpit "The aristocratic world," wrote Edward Lytton Bulwer in 1833, "does not like either clergymen, or women, to make too much noise."[44]

In a letter to his brother Egerton in 1831, the Canadian itinerant George Ryerson wrote that he feared the Wesleyan Conference in England was "an obstacle to the extension of civil and religious liberty." George had been sent to England by a group of liberal-minded Canadian citizens to lay their case before the British Parliament. He had time to observe the Methodist church in England and despaired of what he found. The Church had become too "legalized," George wrote. "Every act is a legislative act, even on so trifling a subject as whether a certain chapel shall have an organ." Even the Irish delegates to the British Conference were too "churchified," he noted, and all the clergy were "too well provided for" to consider a posting to a country such as Canada. Many of the preachers' sons were being educated for the Church of England ministry, and a number of the Methodist members who had become wealthy had left the Methodists

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43 Egerton Ryerson, The Story of My Life (Toronto: William Briggs, 1883), p.27. Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters, 7ff. Church, More About, 250. Kent, Jabez Bunting, 30ff.

44 As quoted in Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters, p.7 (1833).

to join the Established Church. George sought the reason that the Methodists had had no increase in members in the previous year, but the Society was unwilling to discuss this topic with him. He did discover, however, that they were "enormously in debt" because of new chapels. The worship services had become exceedingly formal, he wrote, and the whole morning service of the Church of England was being read in most of the Methodist chapels with as much formality as in the parent body. George criticized the Wesleyans' "exalted opinion of themselves," their politics, and "their servile reverence for great men and great names." He went as far as to say that what Alexander Pope had said of "Churchmen" could be literally applied to Wesleyans: "Is he a Churchman, then he's fond of *power*." Family business took George to England again the next spring and in another letter home to Egerton, George described the "sneering contempt" with which some of the Wesleyans spoke of the American Methodist Episcopal ordination and the Canadian Methodist Christian Guardian. "They have no friendly feeling or designs towards Canada Methodism," he wrote.[45]

In the same year, the Wesleyan Protestant Methodist Magazine published an article on education for women, describing the "reigning mode of education" as the worst curse of the age. It was producing women with "accomplishments," the writer complained, rather than preparing women for the station in society which "Providence" had destined them to occupy - that of wives, mothers and mistresses of families. Frustrated that Methodist women were still not safely ensconced in the home, in 1835 the Conference again prohibited women from preaching. In the Conference Minutes of that year, the list of those who could attend "Special Circuit Meetings, if one shall be convened," included travelling preachers, circuit-stewards, stewards, local preachers, trustees of the Chapel, and specifically mentioned male class-leaders. It was evidently assumed that all the other functions except leading classes would be done only by men.[46]

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45 Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, Vol 2, 130-40, 162-4.

46 Wesleyan Protestant Magazine 1832, 75ff. Minutes of the London Conference 1835, 589.

Although a number of women did manage to continue preaching in Wesleyan Methodist chapels and on circuits, many of them turned to the newly formed secession groups such as the Primitive Methodists and Bible Christians.

The Primitive Methodists

In 1811, the first Primitive Methodist Society tickets were issued to two hundred men and women in Tunstall who gathered to support Hugh Bourne and William Clowes, both expelled from the Wesleyan Methodist Church for holding camp-meetings. The two men had been encouraged in this venture by Lorenzo Dow, the eccentric American itinerant who had just returned from Canada and the United States much impressed by the frontier tent meetings he had witnessed there. Not that Hugh had needed coaching. He had already taken a radical stand in 1808 when he published a defense of women preaching. He had listed the women Jesus Christ had authorized "to preach," including the Old Testament women Miriam and Deborah, and in the New Testament, the Virgin Mary [sic] and Mary Magdalene. Hugh's mother had been influential in forming his attitude towards women and their abilities. She had taught him and all her family to read. In 1810, Hugh Bourne, his brother, and an unidentified woman preached at Standly in Staffordshire, resulting in the formation of a small society, later identified as the beginning of the Primitive Methodist denomination.[47]

In 1815, the popular Sarah Kirkland Harrison (1794-1880) became the first woman itinerant with this denomination. Hugh Bourne paid her salary out of his own pocket at the beginning of her ministry to allow her to travel. Two years earlier when she was nineteen years old, she had been put on the preacher's plan in Derbyshire. Her first convert had been a gipsy, and afterwards whenever she was preaching close by, he acted as a "herald" announcing her presence. Five years later, one-fifth of all the preachers were women, thirty out of one hundred and fifty. Lorenzo Dow,

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47 Hugh Bourne, History of the Primitive Methodists (London: J. Bourne, 1823), passim. Christian Journal, 18 Aug. 1860, p.1, c.2. Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters, 95ff.

apparently biased in favour of women preachers, recorded in his journal that he had heard one of them and was extremely "satisfied." "She stopped when she had done," he wrote, "whereas a great many men, instead of stopping when they have got through, must spin it out and add to it or have a repetition over and over again."[48]

In her detailed analysis of lower class women preachers in England, Deborah Valenze notes that she found records of more than two hundred women preaching in the first half of the century, a great majority of them affiliated with the Primitive Methodist movement. The 1832 Minutes of Conference officially listed at least thirteen women preachers. There were likely others, but initials were sometimes used in place of first names, and it is impossible to determine the sex of all the preachers.[49]

The women were young, and a number of them hardly strong enough to travel around the country as itinerants. It has been noted that radical revivalistic sects have the greatest appeal to the socially marginalized such as adolescents. Lucy Collison (1813-1834) was a local preacher at Lynn and Snettisham. Unfortunately, she got wet going to one of her appointments and died from a cold and scarlet fever at the age of twenty-one. Hannah Williams had been married for only ten months when she died in 1834, and her husband took over her appointments afterwards. An examination of twenty-eight women who were preaching in the southwest of England between 1827 and 1841 indicates that their median age was nineteen and a half. They were also poor. Over half of another group of one hundred women analyzed had been servants or farm labourers living in poverty. Preachers' salaries did not go far in alleviating this situation. In 1820, a woman was paid £8.0.0 a year, whereas an unmarried man could earn £15.0.0 and a married man up to £37.14.0.[50]

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48 Lorenzo Dow, The Dealings of God,175. Werner, The Primitive Methodist Connexion, 81ff. Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters, 7. Minutes, p.156. Townsend, A New History, 575. Hugh Bourne, History of the Primitive Methodists, Vol. 2, 265. "Sarah Kirkland," in Encyclopedia of World Methodism ed. Nolan B. Harmon.

49 Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters, 7.

50 Werner, The Primitive Methodist Connexion, 141. Methodist Magazine 1834-1836; Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters, pp.112. Smith-Rosenberg, Disorderly Conduct, 149.

Elizabeth Smith Russell (1805-1836) had been a household servant before she became a Primitive Methodist itinerant. A good speaker, self-possessed and determined, she attracted crowds wherever she went. At her death at the age of thirty-one, her husband, Thomas, also an itinerant, found a list of thirteen stations which had asked her to come and preach. Thomas estimated that nearly two thousand men and women attended her funeral. Like most of the committed preachers, Elizabeth and Thomas endured extreme hardship for their cause. Their circuits were large and travelling was done on foot. Their custom was to walk through a village singing a hymn, and then take a "Ranter stand" to address the people who had collected. One morning when Elizabeth felt so ill she could not eat, Thomas offered to fill her evening appointment for her. The appointment was twenty-five miles away. The next year, while she was preaching at Mitcheldever and Winchester, a young man "maliciously strung up a lot of dead rats." After ripping them open, he hung them in a row on a long stick and dangled them before her face. Elizabeth closed her eyes and kept on with her sermon.[51]

Sometimes the women's presence disarmed their opponents. At Ramsbury, when Thomas preached, about twenty young men sang "wicked" songs during his sermon, men and boys rang hand bells, sheep bells, and horse bells, blew horns and shouted. Thomas warned Elizabeth who was scheduled to preach next, but she insisted on filling her appointment. Elizabeth's followers were waiting for the mob with their own arsenal, - "stones, eggs and other missiles" in their pockets. But when the ringleader came and found a woman preaching, he crept foolishly away with his gang.[52]

The Primitive Methodist preachers had a large following. In the two decades between 1821 and 1841, it has been estimated that membership increased phenomenally from sixteen thousand three hundred and ninety-four to seventy-five thousand, nine hundred and sixty-nine men and women. Chapels were built, their publications increased, and the same institutionalization that had helped foster a conservative Wesleyan church

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51 Thomas Russell, Record of Events in Primitive Methodism (London: William Lister, 1869), 145. Dow, The Dealings of God, 171.

52 Russell, Record of Events, 147.

could be seen taking shape. From a "cottage" religion, Primitive Methodism shifted to being a mainstream denomination. The strong-willed independent women who had preached so confidently in the beginning became less noticeable. In 1842, Hugh Bourne and William Clowes retired, and with new leadership, a new organization was put into place. The centralized denomination moved its headquarters from "an obscure hamlet" to London in 1843. By 1851, a three-year plan of study had been set up for probationary preachers to read while they were itinerating. By the 1860s, few biographies of women preachers could be found in the Society's newspapers and magazines. Towards the end of the century, not only was it unusual to find a woman preaching but it was noted that women had even stopped praying in public.[53]

Bible Christians

As in the Primitive Methodist Societies, the Bible Christian movement afforded opportunities in the nineteenth century for women who believed that they had been called to preach. William O'Bryan, the Bible Christian leader, had been convinced after a trial period that women should be included on the preaching plan.

A Wesleyan Methodist lay supply preacher, O'Bryan had sought and been denied full preaching status because he was a married man. As the Wesleyan London Conference had decided in 1791 that it was too costly to maintain married men as preachers, it had ruled that only those married men who produced a signed statement that they had ample financial resources would be accepted on a plan. If men could not support their own families and preach as well, they would have to remain single. Believing that he had received a divine call, however, William threw himself into the preaching assignments he had been given as lay supply. He even added extra places where he found there was no preacher or where preaching had been abandoned. Some Sundays he walked thirty or forty miles, preaching three or four times. The Church did not applaud this enthusiasm and independence and instead, censured William for not adhering to a plan.

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53 Townsend, A New History, 586. Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters, 247ff. Hoover, "The Primitive Methodist Church" 142ff.

Because he refused to stop preaching where he felt he was needed, he was formally excluded from the Wesleyan Church, and on October 9, 1815, William, his wife Catherine and twenty other men and women gathered together in a farm house at Shebbear in Devon to form a new Society. Elizabeth Dart, who later played a prominent role in the Society's work in Canada, was among this first group of Bible Christians.[54]

Another founding member, Johanna Neale Brooks, had felt compelled to speak out during an earlier worship service, but had gone to church three times before she was able to summon up enough courage to stand up in public. After she was finished, her husband and a parish officer compelled her to leave, even though the congregation followed her outside and pressed her to continue. Johanna joined the new Society and continued to preach for it. William O'Bryan's wife Catherine and Mary Thorne, both married women with families, were preaching by 1816. The women proved to be so effective that by 1819, they had received official sanction. At the first Conference held that year, fourteen women out of a total of twenty-nine were listed as itinerants: Elizabeth Dart, Betsey Reed, Elizabeth Gay, Ann Mason, Patience Bickle, Margaret Adams, Susan Furze, Mary Ann Soper, Ann Cory, Catherine Reed, Elizabeth Trick, Grace Mason, Sarah Cory, and Sarah Baulch. At least two of these women - Elizabeth Dart and Elizabeth Trick - later emigrated to Canada. One of the youngest to begin as an itinerant, Patience Bickle had been only fourteen years old when she started working for the Society. Like the Primitive Methodist women preachers, many of the Bible Christian women were in their teens when they first felt the call to preach. William and Catherine O'Bryan's daughter, Mary, began speaking in public at age eleven.[55]

The women preached and travelled in spite of ill health, gruelling conditions, and opposition in the communities where they were sent to open new societies. One year, Elizabeth Dart travelled on a twenty-mile circuit, preached three times on Sunday, and usually every evening except Saturday. She began teaching school during the week to earn extra money but had to give it up because she found it too exhausting. In Cornwall, she

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54 Wesleyan Methodist Minutes, London, 1791, 254. F. W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 1-22.

55 F. W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 21-36. Observer, 9 May 1883, p.1. Taft, Biographical Sketches, 275.

was told that the crowds who flocked to hear her only came because she was a woman, and once their curiosity was satisfied, she would have no congregation. "But, blessed be the Lord," she exclaimed, "I found it otherwise." When she arrived at the house where she was to preach in Tavistock, the people were afraid to let her come in because some "great man" had threatened them with punishment if they did. So Elizabeth preached in the doorway. Another man told her that all preaching women should be burnt, she recorded in her journals, but a few days after his "abuse" of her, Elizabeth heard that his house had been burnt. She preached to a large congregation in Callington where the male local preacher was afraid of the mob. But she spoke out without fear, believing that her audience was "hungering and thirsting after truth."[56]

At the first Conference, the question was raised as to whether or not women should be allowed to preach. There was opposition, but the decision was that God could enable women as well as men to "speak to edification, and exhortation, and comfort". "The Lord" had already used women "to turn many to righteousness," the Conference pointed out, asking "what but this is the end of all preaching?" That year, the preaching plan listed at least one man and one woman in every circuit, except in one instance where a woman, Elizabeth Gay, was the only preacher.[57]

The women did have some restrictions not placed on men. Women were directed to change preaching places under the General Superintendent. Elizabeth Dart noted the discrimination in her journal, but accepted it. Ann Mason Freeman (1791-1826), however, chafed under all human authority. In 1819, on her own initiative, she sent an unofficial letter to all those who had attended Conference, urging them to stand fast against Satan. That same year, she only reluctantly agreed to follow the assignments given her, believing that they were not divinely inspired. But she eventually did comply, noting that it was not her own will, but only in "obedience to the elders." Catherine O'Bryan expressed her unhappiness with the male domination in a poem entitled "The Female Preachers' Plea":

By sweet experience now I know,

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56 Observer, 2 May 1883, p.4; 1 Aug 1883.

57 Observer, 2 May 1883, pp.1, 4. F. W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 73.

That those who knock shall enter in;
God doth his gifts and grace bestow,
On Women too, as well as men.

The sacred fire doth burn within
The breasts of either sex the same;
The holy soul that's freed from sin,
Desires that all may catch the flame.

If we had fear'd the frowns of men,
Or thought their observations just,
Long since we had believ'd it vain,
And hid our talent in the dust.

While men with eloquence and fame,
The silver trumpet manly blow,
A plainer trump we humbly claim,
The saving power of God to show.[58]

In spite of opposition, the women were popular, and drew large crowds. At St Ervan, where Betsey Reed came to take Elizabeth Dart's place because of the latter's ill health, several hundred gathered in the open air, and at times "her hearers" were too numerous to be counted. After Sarah Willis Stevens (b.1770) and Ann Mason preached indoors and in the streets in Brighton, they received excellent reviews in the Herald. One of the women, it was reported, spoke fluently in "correct language" with animation, and her doctrines were compared to those of the Wesleyan denomination. The other woman, the newspaper account noted, had "respectable" connections. Sarah and her husband had been Wesleyan preachers, travelling together extensively before her husband's death in 1813. Catherine Reed astonished a doctor in her audience who concluded that "she must have been inspired by God."[59]

The little Society expanded rapidly. Mary Ann Werrey (1801-1825) was sent to the Scilly Islands, the first missionary from the new Missionary Society formed in 1821. Multitudes flocked to hear her, sometimes two to three thousand at one meeting. The Conference had

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[58] Observer, 2 May 1883, p.4 Valenze, Prophetic Sons and Daughters, 150ff. F. W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 73, 85. Taft, Biographical Sketches, 159.

[59] F. W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, passim esp. 86, 104-152.

insisted that preachers take care of their health, but often there was no accommodation and little food. By 1824, Mary Ann had worn herself out, and she died the next year. Mary Toms was stopped by a constable from preaching outside a friend's house on the Isle of Wight in 1823, but before a month was up, two more women had been sent out to help her, the converts were so numerous. In 1824, there were sixty-eight itinerant preachers, forty-seven men and twenty-one women. In addition, the Society recognized approximately eighty female and numerous male local preachers. In his history of the Bible Christian movement, F.W. Bourne refers by name to forty-two women who were engaged in a preaching ministry throughout England and Wales. [60]

Women continued to be an important part of the Bible Christians' activity, but as the number of travelling preachers increased, the ratio of women to men decreased. In 1827, there were sixty-two male itinerants and only twenty-seven female. Eleven years later, out of ninety-five, only eleven were women. In less than twenty years, the percentage of women had dropped from forty-eight per cent in 1819, to thirteen per cent in 1838. Even by 1832, such resistance had developed that William O'Bryan felt compelled to publish a vindication of women preaching in the Arminian Magazine. He described how useful women had been in converting sinners. Answering scriptural objections, he suggested that it was totally inconsistent to allow women to pray, sing and prophesy and not to preach. Nevertheless, by 1844, at the same time that Ann Vickery Robins was experiencing hostility in Upper Canada, there were only seven women as itinerants, but one hundred and eleven men.[61]

As in the other Methodist denominations, the salary scale was discriminatory, but that was not unusual for this period in history. In 1837, a single man received from £10.0.0 to £14.0.0 a year with board and lodging. A single woman earned £7.0.0 along with room and board. Married men were given a bonus in order to try to keep their wives preaching: £30.0.0, a furnished house and allowances for each child. Conference had recommended in 1820 that if preachers were to marry, they should choose "wives" from among those women who devoted themselves "wholly to the

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60 F. W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 147, 293.

61 F. W. Bourne, The Bible Christians, 86, 241.

work." A number of women did itinerate at the same time as raising their families. Ann Vickery Robins often carried her youngest child to church, handing it to a member of the congregation to care for while she preached. Some of the women such as Ann emigrated to Canada with their husbands, becoming clergy couples in North America.[62]

Like the Primitive Methodist denomination, the Bible Christians evolved into a more regular denomination. Influenced by the conservative British atmosphere, women began to fit more closely into the norm expected by mainstream society, nurturers closely confined to the hearth and home.

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62 Werner, The Primitive Methodist Connexion, 144. Minutes of the Bible Christian Conference 1820, 7. Bible Christian Magazine 1853, memorial tribute by Paul Robins.

PRIMITIVE METHODIST PREACHERS' PLAN.

For the Home Branch *of HULL CIRCUIT.*—1827.

PLACES AND HOURS.	APRIL. 15	22	29	MAY. 6	13	20	27	JUNE. 3	10	17	24	JULY. 1	8
Mill Street 10½—6	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2
Mill Street 3		3	13	20	13	23	6	6	12	9	20	21	22
Mill Street 7	18	12	10	21	9	20	5	22	23	6	13	24	21
Church Street 6	18	12	10	21	9	20c	5	22	23	6	13	24	21
Beverley 10½—2		13	1	10	31	9	[illegible]	12	4	5	1	20	3
Beverley 6		2	1	4	3	2	[illegible]	4	4	2	1	4	3
Sutton Bank 2		23		12		18		13		21		33	
Sutton 6	20	33	22	12	10c	18	9	13	24	21	22	33	5
Hessle 6	22	24	5	6	33	17	20c	9	18	13	10	23	31
Cottingham 2	22	2	3	4	32	2	1c	4	13	2	3	4	10
Cottingham 6	22	20	3	9	32	5	1c	24	13	18	3	12	10
~~Woodmansey 6~~	10		8c	—	3		13		22		24	—	12
Willerby 6		32		21		2c		23		10		6	
Swanland 6		17		13		2c		8		33		32	
Elloughton 10	*	4	28	3	15	1c	26	2	17	4	8	3	7
South Cave 2	*	4	28		15	1c	26	2	17	4	8	3	7
North Cave 6	28	4c	26	3L	17	1	28	2	*	4	26	3	15
Ellerker 10—Brantingham 2	7		*		8		17		28		15		17
Newbald 2	28	15	26	11	17	*	28	7	32	15	26	*	11
Halton 1½		1		25		1c		16		1		27	
Goxhill 6	1	6	2	30	4c	27	3	25	1	20	2	16	4
Barrow 2	1	6	2	30	4c	12	3	25	1	20	2	16	4
Barton 10½	1	6	2	2	4c	12	3	3	1	20	2	2	4
Barton 6	19	1	12	16	2c	4	22	27	16	1	19	25	29
Ferriby 1½	25	27	18	5c	19	16	22	3	16	25	19	2	29
Ferriby 6				2c				3				2	
Mill Street ....M	4		3		2		2		1		3		1
Ferriby ....T	4		4		3T		2		4		3		1
Brantingham ....W	4		4		3T		2		4		3		1
South Cave ....Th	4		3		3T		2		4		3		1
Ellerker ....F	4		3c		3T		2		4		3		1
Newbald ....M		4		3T		1c		2		4		3	
Elloughton ....T		4		3T		1		2		4		3	
Swanland ....W		4		3T		1		2		4		3	
Hessle ....Th		4		3T		1		2		4		3	
Beverley ....T	2		4		1		1		2		4		3
Sutton ....Th	2		4		1T		1		2		4		3
Mill Street ....F	2		4		1		1		2		4		3
Woodmansey ....M		2		1T		3		1		2		4	
Sutton Bank ....Th		2		4T		3		1		2		4	
Barton Water Side ....F		2		1		3		1		2		4	
Goxhill ....M	1		2		1T		3		1		2		4
Halton ....T	1		2		4T		3		1		2		4
Barrow ....W	1		2		4T		3		1		2		4
Ferriby ....Th	1		2		4T		3		1		2		4
Barton ....F	1		2		4T		3		1		2		4
Cottingham ....T		1		2T		4		3		1		2	
Pottery ....Th		1		2T		4		3		1		2	
Mill Street ....F		1		2		4		3		1		2	
Cottingham ....T	3		1		2T		4		3		1		2
Willerby ....W	3		1		2T		4		3		1		2
Hessle ....Th	3		1		2T		4		3		1		2
Mill Street ....M		3		1		2		4		3		1	
~~Beverley ....T~~		3		1T		2		4		3		1	
Tickton ....W		3		1T		2		4		3		1	
Church Street ....Th		3		1		2		4		3		1	

PREACHERS.

W. Clowes, Supernumerary
1 William Suddards
2 Thomas Bletcher
3 William Dent
4 Mary Burks
5 Henry Bentley
6 George Gill
7 Mary Thornham
8 Benjamin Dorsey
9 William Weston
10 Thomas Newsom
11 John Coates
12 William Malton
13 John Wallis & W. L.
~~14 Thomas Greasley~~
15 John Smith
16 John Lidget
17 William Anson
18 Robert Wood
19 James Scholefield
20 Marmaduke Hirst
21 Richard Rispin
22 J. Lockwood
23 Elizabeth Jackson
24 John Dennison
25 Enoch Bell
26 Job Gibson
* Hannah Johnson

ON TRIAL.

27 W. A.

EXHORTERS.

28 Thomas Pawson
29 John Smith
30 Joseph Foulding
31 William Slater
32 Charles Ellerington
33 ——K.

L Lovefeast
C Collection
T Tickets

The Preparatory Meeting for the Home Branch to be at Hull, on Friday, June 1st, to commence at 6 o'Clock.

The Preachers Meeting to be at Hull, on Tuesday, June 5th, to commence at 9 o'Clock in the Morning, and the Quarter Board at One o'Clock on the same day.

☞ Every Preacher is expected to attend his own Appointments, or get them supplied by those whose names are on the Plan—if that be found impracticable, he is requested to give proper Notice to the Committee ~~[illegible]~~ that they may get them properly attended to.

☞ A Home Missionary Meeting will be held in Mill-Street Chapel, Hull, on the Evening of Tuesday the 5th of June; Service to commence at Six o'clock—Also, on the preceding Sunday Evening, a Preparatory Sermon will be preached in the same place by J. Nelson, from Bridlington.

Stations of the Preachers.

Hull.
W. Suddards
T. Bletcher
W. Dent
M. Birks

Keyingham.
W. Brinning
S. Priestman

Driffield.
T. Webb
J. Oxtoby
J. Thompson

Bridlington.
J. Nelson
J. Hirst
M. Allen

Scarbro'.
R. Woodall
W. Sanders

Whitehaven.
W. Summersides
W. Thackray

Barnard Castle.
T. Ford
T. Holliday
J. Holliday

West Gate.
W. Turner
T. Morris
T. Greaves

Alston Moor.
J. Flesher
D. Beattie
J. Leakley

Redruth.
J. Garner
W. Drifield
D. Stranger

St. Austill
J. Hewson
W. Teal.

Plymouth.
R. Abey

Primitive Methodist Preachers' Plan from the Hull Circuit, England, 1827, lists four women preachers. Courtesy United Church Archives.

Elizabeth Ritchie Mortimer (1788-1835), Wesleyan Methodist preacher in England. Photo courtesy John Rylands University Library of Manchester.

The Countess of Huntingdon (1707-1791), called the first "Methodist bishop." Photo courtesy John Rylands University Library of Manchester.

Mary Barritt Taft (1772-1851), Wesleyan Methodist preacher in England.
Photo courtesy John Rylands University Library of Manchester.

Grace Norman Bennet Murray (1718-1803) organized the women's classes in
Great Britain. Photo courtesy John Rylands University Library of Manchester

VI. INCHING TOWARDS ORDINATION: IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

> "I'll go over to Canada for a wife when I marry," said a young south shore farmer to his friend. "When I come home at night she'll have a nice blazing fire on, and a clean kitchen, and a comfortable supper for me; but if I marry a New Yorker, it'll be when I come home 'John, go down to the well for some water, to make the tea;' or 'John, go and bring some logs to put on the fire to boil the kettle.' No, no, a Canadian woman's the wife for me."
> *Canadian Statesman*, February 12, 1857, p.1

Not only did Methodist women preachers from Great Britain emigrate to Upper Canada in the first half of the nineteenth century, but also to the United States, where many of them continued preaching to mixed reactions. Generally, in spite of resistance, they made greater progress in the United States than in Canada, inching their way towards ordination before the turn of the century. Whereas the governing body of Upper Canada was bent on preventing rebellion and preserving the status quo, the United States had been born of revolution, and peopled by radicals seeking freedom from restraint and authority. It should not be surprising that women were able to function more freely in the latter country than they could in the former, especially in public spheres generally considered by Victorian society to be the preserve of men.

American women had a reputation of being outspoken and assertive. Travelling throughout Canada and the United States in the late 1830s, Anna Brownell Jameson had recommended to a man looking for an educated but energetic wife in Canada that he look instead for a "spirited" woman from the New England States. Unfortunately, she wrote, British Canadian women displayed "a want of cheerful self-dependence, a cherished physical delicacy," and "a weakness of temperament" considered by that society to be "essential to feminine grace and refinement." This kind of Canadian

woman, Anna explained, was totally unsuited to Upper Canada and pioneer living.[1]

But while the lively American woman was more appealing to Anna who, herself, was independent and adventurous, that type of woman was an aggravation to others. In 1834, the editor of the Christian Advocate reported that a "female correspondent" had written a "spirited letter of reproof" accusing the paper of treating women differently than men in its columns. In fact, the editor remarked facetiously, the writer seems to think that the paper degrades women because she has read many lectures directed towards "wives and ladies" but not one "respecting husbands and gentlemen." Another reader supported the paper, suggesting sarcastically that the "female correspondent" must be suffering "from an injudicious bias of early education," and that her mind "may have imbibed prejudices and jealousies on the hackneyed and still debated subject, 'the rights of women,' which are not easily obliterated."[2]

While assertive women could be annoying to many Americans, women preaching were especially irritating. In his mid-century Compendium of Methodism, James Porter explained that there was nothing wrong with women speaking in public, as long as they were careful not to "usurp any authority" over men. In his opinion, the problem of women preaching was not the speaking itself, but the manner in which women spoke. It was "indecorous" for a woman to "be contending with a man in public," Porter exclaimed. A woman could teach, edify, or comfort, he explained, "as long as she does not find fault with men." A woman could "prophesy," he continued, as long as it was not done in an "immodest or masculine" manner. Women, he concluded, "must not be kept from speaking," but they must not speak "too loud or too long."[3]

Women, however, had been preaching in the church in the New England States since the seventeenth century. By the late nineteenth century, the American Methodist temperance worker, Frances Willard, estimated that at least five hundred women "evangelists" had occupied pulpits in the

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1 Jameson, Winter Studies, Vol 2, 153.

2 Christian Advocate, 21 March 1834, p.119, c.l; 11 April 1834, p.129, c.2.

3 James Porter, A Compendium of Methodism (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1851), 487ff.

United States, *excluding* an estimated three hundred and fifty Quaker women. Many of the women who preached had come from Great Britain, seemingly undeterred by the hazards of early ocean travel, including six weeks in confined quarters, contagious diseases, and the lack of fresh food.[4]

Dorothy Ripley (ca.1767-1831), described by the Christian Advocate as the most extraordinary woman in the world, crossed the Atlantic nineteen times between England and the United States, eleven of these trips between 1825 and her death in Virginia in 1831. Brought up as a Wesleyan Methodist in Whitby, England, Dorothy left that denomination because of opposition to women preachers. A free spirit, she travelled and preached as she felt called. She maintained a loose affiliation with both Quakers and Methodists, although she never would submit even to the direction of the Quaker Society. Dorothy, however, is one of the few women whose biographies appear in Harmon's Methodist Encyclopedia.[5]

Of a rebellious nature, herself, she befriended other preachers who refused to fit into the accepted mould. The tall, pock-marked, asthmatic Methodist preacher, Lorenzo Dow, was one of the recipients of her kindness. He, in turn, vigorously defended her against all opposition. Those who tried to block her were nothing but "religious bigots," he declared, "of narrow, contracted minds; for little minds are only capable of little things." Dorothy championed many causes in the United States. She visited the prisons, and described the horrors in the jails. "The rattling chains never can be obliterated from my mind," she wrote in her journal. She abhorred slavery. On one occasion, she went on board a slave ship and berated the owner. A black woman "praised God" that she had lived long enough to see a woman in the pulpit preaching "Jesus Christ." She preached to the Oneida Indians where the crowds were so great that in order to be seen and heard she had to stand up in a cart in the blazing sun.

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[4] Barbara Brown Zikmund, "The Struggle For the Right to Preach," in R.R. Ruether and R.S. Keller, Women and Religion in America: Volume I The Nineteenth Century A Documentary History (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981), 208.

[5] Zechariah Taft, Biographical Sketches, 205-41. Dorothy Ripley, The Bank of Faith and Works United 2d ed. (Whitby: G. Clark, 1822), passim. John T. Wilkinson, "Dorothy Ripley" in Nolan B. Harmon, Encyclopedia of World Methodism (Nashville: United Methodist Pub. House, 1974). Christian Advocate, 10 Feb. 1832, p.95, c.4,5.

One of the women there told her not to be discouraged even though many Americans believed a woman should not preach.[6]

Presbyterians, Methodists and Quakers in the United States invited Dorothy to speak to their congregations. In one six-week period alone, in New York in 1805, she slept in thirty different homes and filled forty-six appointments. In 1806, the Speaker of the Legislature of the State of Maryland offered her his chair to speak, and later that same year, Thomas Jefferson invited her to address Congress. Her contemporaries referred to her preaching appointments, but in her memoirs, Dorothy wrote that she objected to using the word "preach." She equated following a prepared text with preaching, whereas she claimed that she spoke only extemporaneously as and when inspired by the Holy Spirit:

> I did not approve of the word 'preach', because I never prepared anything for the purpose .. for I pray, and give my heart and tongue for God to inspire and speak by.[7]

Many of the early women preachers were from denominations other than the Methodist Church. The New Hampshire Freewill Baptists provided Sally Parsons (b.ca.1780) with a horse, saddle and bridle, so that she could travel "so much further" to exhort, pray and preach. Later, when she married another Baptist minister Benjamin Walton Randall, she was presented with the horse as a wedding gift. Clarissa Danforth Richmond (b.1792), another Freewill Baptist, was the "preaching sensation of the decade" from 1810-1820. She attracted vast crowds throughout the New England States and in the Canadian Eastern Townships, leading a religious revival in 1819 which lasted sixteen months. Chapels from other denominations were opened to allow her to preach, as was often the

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6 Lorenzo Dow, The Dealings of God, 150,189. Ripley, The Bank of Faith, 253, 279, 303. Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 45.

7 Taft, Biographical Sketches, 205-241. Ripley, The Bank of Faith, passim, esp. 180. Wilkinson, "Dorothy Ripley" in Harmon. Elaine Magolis, Conduct Becoming To a Woman (n.p.: The United Methodist Church, 1977), 108; and Leonard Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 129: Another woman, Harriet Livermore, preached in the House of Congress in 1824, 1832, 1838 and 1843, and in the Hall of Representatives in 1827. Harriet belonged successively to the Congregationalists, Quakers, Free-Will Baptists and Methodists.

custom for popular preachers. In the early 1830s, the Baptist Martha Spaulding also preached in the New England States and in the Eastern Townships. At least four other women were known to be preaching in that denomination during this period. Dorothy Ripley had written in her diary in 1806 that the baptist [sic] ministers were "free from those prejudices that prevail over many, against women officiating in the Gospel with them." The Christian Church is also reported to have had at least six female travelling evangelists before 1833, including Ann Rexford who was given a new chapel of her own in New Jersey. And women were preaching in the pulpits of the Congregationalists, Universalists and Presbyterians.[8]

The Methodist Episcopal Church

Methodist histories suggest that the Methodist Episcopal Church was not as receptive to women preachers. However, women appear to have been more active than official church records allow. There is evidence that women had taken an equal part in Methodist meetings by 1812. Methodist woman were preaching regularly in New York before 1825, and women began exhorting at least as early as 1810. The historian Nathan Bangs refers to a woman who began exhorting in the middle of one of his sermons even before that in 1796. He stopped preaching "and let God send by whom he will send." Contagious religious revivals, a "Second Great Awakening,' had been erupting in the United States since 1790, spreading westward from New England until at least 1837. Women formed the backbone of these revivals and many women were encouraged to exhort and preach. In fact, historians have estimated that as many as two-thirds of all the participants were women. The Methodist itinerant John Hudson reported that he had mostly women in his meetings in the first decade of the nineteenth century. When he went to Sela's Creek, he found that all the men had gone to the races, except one who was blind. Consequently he met in the school house with the women, mostly "young ladies of respectable appearance." With women in the majority, it is not surprising that they

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[8] Whitney R. Cross, The Burned-Over District (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1950), 263. Nancy A. Hardesty, Great Women of Faith (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982), 68f. Free Baptist Cyclopedia, 669. Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 127, 141.

took on leadership functions as they had in the Methodist Church in the eighteenth century in England.[9]

Eleanor Dorsey, wife of a prominent New York judge, accompanied a circuit rider in house-to-house visitation. She is credited with bringing in forty new converts to Methodism in one day. Fanny Butterfield Newell raised two children, but this did not prevent her from travelling with her itinerant husband through Vermont and Maine. Married in 1810, she began exhorting on her wedding day and afterwards when she travelled and shared the ministry with her husband, Ebenezer, she attracted crowds of people who came to hear her call penitents to the front of the church. Both Elizabeth Cantrell and Mrs William Baker also travelled with their husbands, exhorting at the close of their husband's services, Elizabeth in the 1830s in New Jersey and Mrs Baker in Arkansas. Amey Scott accompanied her husband and exhorted sometime after 1826. But one of the most famous ministerial teams was Deborah Millett and her husband. Deborah began exhorting in 1819 after her marriage to Edward Taylor, and by 1859 was preaching sermons. She was so well received in Boston that she was known as the Reverend Mrs Edward T. Taylor. Judith Mathers, Susan Hermes, Mrs Thompson and Jane Perry were also among a long list of early nineteenth century women preachers.[10]

In the face of this activity, however, American mid-nineteenth century Methodist biographers and historians played down women's role in the church. Though George Coles believed that the "most heroic followers of Christ" were "Females" [sic], yet in his accounts of English women who preached and worked closely with John Wesley, he either avoided referring to their preaching or devalued their work. He wrote that Sarah Willis Stevens "instructed the ignorant," that Sarah Crosby "held public meetings," that Ann Cutler was a "non-commissioned itinerant," that Mary Woodhouse Holder "worked with her husband," that Elizabeth Ritchie Mortimer was "useful," and that Sarah Mallett Boyce "preached for an hour

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9 Cross, The Burned-Over District, 37f., 177. George Coles, Heroines of Methodism or Pen and Ink Sketches of the Mothers and Daughters of the Church (New York: Carlton and Porter, 1857), 181. M. T. Blauvelt, "Women and Revivalism," in Ruether, Women and Religion, 1ff. Bangs, The Methodist Episcopal Church, Vol. 2, 31. Christian Guardian, 21 Nov. 1829, p.3, c.2.

10 Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 103, 117ff.

when in fits." Wesley, wrote Coles, did not want any women to "assume the character and title of a preacher." In fact, after an initial resistance, Wesley recognized and supported women in preaching roles. Gabriel Disosway, writing in 1861, four years after Coles, is even more selective in his study of Methodist women. Of Wesley's preachers, the only one included is Mary Bosanquet Fletcher who led "public meetings." Disosway downplays women's role in early Methodism even more than Coles. Therefore it is possible that Coles and Disosway also under-state the work of some of the American women they mention, and that the women were considerably more active in the church than they record, such as the "useful" Kentucky feminist Sarah Low Norton (1790-1856) who "was able to argue intelligently;" Elizabeth McColloch Zane (b.ca1748) who "read sermons," exhorted, and took over in the absence of a preacher; Sarah Pigman Griffith (1783-1845) who accompanied her itinerant husband from 1811 onward; and the Virginia resident Sarah Roszel (ca1751-1830) who led public meetings, exhorted and read sermons. The "useful" designation was often applied to women who preached in the Methodist church. John Wesley had described the itinerant preacher Sarah Crosby as "useful" and suggested to Eliza Bennis that she become "useful" by organizing and leading some classes. An English preacher and friend of Wesley's, Eliza died in the United States in 1802, evidently "having called people to repentance."[11]

The expectation of many members in the Methodist Episcopal tradition when Coles and Disosway were writing was that women would not preach, and it was natural for these historians to interpret their sources from a mid-nineteenth century mind-set. When Coles wrote, he pointed out that he was not aware of any women who even led Methodist classes in the United States. "The practice does not obtain in this country," he explained,

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[11] Coles, Heroines of Methodism, preface, 94ff., 105ff., 194ff., 266ff., 288ff. It is particularly difficult to tell from Coles' accounts of Methodist women which are American and which British. Many more of the women he mentions in leadership roles may have been American. Gabriel Disosway, Our Excellent Women, 45ff., 85ff., 145f., 261ff., 276f. John Wesley letters to Mrs Jane Barton, 13 Nov.1778; to Elizabeth Bennis 18 Jan. 1774. C. H. Crookshank, Memorable Women, 20. Letter from John Wesley to Sarah Crosby, 2 Dec. 1777, in George Smith, History of Wesleyan Methodism, 420f.

and as far as he knew, very few women were even praying out loud in prayer meetings.[12]

In his vignettes of American Methodism, James B. Finley recounted a story of two "pious" women who found themselves isolated in the country without access to church or pastor. Meeting in the woods to pray and talk about their spiritual life, they were overheard one day by a hunter. Reminded of the "instructions and prayers" of his "pious mother," the hunter implored the women to lead a prayer meeting in his cabin for his neighbours. "What Christian," asked Finley, would have believed that "any good would have resulted from such a meeting" led by women? But the women spoke and a revival began. Forty men and women were converted in a two-week session which continued without intermission. The news spread. A male itinerant arrived and the women "cheerfully" entrusted the work to him, Finley wrote. One wonders, of course, if the women were that relieved to hand over the work after such success. "How improper" it had all been, suggested Finley, how "abhorrent to every Christian" that the "Holy Spirit" had sanctioned a work brought about by such "improper agencies." "How shocking to delicacy," he exclaimed, that women had spoken "in public, especially in such a mixed assembly."[13]

The Victorian model of the modest, pious, and domestic woman who ministered in the home, shielded from the rigours and unsavoury aspects of the public milieu, had evolved as a result of the separation of home and workplace. Motherhood, Victorian society pointed out, was the role assigned to women since the beginning of creation, and although religion was more natural for women than for men, women's main religious function was to train their young at home in Christian morals and precepts. As Disosway pointed out, "woman and piety" were "sacred names," and "the bliss of home, of a sainted mother's love" was for him the most potent force in society. Women had been charged with their sons' spiritual growth and conversion, and in this way, it was argued, women were ultimately responsible for the shape of world events. It was a duty which could not be dismissed lightly. The prayers that God listened to most of

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12 Coles, Heroines of Methodism,13.

13 James B. Finley, Sketches of Western Methodism (Cincinnati: R.P. Thompson, 1854), 531ff.

all, noted Coles, were "those of the devoted mother pleading for her wandering child." Mothering, however, did not have to be confined to the home, but could be extended to the community. As Coles explained, women were not useful or powerful "in the same way as preachers of the Gospel" but in other nurturing ways such as "Mothers [sic], class leaders for their own sex, visitors of the sick and poor, Sunday School teachers, tract distributors, collectors" and as wives of missionaries and ministers.[14]

The expectations of the church and society for women and what women did in reality, however, did not always mesh. Miss Miller, "a lady preacher from the Northern States" was admired by the itinerant George Brown, a young Methodist Episcopal minister. In 1826 and 1827 she undertook an extensive tour around Pennsylvania and was sought after as a preacher at quarterly conference Sunday morning services. Although she was "highly recommended" by a number of Methodist preachers, Bishop Soulé called her a "strolling girl" with no authority to preach. But she spoke from the "altar" and drew larger crowds than the Bishop. Eventually she married a Methodist Episcopal minister, William A. Smith. Brown was more liberal than many of his co-workers. In 1829, he spearheaded the formation of the Methodist Protestant Church in the Ohio valley, a splinter group which advocated more involvement of the laity in church government and limited authority for the bishop. In 1866, after three years of discussion, the Northern Indiana Conference of the Methodist Protestants ordained Helanor M. Davidson, although a later motion to ordain women was defeated by the General Conference in 1871.[15]

In his research, Leonard Sweet found that on many occasions women preachers were asked to conduct funeral services; that many Methodist churches invited women preachers for "prime-time" Sunday morning worship; and that Methodist presiding elders sponsored women and quarterly conferences invited them to preach. Although affiliated with no one denomination, Nancy Towle preached to Methodist congregations around

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[14] Disosway, Our Excellent Women, iv. Coles, Heroines of Methodism, 14, 75. Blauvelt, "Women and Revivalism,"1.

[15] George Brown, Recollections of Itinerant Life: Including Early Reminiscences (Cincinnati: R. W. Carroll & Co., 1868), 183ff. William T. Noll, "Women as Clergy and Laity in the 19th Century Methodist Protestant Church," in Methodist History 15 (1977), 110. Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 142.

Pennsylvania in the 1830s as well as to Lutherans and Dutch-Reformed Baptists. After ten years as an itinerant, she claimed that only in Frederick, Maryland, had she ever been prohibited from preaching in a church. Although Nancy was often invited by the Methodist people to preach in their congregations, preachers often attempted to stop her. Her travelling companion was Thomasine O'Bryan, one of the daughters of William O'Bryan, the founder of the Bible Christian Church.[16]

Phoebe Worrall Palmer (1807-1874) firmly believed that she had been sanctioned to preach. "That God has called me to stand before the people, and proclaim His truth, has long been beyond question," she declared. Converted to Methodism, Phoebe began speaking in 1829, and for years, held "Tuesday meetings" in her New York home, promoting the doctrine of holiness or perfection. This was not unlike John Wesley's idea of sanctification, the state of perfect love, or willful action without sin. The historian Nathan Bangs, her childhood friend, acted as an unofficial president of these gatherings, and "pronounced her teachings substantially orthodox and Wesleyan." He believed that opposition to her stemmed from a lack of understanding of her opinions. "Why should anyone oppose another, even though a female," Bangs conceded in his diary, if that person had been instrumental in "the conversion of sinners and in the sanctification of believers." Phoebe became widely renowned as a preacher and camp-meeting speaker travelling in the 1850s to 1870s throughout Canada, the United States and Great Britain with her physician husband.[17]

A number of women, spurred on by revivalist fervour, served as American missionaries in the early part of the nineteenth century, both with the Indian tribes and beyond the continent. Whether or not these women preached as some of the American women did who went to the Canadian missions in the 1820s is not revealed in any of the available material. Sometime before 1819, Jane Allen Trimble (1755-1839) worked with the Wyandottes in the Ohio Conference, as did Harriet Stubbs a little later on. The presiding elder Finley described Harriet in language similar to that used to describe the Indian teacher and preacher Eliza Barnes Case,

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16 Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 128, 139ff.

17 F. A. Norwood, "Expanding Horizons" in Greaves ed., Triumph, 166. Abel Stevens, The Women, 350ff. Hardesty, Great Women, 94.

who won the admiration of the Canadian Wesleyan Indian converts in the late 1820s. Harriet was known as the "pretty red-bird " and regarded as an "angel-messenger sent from the spirit-land." According to Finley, she had "more courage and fortitude than any one of her age and sex." He wrote that she was "intrepid" and the "idol of the whole nation." Although Harriet is recorded as a teacher of Indian girls, these titles suggest a fairly assertive personality and unusual activity. Lucy Richards (b.1792) was teaching the New York Oneida Indian children the alphabet, reading and the New Testament in 1829. Natio Curtis Barnum (1812-1853) was also "useful," teaching the Indian women domestic economy around the 1830s. On New Year's Day, 1834, Sophronia Farrington, a teacher employed by the Boston Auxiliary to the General Methodist Missionary Society, arrived in Monrovia, Liberia, with two other couples to become the first single missionary woman sent overseas by the American Methodists. After twenty attacks of fever, she reluctantly returned to the United States the next year, and in 1836, was replaced by Ann Wilkins (1806-1857), a thirty-year old widow from New York State. Marcella Russell was sent to Rio de Janeiro in 1837, and a Mrs Jenkins to Buenos Aires three years later. A "strong" woman, Mrs Jenkins' services were soon terminated because of her refusal to follow her superintendent's orders. In 1851, Sarah Hale compiled a monumental work which noted all the distinguished women from creation to her time, eventually revising her final section to include women up to 1868. She listed all the women who had worked for missions, both at home and abroad, for the American Board of Foreign Missions, the Baptist Mission Union, the Protestant Episcopal Society and the Presbyterian Churches but was unable to obtain the names of the Methodist Episcopal women even though she made repeated requests to that denomination's Missionary Board. As Sarah pointed out, the Methodist Board published the names of all the financial donors to world mission, but neglected to "honour" those women who gave "of their living."[18]

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[18] Abel Stevens, History of Methodism, 436f. Christian Guardian, 21 Nov. 1829, p.3, c.2. R. Pierce Beaver, American Protestant Women in World Mission (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm B Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1986), 75ff., 60: In 1820, the United Foreign Mission Society sent six single women to the Osages west of the Mississippi. Disosway, Our Excellent Women, 241, 155. Abel Stevens, The Women, 275; Sarah

Enthusiastic and committed as the Methodist Episcopal women preachers were, they often held back in the face of opposition and abuse. Miss Miller begged to be excused from a preaching obligation when she heard that the Bishop who opposed her would be in town, but the presiding elder insisted that she keep her appointment. When Methodist preachers all suddenly developed "colds" at a protracted meeting where Nancy Towle was scheduled to speak, she gracefully withdrew and the preachers quickly recovered from their illness. A number of Methodist male preachers had no use for women who "screamed loud" and "frothed at the mouth," terms James A. Garfield used to describe women preachers.[19]

However, despite some resistance in the denomination to women preaching in the nineteenth century, the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States was one of the earliest to officially sanction women preachers. In 1869, Margaret Newton Van Cott (1830-1914) was given an exhorter's licence by the New York Conference, and a preacher's licence the following year, even though she had sought neither. Margaret had started preaching in 1866 after the death of her husband. Initially, she had been afraid to attend a Methodist class meeting because she would have to speak. She soon overcame her reticence. During her first year as a preacher, she delivered three hundred and thirty-five sermons, added five hundred new church members and travelled three thousand miles. At least fourteen other women were licensed and engaged in an active preaching ministry in the 1870s, including Anna Oliver, Jennie Fowler Willing and Amanda Smith. In 1880 their licences were withdrawn, but full-fledged ordination was permanently recognized in 1889.[20]

The Primitive Methodists

Whereas official recognition that women were preaching in the early Methodist Episcopal Church is limited, the Primitive Methodists

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19 Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 140ff.

20 Janet S. Everhart, "Maggie Newton Van Cott: The Methodist Episcopal Church Considers the Question of Women Clergy," in R.S. Keller, L.L. Queen and H.F. Thomas, Women in New Worlds Vol 2, 303ff. Greaves, Triumph, 9. W. T. Noll, "Women and Clergy," 110ff. W. G. McLoughlin, Modern Revivalism (New York: The Ronald Press, 1959),158. Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 117, 226.

occasionally published accounts of their women preachers' activities after missionaries were first sent out to the North American continent.

One of the most intrepid and controversial was Ruth Watkins (b.1802). In spite of her courage, Ruth wept as her vessel set sail from Prince's Dock in Liverpool just before noon on June 19, 1829, the only single woman in the first group of missionaries sent out to minister to the Primitives already in America. Forty-two days later, she stepped onto land in New York City, having suffered on the voyage from fear and nausea. The captain told her that in his fifteen ocean crossings in that ship, never had he experienced as rough seas during the summer. The small band of seven adults and two children comforted each other briefly and then got on with their work. Ruth carried out an exacting ministry around New York and Philadelphia, until sick, virtually destitute, disillusioned and feeling totally abandoned by the English Missionary Society, she retired in December 1832.[21]

The published journals and letters from Ruth and her co-workers omit the 'dark side' of their stories. The Hull and Tunstall circuits in England had contracted to support the missionaries, but they were often negligent in paying their salaries. Made up mainly of poor men and women, the Primitive Methodist Society had enthusiastically begun the mission but was financially unprepared. It sent its missionaries to America with inadequate funds. While enough money had been scraped together to buy hymn books to send over, the missionaries were barely able to pay the duty - £26.0.0 for stitched books and £30.0.0 for bound books. With their remaining funds, they could afford to rent only a cellar in the "back part of the city." The 1829 Primitive Methodist Magazine contained a plea to all their British members to make extra contributions to pay for their mission expenses. Yet in 1835, William Samson wrote to the "Brethren at Hull" on behalf of the other itinerants asking for more money. He explained that the cost of living in America was extremely high, that Americans expected them to dress better, and that the dirt from the dusty roads and the perspiration which resulted from the summer heat shortened the life of their garments. Other Societies were offering more attractive wages.

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[21] Primitive Methodist Magazine 1829, letter from William Clowes, 19 June 1829; letter from Ruth Watkins, 10 Aug. 1829.

Preachers needed at least $260.00 a year to live in the United States, Samson pointed out. But in January, 1836, he reported that he had received only $71.00 the past year as salary, $59.68 to cover travelling expenses, and $16.00 for house rent, a total of $145.68. Hardly enough, when the most recent doctor's bill for his wife Eliza had been $11.00. However, by 1852 at least, male married preachers were to be paid an annual stipend of $260.00 along with a small allowance for children, although a station could reduce this if necessary. Single male preachers were to be paid only $100.00 a year, and female preachers only $60.00 a year. In 1835, Ruth Watkins wrote that she had received only $16.00 from England since she had been in America, and this in 1830 or 1831. She had been given an additional $13.00 from the American stations. One hundred dollars "would have saved those Missions at the North [of New York State]," Ruth declared, "but we could receive no communication from home."[22]

The lack of home support led to certain abuses. Society members quarrelled in Philadelphia over whether the station there should be considered a circuit or a mission. Money which had been collected to buy land for a church building was being held by a few members who would not give it up. A lawsuit had been initiated by Samson at Newark to try to regain possession of the Society's property there, valued at $6,000.00. The itinerant George Parsons was accused of misappropriation of funds, and letters hinted at "mysterious affairs" of which "every preacher" was suspected. The members at Albany had been able to raise only $900.00 of the required $1900.00 to pay for their church, when another Society offered to bail them out if they turned over the buildings and joined with it. Only Ruth Watkins stood firm and would not be compromised. The trustees and the other preacher, her brother Nathaniel, changed their allegiance.[23]

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22 According to Acornley, A History, 19, the books were confiscated, but this is contradicted by Knowles' letter. Letter from Samson, 19 Jan. 1836, Philadelphia, to Mr John Flesher; letter from Ruth Watkins to William Clowes and John Flesher, 35 March 1835 from New York City, John Rylands University Library. Primitive Methodist Magazine 1829, letter from Knowles, New York, 15 Aug. 1829; letter from William Clowes to James Bourne, Liverpool, 19 June 1829.

23 Ruth Watkins, letter to William Clowes; Samson, 6 Nov. 1835 from Philadelphia, John Rylands University Library.

It was a hard life. The preachers were restricted to a maximum of seven hours sleep a night. Six hours had to be spent in study and the other eleven in pastoral duties. They were required to visit twenty different families each week, in addition to services, classes and other work. A preacher was fined fifty cents a day plus loss of salary for negligence. The heat in the summer months was oppressive. "I felt as though my blood almost boiled in my veins," wrote Ruth the second week in New York City. After walking ten miles outside Philadelphia to an appointment, Ann Wearing noted, "I find I could better walk in England ten miles, than five in this country. The roads and climate are different."[24]

But in spite of the lack of funds, the disagreements, and the working conditions, Ruth undertook an active ministry. She preached from the church pulpit or out-of-doors, often three times a day, led classes and week-long prayer meetings, held "love feasts," and opened new stations. The itinerant William Summersides wrote in 1830 that she was "very useful" and "well received." By December of that year, the Primitive Methodist missionaries had opened a church in Philadelphia, and the church Board there wrote New York to see if Ruth could extend her stay with them longer than had been scheduled.[25]

Ruth and Ann Wearing alternated on the Philadelphia and New York circuits for periods of four to six months, although there were brief times when they worked together. A man, seeing Ann and Ruth together in the pulpit one Sunday, said they reminded him of "the women who looked into the sepulchre." Ann had been a Wesleyan preacher in Devon. She had a more pastoral approach to ministry than Ruth, concentrating on families and seeking out the unchurched. "More good is done by family visiting than by the public ministry," she wrote in her journal. The people are more able to speak freely, she explained, "and the preacher gets into confidence with the people." She preached in small alleyways, although some "delicate people were offended," in jails and poor houses, and visited in hospitals. Church-goers often lacked an intense loyalty to any one denomination, and Methodist Episcopals, Quakers, Baptists and Presbyterians welcomed her,

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24 Acornley, A History, 59. Primitive Methodist Magazine June 1831, Ann Wearing's Journal, 5 Aug. 1830; 1829, Ruth Watkins Journal, 9 Aug.1829.

25 Primitive Methodist Magazine July 1831, Ruth Watkins Journal, Oct. 1830 to Feb. 1831.

and along with Roman Catholics attended her services. She had a thirst to find out about different aspects of life, and a love for all people. She attended a black people's meeting where she listened to them preach, exhort, pray and sing. She found them "sincere and happy." She was invited to a Methodist Episcopalian camp-meeting and went out of curiosity "as well as a desire to get good to my soul." To reach the campsite she travelled ten-and-a-half hours by sloop on a river and walked three miles. There were three thousand men and women and one hundred and eighty tents at the four-and-a-half day meeting. At times Ann found that her work was a "heavy cross," yet she was consoled by her "happiness" and "inward satisfaction."[26]

The reports of Ann's ministry end abruptly. The historian John Acornley wrote that the itinerant Edward Wearing returned to England in 1831. Edward could have been a relative of Ann's or Acornley may have confused the name.

Acornley also mentions that Ruth Watkins married a Methodist Episcopal minister at that same time, but Ruth's later correspondence makes no mention of this. In 1831, Ruth was asked to open new missions which she accomplished around Albany and Troy. But the cold weather, lack of money, and long walks in the snow were too much for her, and by the end of 1832 her health was spent. Friends cared for her and nursed her back to health, but the lack of support and communication from the parent Society alienated her. In 1835, she sadly wrote to John Flesher and William Clowes, the denomination's leaders in England:

> I have loved as dear as my life the P. M. cause, but I never can in future join it nor incourage [sic] anyone else to join it in this country.

Ruth disappeared from historical accounts. Years later, in paying tribute to the first courageous missionaries to North America, the Canadian writer Jane Agar Hopper referred to her as Mr. R. Watkins.[27]

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26 Primitive Methodist Magazine, July 1831, Ann Wearing Journal, Mar. to May 1830.

27 Letter from Ruth Watkins, John Rylands University Library. Acornley, A History, 22. Hopper, Primitive Methodism, 22. Letter from Wm Summersides, Toronto to

Even with its internal problems, the society continued, and women participated actively both in the industrialized Eastern cities and on the frontier. T. Newton and his wife, who had been on the preachers' plan in Derbyshire, England, continued to preach in Philadelphia after they emigrated to the United States in 1830. Mrs Suddard preached there, too, until her husband, a Primitive Methodist itinerant, joined the Methodist Episcopal Church as a minister. Ann (ca1807-1889) and George Parker were both itinerants for the American church. Sister Sutton was speaking in Albany in 1831, and in 1842, Eliza Fletcher was one of six people received into the professional ministry. Mary Holt Livsey (ca1837-1896) had been an active preacher throughout Lancashire in England and continued after she emigrated to the United States, although marriage "interfered somewhat" with her ministry.[28]

Mrs H.M. Knowles was sought after as a preacher, often holding her services in the open air to accommodate all the people who wanted to hear her. In spite of her popularity, however, the available records of her work, mainly in her husband's journals and letters, refer to her only by her initials. She and her husband William arrived in New York with the first group of missionaries. Even though she was expecting her first child, she took her share of preaching engagements. The parent body in England, however, accorded her less status than her husband. The broadsheet prepared by the Primitive Methodist president, James Bourne, to announce the first group of missionaries to New York referred only to "our respected Brother and faithful Minister, the Rev. William Knowles" and "our respected Sister, Ruth Watkins," ignoring Mrs. Knowles. Even though Ruth was accredited as an official missionary, yet she was not described as a "Minister" or given the title of "Rev."[29]

In his first year as a missionary, William wrote back home that New Yorkers were opposed to open-air preaching and that it was never done except for annual camp-meetings. He was told that he "would lose his

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Hull Circuit Committee, 1 July 1835, mentions that Sister Watkins was a local preacher at Newark, but the alienation in her 1835 letter makes this unlikely.

[28] Primitive Methodist Magazine 1831. Acornley, A History, 24, 30, 262, 361.

[29] Broadsheet, John Rylands University Library. Primitive Methodist Magazine 1829, letter from Wm Knowles, New York, 15 Aug. 1829; 1831, Knowles' 1831 Journal; 1832, Knowles' 1830 Journal.

character" if he preached outside, but, he confessed, "if this be the case, it is already gone." In 1830, the English Missionary Society asked William and "H.M." Knowles to open a station at Cincinnati, Ohio. In response, they set off on a seven hundred-mile trek with a new infant. They took turns preaching to crowds of "Old Methodists," "Associate Methodists" and other denominations, estimated by William to have been from two thousand to three thousand men and women. Their young child accompanied them to services. Methodist Episcopals welcomed them into their homes. After "H.M." Knowles preached, the people kept asking, "when will she preach again?" Many young people were attracted to their message but, recorded William, "influenced by their parents they joined other denominations." The first fall, "H.M." Knowles caught a severe cold from preaching in a log barn where the space between the logs was wide enough for William to put his arm through. They were both ill for some time the second year in their new station.[30]

In 1840, the young Society became independent from the English Church. Yet six years later, William Towler, his wife Mary Ann, and seven children arrived on the sailing ship Montezuma. On salary from the parent church, William was to assume the duties of general superintendent of the United States missions. He was paid very little and had to practice the most rigid economy. The family slept on the floor, and lacking enough chairs, most of them stood up to eat their meals. The kitchen work table doubled as William's desk. William travelled extensively throughout the United States and Canada, but the demands of the job and inadequate funding from England resulted in illness and his death less than a year after he had arrived. When he was sick, Mary Ann, "a lady of culture and refinement," took his services, and looked after much of his correspondence. Later she preached in Canada.[31]

It was not unusual for wives to fill in when their husbands were ill. In Pennsylvania, William Wood's wife preached when he was sick, but unfortunately she took sick, as well, and her husband was unable to provide what he felt was the necessary care. On a salary of $69.60 a year, he

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30 Primitive Methodist Magazine, 1829, letter from Wm Knowles, New York, 15 Aug. 1829; 1831, Knowles' 1831 Journal; 1832, Knowles' 1830 Journal.

31 Acornley, A History, 38ff.

often had to resort to "begging." Money, evidently, was so scarce in the Bloomsburg congregation, that William quarried the stone himself to build their church. It is estimated that William was required to take up to ten regular services each week in addition to funerals and other pastoral duties, walking approximately sixty miles.[32]

Even with these opportunities for preaching, there is no question that the American Primitive Methodist women in the United States soon lost the equality that the early Primitive Methodist women had in England. Almost from the time that the first missionaries arrived in New York City, an air of respectability appeared in the new Societies. In April, 1832, Ruth Watkins had noted at a convention that year in New York City, that some of the members wanted to discard the Primitive Methodist rules, but she insisted on retaining the "old Rules." At the end of 1835, William Samson had written that the itinerants needed more money to dress better, even though they were instructed to wear plain dress. Indeed, some of the preachers were enticed to join other denominations which paid better salaries. The 1850 New York Conference decided that women could not vote or speak at official meetings even though the 1852 Conference set a salary for women preachers. In the 1870s, women were invited to preach on anniversaries and at other celebrations, and engaged as supplies when the regular pastors became ill. By the early 1880s, however, they were hired by Conference staff as travelling evangelists, and one of them, Caroline Watson from Toronto, is credited with converting one thousand, one hundred and thirty-two men and women in a period of two years and three months. However, experiencing some resistance to her preaching in 1884, she and one of the churches in Michigan later left the denomination and joined with the Methodist Episcopals who must have been more liberal in their acceptance of women.[33]

Obviously, not all Primitive Methodists opposed women preachers at that time. As in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in spite of opposition, the women gained ground. In 1888, an Eastern Conference representative remarked that whereas the Methodist Episcopal church had rejected women

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32 Acornley, A History, 58f

33 Acornley, A History, 53, 100ff. There is both a Catherine Watson and a Caroline Watson, but it appears to be the same person.

delegates, the Primitive Methodist denomination already had two Conferences where women delegates had equal rights with men. "And why should they not?" Rev. E. Humphries asked in an address to the Western Conference. Pointing out that women made up most of the membership and were the best workers, it was only justice to allow them equal representation in church courts, he noted. And by the following year, the Primitive Methodists had ordained their first woman minister.[34]

Methodist Protestants and Other Denominations

A variety of other Methodist groups in the United States accepted the gifts women had to bring to the pastorate, although not without some opposition from other denominations and within their own ranks. Hannah Pearce Reeves (1800-1868), one of the early Bible Christian preachers in England, itinerated in Ohio for the Methodist Protestant Church from her arrival in 1831 to the year of her death. Born in Devonshire, Hannah was the third child in a large and apparently talented family. Her mother was an excellent cook and a business woman who owned her own store. Her father had two farms and a malting business, managing extremely well until he became an alcoholic. Initially Hannah entered the "gloving business," but after her conversion to Bible Christian Methodism, she became a parlour maid for the son of one of Canada's Governors General, John Graves Simcoe. There, she learned "cultural niceties" until she became an itinerant preacher. As an itinerant, her life took on a different complexion. She picked blackberries in order to eat. On one mission she walked thirty miles each day. Exhausted after two years of demanding work, she rested for a year in order to recover her physical strength. In Kent, she met the American William Reeves who had been taken by a Wesleyan to hear her preach. Claiming that he was impressed by the fact that she preached without any notes, William asked her to marry him. The same year she sailed to the United States from Bideford, somewhat apprehensive about her future. In the United States, however, William and Hannah both preached for the Methodist Protestant Church, and William

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[34] Acornley, A History, 278. Nancy A. Hardesty, Women Called to Witness (Nashville: Abingdon, 1984), 98. Letters from Ruth Watkins, March 1835, and William Samson, 3 Nov. 1835, John Rylands University Library.

defended her against any opposition. They travelled on horseback, sometimes together, sometimes to separate appointments. She was called a "modern marvel" and Conference offered her her own circuit, but she declined, preferring to share the work with her husband. Like other women preachers, she took her second son Samuel to church when she preached. He waited patiently until after the sermon when he went up to the pulpit to join her. Someone else then closed the service.[35]

The confusion in women's roles in the Methodist Protestant Church illustrates well the mixed reactions to women preaching in the United States. By 1866, the Northern Indiana Conference had ordained Helanor M. Davidson, although the General Conference defeated a motion to ordain women in 1871. In 1880, Anna Howard Shaw (1847-1919) was ordained in the New York Conference where she ministered in a church in Massachusetts. Four years later, the General Conference ruled her ordination out of order. Nevertheless, in 1889, Eugenia St John, who had been a pulpit supply for her ailing husband, was ordained by the Kansas Conference.[36]

There were a number of prominent women preaching in the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Jarena Lee, backed by Bishop Richard Allen, was preaching in the 1820s. Male ministers exhorted for her, and elders took her on their circuits. Zilpha Shaw itinerated throughout the New England States, supported by both black and white male ministers. Born into slavery and later freed, "Elizabeth" (b.1766) began preaching in 1808 and continued for fifty years.[37]

When the Wesleyan Methodists ordained women is not clear. One historian notes that women were fully ordained in the denomination as early as the 1860s. Another source, however, notes only that when a woman was ordained an elder in 1864, the General Conference refused to forbid it. Earlier in 1853, the Wesleyan Methodist preacher, Luther Lee, had preached the ordination sermon for the first woman minister in the

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35 George Brown, The Lady Preacher or the Life and Labors of Mrs Hannah Reeves (Philadelphia: Daughaday and Becker, 1870), passim. Hannah had three children, but all three died in early childhood.

36 Noll, "Women and Clergy,"110ff. Anna Howard Shaw had been licensed to preach in the Methodist Episcopal church in 1872. In 1880, however, women's licences were withdrawn in that denomination.

37 Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 118, 136ff.

Congregational church, Antoinette Louisa Brown. In his address, Luther declared that they had not gathered together to confer a right on Antoinette to preach the gospel. "If she has not that right already," Luther said, "we have not the power to communicate it to her." The only role the participants had, Luther continued, was "to subscribe our testimony to the fact, that in our belief, our sister in Christ, Antoinette L. Brown, is ... authorized, qualified, and called of God to preach."[38]

The founder of the Free Methodists, B.T. Roberts, argued in favour of ordination for women as early as 1860 when that denomination began. That church licensed women as local preachers in 1873, but granted them full ordination only in 1974.[39]

Nevertheless, before the turn of the century, American Methodist women had been accepted for ordination in a number of denominations, although the road had been rough. The Victorian model of a passive and submissive woman had permeated American society as it had Great Britain and Canada, but the more liberal environment of the United States had enabled a number of women to step outside the mould and shake off some of society's constraints.

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38 Hardesty, Women Called, 95ff. Norwood, "Expanding Horizons," in Greaves, Triumph, 167.

39 Hardesty, Women Called, 98. Norwood, "Expanding Horizons," in Greaves, Triumph, 167.

REV. WILL.M KNOWLES.
Aged 26. 1829

RUTH WATKINS.
Aged 27. 1829

THE

Primitive Methodist Connexion

TO THE INHABITANTS OF

NEW YORK,

AND OF THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

IN GENERAL SEND GREETING.

Friends and Brethren,

THE LORD having in his Providence raised up the Primitive Methodist Connexion, in Old England, and made it an instrument, in his hands, of turning thousands and ten thousands unto righteousness, and many of its members having emigrated to the United States, it was judged providential to appoint a regular Mission. We have accordingly sent over our respected Brother and faithful Minister, the Rev. WILLIAM KNOWLES; as also our respected Sister, RUTH WATKINS, who has laboured much in the Lord. And we trust they will be made useful in the Gospel of our common LORD, and will meet with that kindness and respect among you, that you, under similar circumstances, would expect from us.

Signed in behalf of the Conference of the said Connexion.

James Bourne, **President.**

Hugh Bourne, **Secretary.**

N. B. The History of the Primitive Methodists may be had of either of the persons above mentioned, with any other necessary information.

Bemersley, near Tunstall, in Old England: Printed at the office of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, by JAMES BOURNE, June 8th, 1829.

Ruth Watkins (b.1802) emigrates to the United States of America

VII. THE LEGEND OF BARBARA HECK

> A stout opposer of the Methodists, hearing that his wife was in a prayer-meeting, rushed violently into the room, seized his wife, and dragged her to the door, when attempting to open it, he was himself seized with trembling, his knees failed him, and he fell helpless upon the floor, and was fain to beg an interest in the prayers of those very people whom he had so much despised and persecuted. He rose not until the Lord released him from his sins and made him a partaker of his pardoning mercy. This very man afterward became an itinerant minister.
> Nathan Bangs, *History of Methodism in Canada*, 53.

No mention has yet been made of the Methodist Episcopalian Barbara Heck, the legendary "Mother" of North American Methodism. Since Barbara herself never preached but rather urged a man to fulfill his preaching obligation, it is worth examining why she has been remembered and revered instead of the more outspoken North American Methodist women preachers.

Barbara Ruckle Heck (1734-1804), twenty-six years old and recently married, arrived in New York City on board the ship Pery, in August, 1760. Emigrating with her were at least twenty-four friends and relatives from Ireland, including her cousin Philip Embury, a lay preacher. The commonly accepted story explains that six years later, calling on Methodist neighbours, Barbara discovered them playing cards. Sweeping the cards into the fire, she quickly searched out her cousin Philip. Sharing the "decadence" she had uncovered, Barbara pleaded with him to preach "the word" at once that they might all be saved. After some hesitation, Philip did as Barbara asked. They gathered a few people together to form the first American Methodist class. The Methodist Church had begun in the New World. Two years later, the first Methodist chapel in the United States was opened. Around 1778, Barbara and her family fled the Revolutionary War, entering Canada at Montreal, and by 1785, with some of their friends, they had settled in the township of Augusta in Grenville County, in Upper Canada. The first Upper Canadian Methodist class, led by

Barbara's son Samuel, was formed in 1788. Two years later, William Losee, the first American Methodist itinerant to travel throughout Upper Canada, preached in the Hecks's barn. Barbara died in 1804, but it was not until 1866 that her descendants erected a cenotaph in her honour, selling photographs of the graveyard and her grave in order to pay for it. More than forty years later, in 1909, a much more substantial monument was erected in Prescott, Ontario. The inscription credits her with bringing into existence both American and Canadian Methodism, and notes that she "laid foundations others have built upon."[1]

It is interesting to trace the alterations in Barbara's story throughout the decades and in successive Methodist histories. The oldest accounts of Methodism in North America either omit all reference to her or describe an elderly woman, although Barbara would have been only thirty-two years old at the time of the 'card playing' incident.

One of the earliest known reports of the beginning of Methodism in the 1760s in New York City is a letter from Thomas Taylor quoted in a much later British Methodist Magazine in 1823. One of the earliest American Methodist trustees, Thomas described in 1768 how "it pleased God to rouse up Mr. Embury to employ his talent (which for several years had been hid as it were in a napkin)." There is no explanation of how God roused up Philip, and Barbara is not mentioned as God's agent. Thomas' letter explains that Philip formed two classes, one of men and one of women. Later, when the class members realized the need for a church building, they all fasted and prayed "and called upon God for His direction." Evidently, at that time, Barbara was not credited with a special role in the establishment of the first church in the United States. The editor of the 1823 Magazine, however, contributed other details which must have developed in Methodist circles sometime after Thomas' letter in 1768. According to the editor, an unnamed mother of an immigrant family, "a woman of a bold and independent spirit ... much devoted to God" was made "instrumental" in "reviving their languishing spirits." This anonymous woman grabbed the playing cards out of the hands of the Methodist immigrants, threw the cards into the fire, and prostrated herself before

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[1] Eula C. Lapp, To Their Heirs Forever (Belleville: Mika Pub. Co., 1977), passim esp. 301. Christian Guardian, 26 Dec. 1866, p.206, c.7.

Philip Embury, entreating him to preach in his own house. According to this version, Philip had been one of the Methodists found playing cards. This same "elderly lady" received direction from God as to how to build the first worship house in the United States.[2]

Another early reference to the Heck family can be found in Francis Asbury's Journal. One of two superintendents of American Methodism, Bishop Asbury travelled extensively throughout the United States and into Canada. In 1811, he wrote that he had called upon "Father Dulmage, and Brother Heck's [sic] - a branch of an old Irish stock of Methodists in New York." But there is no mention of Barbara. In 1825, in reporting the death of Paul Heck, the Methodist Magazine noted only that "his pious mother was one of a small number who formed the first Methodist Society in America." Barbara's husband Paul, however, had died in 1795, and there is no record of a son called Paul. In 1846, in a memorial to Samuel Heck, John Carroll referred to the "religiously heroic woman who was instrumental in calling back the distinguished Philip Embury from a state of backsliding and prompting him to resume the exercise of a long buried talent." The woman's name was omitted, but Samuel was said to have been her grandson.[3]

The historian Nathan Bangs knew the Hecks well. He often visited their Prescott home, and in 1818, speaking at the dedication ceremony for the second John Street Church in New York, he referred to Barbara. Yet in his 1856 History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Nathan alluded to two different women, one anonymously. He described how Philip Embury and other Irish Methodist immigrants to New York had became lukewarm about their religion; how an unnamed "pious 'mother in Israel'" arrived the next year and found the Methodists playing cards; how this woman threw the cards into the fire, and turning to Philip demanded that he preach. According to Nathan's story, classes were formed and the new members determined to build a church. It was while they were deciding how to accomplish this, that "an elderly lady" who "fervently engaged in prayer"

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2 Methodist Magazine, October 1823, pp.384-387, 427-31, 461-3.

3 Francis Asbury, The Journals and Letters of Francis Asbury, Vol. 2, ed. E. T. Clark (Nashville: Abingdon, 1958), 678. Christian Guardian, 30 Oct. 1839, p.2, c.2; 15 July 1846, p.154, c.5 - p.155, c.1; 25 May 1859, p.1, c.2-7, p.81, c.1, p.82. c.1.

was directed by God to solicit subscriptions from wealthy citizens. This "elderly lady," Nathan continued, was a "pious" woman called "Hick [sic], the mother of the late Paul Hick." Nathan also explained in a footnote that he personally had heard these facts from Mr Hick and other members of the family living in New York, including children and grandchildren. J.B. Wakeley later remarked that Nathan Bangs had been writing the same account since 1824. The same information appeared in James Dixon's history in 1849. Quoting from Bangs, he repeated the incident, and added that it was a pity that the name of the first woman had "not been preserved," but the "elderly" lady's name had been "rescued from oblivion," and she was "Paul Hick's mother." In 1857, in Smith's History of Wesleyan Methodism published in London, there was a brief reference to the "Barbara Heck story," but Barbara's name was never mentioned. References were made instead to "a Christian woman," "an aged Christian matron," "the old lady," and "this mother in Israel."[4]

As the 1860s approached and plans were made for centenary celebrations, American Methodists researched the beginning of their Church in North America. J. B. Wakeley collected little-known anecdotal stories for his 1858 Lost Chapters Recovered From the Early History of American Methodism. He included a chapter on Barbara Heck, virtually repeating the version of the card players and the founding of Methodism that Nathan Bangs had used. But this time, the story created a controversy which lasted from 1859 until 1866 in the columns of the Christian Guardian. There were four main points in dispute: the correct spelling of Barbara's name - Hick or Heck; the existence of a son Paul; her arrival in Canada; and whether or not Philip Embury had been one of the card players. The main antagonists were two historians, Wakeley and John Carroll. However, after arguing the facts in print over a number of months, they came to an amicable settlement. In August, 1859, they both signed a letter stating that there had been two Pauls - one a Paul Hick who died in New York, and the other a Paul Heck who had emigrated to Canada. Presumably, then, there were two Barbaras as well! Who threw the cards

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[4] Lapp, To Their Heirs, 296. Christian Guardian, 25 May 1859, p.1, c.2-7, p.81, c.l, p.82. c.l. Bangs, The Methodist Episcopal, 546ff.; William Smith, A Consecutive History, 351; James Dixon, Methodism in America (London: James Dixon, 1849), 158f.

into the fire was a question they could not settle, but left it open to speculation. J.B. Wakeley agreed to publish a revised version of the story.[5]

At least two other early Methodist historians remained aloof from the controversy. Abel Stevens noted that the debate was of interest chiefly to friends of the Hick and Heck families. "Our church history," Stevens explained, "has little concern with the particular matter in question." What he almost certainly meant was not that he was disinterested in Barbara's role in the first Methodist Society, but that he was not prepared to argue over details. In an 1869 publication, The Women of Methodism, Abel devoted thirteen pages to Barbara. The other historian, the Canadian Methodist itinerant, Egerton Ryerson, was satisfied that the Barbara Heck who was buried in the churchyard a few miles from Prescott in Upper Canada had indeed begun Methodism in America. Recounting some of his travels in a letter to the Christian Guardian in 1839, Egerton noted that he had visited the graveyard near Prescott to look at the graves of some of the "honourable dead." Among those buried, he wrote, was "Mrs Hick [sic], the devoted matron who urged Philip Embury, (the first Methodist preacher in America,) to lift up his voice in the City of New York in 1766." He visited Barbara's two surviving children and eulogized, "O my heart burned within me when I heard them converse about their sainted mother ... I almost envied them the privilege of being thus related to the Founder of American Methodism." Later on in his report, he noted that "a majority of the members in this neighbourhood are family connexions of the venerable Mrs Hick, the mother of the American Methodist Israel." Even though Egerton revered Barbara and had visited with her descendants, he persisted in spelling her name "Hick." According to John Carroll who was writing in the 1860s, the itinerant Anson Green had suggested raising a Canadian memorial to Barbara in 1839, but nothing had come of his request. A "Brother Green" had been travelling with Egerton in 1839, and it is likely that it was Anson.[6]

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[5] Christian Guardian, 25 May 1859, p.1, c.1-7, p.81, c.1, p.82, c.1; 27 July 1859, p. 118, c.4f.; 10 Aug. 1859, p.126, c.3; 2 Apr. 1862, p.53, c.2f.; 30 Dec. 1863, p.2, c.6; 11 Apr. 1866, p.58, c.7; 25 Apr. 1866, p.67, c.2; 9 May 1866, p.74, c.7.

[6] Christian Guardian, 25 May 1859, p.1, c.1-7, p.81, c.1, p.82, c.1. Abel Stevens, The Women, 180-193.

Whether or not Barbara's involvement in the card-playing incident and in the plan to build the church are part fact and part legend, by the 1860s, there were common details of a story in circulation. The American Methodist Ladies' Centenary Association asked ministers' wives to canvas all the ladies for a donation of any amount from $1.00 to $1000.00 to build a residence at the Evanston Biblical Institute as a memorial to Barbara. She was really the "Foundress of American Methodism" the Association explained in 1865. "She called out the first preacher, convened the first meeting, and planned the first church edifice on this side of the Atlantic." Noticeable in a story published by the Christian Advocate in 1866, one hundred years after Philip preached his first sermon, was the fact that he had not been among the card players, but lived on "another street."[7]

Future writers embellished the account to suit their needs. In 1869, Abel Stevens pointed out that one million, nine hundred and seventy-two thousand men and women in the United States and Canada were members of the Methodist church as a direct result of the work of Barbara Heck, a "devoted, obscure, unpretentious woman." He included a centenary address by C.H. Fowler who credited Barbara with calling out the first minister, convening the first congregation, meeting the first class, planning the first Methodist church building, and "securing its completion." By 1880, W.H. Withrow was describing her as a prophetess who came to the United States "under divine impulse" and who might "even take precedence" over Philip Embury in founding Methodism in the United Sates and Canada. An 1893 article in the New York Christian Herald depicted Barbara as a new Deborah rescuing the nation; a modern Abraham obediently setting out under God's command to an unknown land; a Christ figure sitting calmly in a boat while her "children nestled in terror at her feet" en route to Lower Canada; and the leader of a loyal British Protestant remnant escaping the tyranny of the American Revolution. On her arrival in Montreal, Barbara was reported to have said to Colonel Burton, the military governor of the District, that "there are yet seven thousand who have not bowed the knee to Baal." By 1934, a story was repeated that it had been discovered that

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[7] Christian Advocate, 1 Nov. 1866.

she was of "Royal Birth" of the House of Guelph, a descendant of Elector Frederick III.[8]

Barbara had evolved from an anonymous eighteenth-century Irish emigrant to the United States to become the "Foundress" of Methodism in North America, and finally with the emerging spirit of Canadian nationalism, the late nineteenth and early twentieth century symbol of the United Empire Loyalist woman. Over the decades, the details of her story were altered to fit the changing paradigm of woman acceptable to and promulgated by mainstream society. If she did indeed throw the cards into the fire and take an active role in establishing the first class and the first church, her behaviour evoked no notice in the late eighteenth century. Her assertiveness must have been within the boundaries of appropriate feminine behaviour. The story of her contribution to the establishment of the Methodist Church was popularized only as the norm for women shifted to a less assertive role. At the same time that women were involved in intense preaching activity, in the 1820s and 1830s, Barbara was evolving into the official Methodist model of the "True Woman," one who assisted the male preacher in many active ways, but stood behind him and supported him in his preaching role. Instead of preaching, the official stereotype was that of a guardian of morality and a "custodian of conversion."[9]

As the legend unfolded and was embellished, the factor which remained constant in all the stories was the passive role Barbara adopted in preaching the gospel. When she realized how 'secularized' her friends and relatives had become, she did not speak to them herself, but turned to a male lay preacher, although he had not been exercising his "gifts" for a number of years. This submissive demeanour was the kind of action put forward as the paradigm for women's behaviour during much of the nineteenth century, and especially after the 1840s. Even though many women refused to be bound by this model, it was held up by mainline Methodists as an example of how women should conduct themselves.

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[8] Stevens, The Women, 198-211, 302f. W. H. Withrow, Makers of Methodism (Toronto: Wm Briggs, 1898), 180ff. W. H. Withrow, Barbara Heck, A Tale of Early Methodism (Toronto: Wm Briggs, n.d.), passim. Mrs J. R. Hill, "Early Canadian Heroines," in Women's Canadian Historical Society of Ottawa 10 (1928), passim. Prescott Journal, 16 Aug. 1934, p.1,4.

[9] Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 30.

As the nineteenth century progressed, the mythology of the pious mother who remained at home nurturing her children took hold tenaciously on society. Women lost voting rights, were barred from the medical profession and became mainly "decorative" and "spiritual" members of society. In her study of American nineteenth-century attitudes to women, Ann Douglas wrote that between 1820 and 1875, "American culture seemed bent on establishing a perpetual Mother's Day." It was at this time that Barbara came into her own. Barbara Heck, the "Mother of Methodism," became the mother *par excellence*. Shunning the spotlight and the public role of preaching in contrast to more vocal American women, she stood behind Philip Embury, encouraging him to preach instead. The "sublime work" of mothers, explained the editor of the Canadian Methodist Magazine, "is to nurse heroic souls and send them forth:"

> ...the great need of the world to-day is women who can worthily wear, as the queenliest dignity of her life, the hallowed name of mother; lifting it high above the defilement of earth; making it a potent spell ... at whose ... utterance temptation and sin shall lose its power. Mothers may write upon the loving palimpsest, a child's heart, lessons of undying wisdom that not all the vile chirography of sin can ever cover or efface ... They may lay their hands upon the hidden springs of action which, more powerful than the Archimedian lever, may move the world.[10]

The Methodist itinerant William Case, who opposed Eliza Barnes' preaching, also believed that the "Mother" was the most important influence in a son's life. It was a mother's tears, prayers and religious devotion that often led men to the ministry, he wrote. "Who has not heard of the piety of the venerated Mrs Wesley; - of the faith of 'Mother Kent,' of New England; - of 'Mother Covel,' of the Catskill Mountains; of 'Mother Ryerson,' of Canada; and of many other 'mothers in Israel' and of their sons in the ministry," he exclaimed in a Jubilee Sermon. Egerton Ryerson, perhaps the most influential Canadian Methodist from the early 1830s on,

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10 Ann Douglas, The Feminization of American Culture (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1977), 5f. Methodist Magazine 1875, p.26f.

became quite maudlin about his mother after her death. Describing two pair of socks which she had knit for him, he wrote:

> I scarcely ever put them on without a gush of feeling which is not easily suppressed. They every day reminded me of the hand which sustained my infancy and guided my childhood, and the heart which has crowned my life with its tenderest solicitudes, and most fervent and, I believe effectual prayers. Praise be to God above all earthly things, for such a Mother![11]

It was common for nineteenth century Methodist historians to depict pious wives and mothers as the instruments of conversion for men, and as a result, the salvation of society. A classic example is Nathan Bangs' account of the beginning of a Methodist Society in Long Island in 1794 in his history of The Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. Nathan wrote that Mrs Moore and two other "pious" women who gathered together for prayer every Monday evening, pleaded with God to send a minister to begin a Methodist Society in their community. Unable to come together one week, they prayed in concert but in their own homes, asking again for a preacher. This time Mrs Moore was confident that their prayers had been answered. Just then, the story continues, Wilson Lee, a Methodist preacher, prevented from continuing his journey to New York, felt an unusual urging to go to Long Island. He made his way to Mrs Moore's home, and was immediately recognized by her as the preacher God had promised to send. The two of them gathered some friends and neighbours together and a society was soon formed.[12]

The story is not unlike one in James Finley's Sketches of Western Methodism in which the prayers of two "pious and devoted" women were instrumental in beginning a society in Georgia just after the Revolutionary War. A woodsman, who had overheard the women praying and talking about their spiritual experiences, begged them to come and speak to his

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11 Egerton Ryerson, The Story, 412. Egerton Ryerson, Canadian Methodism: Its Epochs and Characteristics (Toronto: William Briggs, 1882), 35.

12 Nathan Bangs, The Methodist Episcopal, Vol. 1, 300ff

neighbours. As a result, a revival began. A Methodist itinerant soon appeared and organized a new society.[13]

These two accounts have much in common. The prayers of pious women resulted in the formation of a Methodist Society in a geographical area devoid of 'the means for spiritual nourishment.' The women, however, were only agents. They paved the way for a male preacher. The same theme runs through the story of the Irish immigrant Barbara Heck. She recognized the desperate need for religious support for the Methodist community in New York, and at her insistence, Philip Embury preached in New York in 1766, beginning the first Methodist Society there. Variations of the story surfaced throughout the history of early North American Methodism. In Chicago, it was Lucy Walker Wentworth, the wife of a tavernkeeper, who by herself gathered up groups of people to hear the itinerant William See. Even the indomitable American preacher, Hannah Pearce Reeves, covenanted with two other women to pray two hours every day for men to lead singing and take care of administrative matters for them. Their prayers were answered. A great religious revival took place, providing them with male assistance.[14]

The emphasis on Barbara Heck's passive role can be compared to the adulation bestowed on Hester Ann Roe Rogers (1756-1795) and contrasted with the lack of recognition accorded the preaching activity of other more assertive Methodist women such as Dorothy Ripley in the United States and Eliza Barnes Case and Hetty Ann Hubbard in Canada.

The Experiences and Letters of Hester Ann Rogers was one of a very few books available in 1812 from the American Methodist Episcopal Book Room. It sold for seventy-five cents. Hester Ann Roe had been born in England, the daughter of a Church of England clergyman. Converted to Methodism when she was twenty-one years old, she married a Methodist lay preacher, James Rogers, ten years later. She bore seven children in eight years, dying in childbirth at the age of thirty-nine. The official record of her life circulated by the Book Room included the sermon preached at her funeral by Thomas Coke, the Methodist bishop who later presided at the Irish Conference when the restrictive legislation regarding

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13 Finley, Sketches, 531ff. See earlier fn. 13 in Chap. VI.

14 George Brown, The Lady, 63. Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 177.

women preachers was passed. Thomas referred to Hester as a "mother in Israel," emphasizing her "usefulness" especially after her marriage, noting that she never "assumed the authority of teaching in the church." Instead, he emphasized, she visited orphans and widows and prayed for them. Her husband James included his own memorial to her, agreeing that "her good sense, joined with that Christian modesty ever becoming her sex" led her to visit the sick, to teach only her own sex in private, and to pray whenever called upon. In 1861, in his account, Gabriel Disosway described her as an "excellent mother," commenting on her "purity, patience, prudence, charity, generosity, and perfect resignation." Her church work, he noted, included meeting classes, instructing "penitents", and leading "believers to Christ." Hester Ann rarely preached. In his story of women preachers in the early nineteenth century, Zechariah Taft omits any reference to her. This suggests that she was in fact a more retiring and much less aggressive woman than the other Wesleyan preachers, for Zechariah's admiration of assertive women is quite evident. It appears that Hester Ann was a suitable model for Victorian women. By contrast, the story of Dorothy Ripley, who spent so many years preaching and travelling throughout the United States and actively promoted prison reform and the abolition of slavery in the early nineteenth century has been omitted from all official histories. Indeed, one is hard-pressed to find any references at all to most of the other women preaching in the early nineteenth century in the United States and Canada.[15]

Canadian Methodist Episcopal women had stopped preaching around the time admiration for Barbara Heck began in that country. The first recorded instances were apparently by Egerton Ryerson and Anson Green in 1839. Were it not for the respect and approval of the Indian convert Peter Jones and his first-hand accounts of their preaching. Hetty Hubbard Case, Eliza Barnes Case, and Susannah Farley Waldron would probably be remembered only as pious women and Indian teachers. Eliza's obituary in the Christian Guardian in 1887 mentions her as a pioneer missionary at Grape Island,

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15 Bangs, History of the Methodist Episcopal, Vol. 2, 319. James Rogers, The Experience and Spiritual Letters of Mrs Hester Ann Rogers: With a Sermon, Preached on the Occasion of Her Death by the Rev. Thomas Coke (London: Methodist Book Room, n.d.), 197f., 210. Disosway, Our Excellent Women, 94ff. Stevens, The Women, 98ff. Robert F. Wearmouth, Methodism, 228. Townsend, A New History, 322.

and the histories of Canadian Missions refer to them briefly as teachers. "Miss Barnes," wrote Mrs Stephenson in her official history of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, "in addition to the ordinary school work, taught sewing, knitting, straw-hat making and cooking ... Miss Hubbard did the same." Yet by this time, halls had been dedicated to Barbara Heck, stories written, and monuments raised. Methodist officialdom ignored the examples of women preaching, instead praising other activities considered more normative for women. An 1860 description of an involved Methodist woman published under the heading "An Elect Lady" noted that although she was intellectually endowed, "yet she never presumed to *preach.*" Instead, she spent her time "in visiting awakened persons from house to house," in classes, in prayer meetings, in "collecting the poor and neglected of her own sex" and reading them a sermon or even "superadding exhortation and prayer." It was more acceptable for women at that time to pattern their lives after Barbara Heck than to emulate the early Methodist women preachers.[16]

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16 Christian Guardian, 11 May 1887, p.299, c.3. Stephenson, One Hundred Years, 71. A Spectator, Past and Present, 49.

Barbara Ruckle Heck (1734-1804), called the Mother of Methodism in North America. Photo courtesy United Church Archives.

VIII. THE DEVOLUTION

> Few can inflict a more deadly wound upon society than the unprincipled woman; and few can be more beneficial than a pious one.
> *Christian Guardian,* 11 June 1831, p.124, c.3.

The stories of Methodist women preachers in Canada and in the United States leave us with no doubt that the women faced both enthusiastic support and hostility throughout the nineteenth century. But it is also apparent that after a heady period of activity in the first half of the century, there was, in general, a marked increase in resistance towards them and a noticeable decrease in the numbers of itinerants and full-time preachers.

When we compare how the women preachers were received in the different Methodist streams and their level of preaching activity, there are striking differences. First of all, there is a large body of evidence that women were travelling, exhorting and preaching extensively in the Methodist Episcopal tradition in the 1820s and 1830s in the United States, whereas only isolated instances can be found in Upper Canada. Secondly, in Upper Canada, there is a sudden cessation of what little preaching by women there was in the Methodist Episcopal tradition around 1830. In the United States, some women were ordained before the turn of the century. The third dissimilarity is the gradual disappearance of women preachers in both the Primitive Methodist and Bible Christian Churches in Canada, whereas in the United States, in the Primitive Methodist and Methodist Protestant Churches, again women were ordained by the end of the century. (The Bible Christian Church was not transplanted to the United States as a church, although women preachers who had been Bible Christians in England emigrated to the United States and preached in other denominations.)

Historians who have analyzed the status of women, have their favourite theory to explain why women lost power or position at certain periods in history. Increasing industrialization, urbanization,

institutionalization and professionalization as well as the natural evolution of a religious denomination from a sect to a church are all inter-related and have validity as phenomena which lessened women's acceptance as preachers by the middle of the nineteenth century in North America. Nor can we underestimate the power of the press and pulpit as a way of enforcing the "Cult of True Womanhood" which kept women more closely confined to the home. There are psychological theories as well, such as the fear of women's power - which in this case would be translated to be the fear of women preaching. Indeed, all these factors are part of a complex set of circumstances which contributed to the diminishing of women's position in the nineteenth-century church, and need to be examined briefly.

Industrialization and urbanization

As industrialization and urbanization changed the face of North America around the 1840s, women were thrust into new roles. Even in the less developed province of Upper Canada, a flood of settlers from the British Isles in the 1830s and 1840s accelerated the move from a pioneer community to a more urbanized society. Urban centres grew even more rapidly after 1851. With this shift in demographics, women were not as frequently required to work alongside their husbands clearing land and establishing homesteads. Instead, as towns developed and families became prosperous, the middle-class woman was encouraged to fit into the stereotype of the leisure class Victorian lady whose "proper sphere" was the hearth, and whose influence was in the home as wife and mother. If she did become involved in the wider community, it was generally in a limited nurturing role such as that of Sunday School teacher, or in newly-formed benevolent organizations. Historians have noted that many opportunities which had previously been available for women disappeared at that time. In both countries, women who had been able to vote, lost that right. This happened around 1830 in the United States, and in Canada between 1832 and 1849. Harsh abortion laws were enacted in Upper Canada in 1837, limiting the options of family size and confining women to child-rearing for a lengthy period of time. In the United States, women were discouraged from entering occupations and businesses which had

formerly been open to them. At one time in the early history of that country, women had been butchers, silversmiths, gunsmiths, upholsterers, gate keepers, jail keepers, sextons, journalists, printers, "doctoresses," apothecaries, and shopkeepers of almost every kind.[1]

Institutionalization and professionalization

The institutionalization and increasing professionalization in nineteenth century society also resulted in a more limited role for women. Where once an apprenticeship had been adequate, new scientific knowledge made specialized training and knowledge a requirement for professions. Schools, newly-established for this purpose, were closed to women. In the United States, women still practised medicine in the mid-fifties, but their acceptance was limited. Not only did graduation from a medical school become the criterion for obtaining a licence to practise medicine, but it allowed access to hospitals as well. And medical training schools were off-limits to women[2]

Religious institutions, too, were transformed. In Upper Canada, new towns and cities required more sophisticated church buildings than the taverns and rude log houses where the earliest worship services were held. As the population multiplied, so did the churches and the church structures. A variety of religious publications and newspapers appeared; religious head offices sprang up; Sunday Schools proliferated. Preachers were ordained in the smaller "sectarian" movements and the gap between lay and clergy widened. Orderly camp-meetings held emotions in check. Methodist clergy were allowed to settle on one circuit for up to five years although they had been shifted every six months in the late eighteenth century, and moved every two years in 1828. Church meetings required the participation of "ladies" to "prepare tea" and supervise "well-filled tables."[3]

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1 Douglas, The Feminization, 5. Alison Prentice et al., Canadian Women A History (Toronto: Harcourt Brace Jovanovitch, 1988), 92, 99. Lerner, The Majority, 16ff.

2 Lerner, The Majority, 18ff.

3 Sanderson, The First Century, Vol. 2, 102, 104, 113. Playter, The History, 378f.

Church members, who had become more 'respectable,' prosperous, cultured, and educated than they had been in the early pioneer settlements, demanded a more educated clergy. This was particularly noticeable in the Methodist denominations in Upper Canada where members of the British governing class believed that, on the whole, Methodists were of a much lower class and most Methodist ministers were illiterate. Methodist churches responded by establishing theological schools and requiring graduation from these schools as a pre-requisite for ordination. Victoria College introduced a theological course in Toronto in 1851. Since women were not accepted in a theological college, this served as another barrier against women's active participation in religious leadership roles.[4]

Salaries for Methodist ministers' wives decreased, indicating a devaluing of their work. In 1792, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church meeting in Baltimore had resolved that "the wife of a preacher" should receive $64.00, the same salary as a preacher. In 1816, Canadian salaries not only decreased for married wives, but were no longer listed as such, considered instead as salaries paid to married men. Married male ministers did not receive a double wage, but were paid only $100.00 per annum compared with a salary of between $60.00 and $80.00 for single male ministers, although there were allowances for each child up to a maximum amount. "Economy," the Christian Guardian pointed out, was "a virtue proper for both sexes," but "particularly becoming and useful in the female." Evidently Methodist ministers' wives were expected to be even more frugal in the nineteenth century than in the eighteenth.[5]

From sect to church

The institutionalization of the church and the professionalization of the ministry was a part of the natural evolution which generally occurs as a sect evolves into a mainline church. Certainly this can be seen in the changing face of Methodism in North America in the nineteenth century, first in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and later in other denominations

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4 Jameson, Winter Studies, Vol. 1, 337. Grant, Profusion, 168.

5 Playter, The History, 37. Christian Guardian, 4 Dec. 1830, p.10, c.4. Ryerson, The Story, 214.

such as the Bible Christian and Primitive Methodist movements. Early Methodist churches had displayed all the traditional characteristics of sects. Theirs was a radical ethic set over against the world. Methodist doctrines and disciplines emphasized a conversion experience, the claim of a direct personal relationship with God, a direct personal fellowship with each other and an ascetic lifestyle. Striving for inward perfection, members displayed an unbounded religious enthusiasm not typical of other denominations such as the Church of England or the Presbyterians in Upper Canada. They adhered more rigidly to the idealism of the early church, valuing lay leadership including that of women. Sects, however, have a limited life expectancy. As membership increases, new generations are born into the religious faith often without the earlier pre-requisite experiential conversion Losing their other-worldly colouring, sects become noticeably less detached from the world and more accommodating to secular values.[6]

The power of the press and pulpit`

Women's position in the church was also affected by the strong opposition from the pulpit and in the early nineteenth century press to women's preaching. As more women became involved in preaching, more articles appeared prohibiting preaching and emphasizing that women should stay in the home. Elisabeth Fiorenza points out that an analysis of sermons and written ethical instructions on women's place and behaviour in the United States has shown that prescriptions against women's participation outside the home increased in direct relation to women's actual activity. The appearance of women preachers in the Methodist tradition in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries proved no exception, and the question of whether or not women should be allowed to preach was hotly debated both in Great Britain and in North America at that time. Injunctions against women preaching were issued from the pulpit and in women's columns in journals and periodicals. Not only were these statements opposed to women in the pulpit, but they also insisted that

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6 Troeltsch, The Social Teaching, 330ff. Grant, Profusion, Chapter 4 passim.

women were not preaching, and, moreover, had "never presumed to preach."[7]

Women in the nineteenth-century received opposing messages. In Upper Canada in the 1830s, Methodist women were being assured that they were preaching the "precious gospel" by knitting socks and remaining in their nursery. Yet at the same time, the political writings of the radical British feminist, Harriet Martineau, were being circulated to the public and referred to in the press. In the 1850s, Canadian women presented petitions to the government asking for the right to own property; and the American Lucy Stone, head of the American Woman Suffrage Association and editor of the Woman's Journal, lectured on women's rights in Upper Canada. Yet at the same time, the 1852 Methodist Conference reinforced the myth that attending Leaders' meetings was not proper for women and that Methodist women had never assumed such a public role:

> Resolved, that although female Leaders have had charge of Female Classes, and have rendered great service as helpers in the Church also giving such [much] information from time to time to the Superintendents respecting their classes; yet female Leaders have never been regarded as Members of the Quarterly or Leaders' Meetings; Nor is it according to our usage, any more than according to the sense of Propriety entertained by our devoted female Leaders, that they should take a part in the official proceedings of such Meetings.

As women in the Toronto District had evidently attempted to take a more active role in the decision-making processes of the church, the Methodist Church felt it necessary to state that women had always acted according to the Victorian sense of "Propriety," at that time the dominant mode.[8]

In the nineteenth century, the arguments against women speaking and taking leadership positions in the church were louder and more frequent

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7 Fiorenza, In Memory, 60, 85. Lerner, The Majority,149. A Spectator of the Scenes, Past and Present, 49.

8 John Moir, "Sectarian Tradition in Canada," in J. W. Grant, The Churches, 127. Cobourg Reformer, Oct. 23 1834, p.28. Prentice, Canadian Women, 174ff. Hardesty, Women Called, 18. Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, Vol. 2, 252.

than those in favour. Partly as a result of this hostility, most of the women, particularly in Upper Canada, either stopped preaching completely, or responded only to guest invitations to speak at special celebrations such as anniversaries or church openings.

Other women, of course, like the eastern Canadian Mary McCoy Morris Bradley never did summon up enough courage to speak in the face of official church opposition. Mary was convinced that God had called her to be a preacher and was aware of Biblical examples of "prophetesses". Still she felt bound to yield to the restrictions her church placed upon women. Her diary explains how she struggled to come to terms with these conflicting demands all her adult life:

> I thought if I had been a man, nothing could hinder me from going abroad to proclaim salvation to a dying world. O, how I longed to declare what God had done for my soul, and to invite Sinners to flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold on eternal life...

But Mary was afraid to act against the church's expectations for women. "I was many times afraid lest the fear of offending man, kept me from obeying the operation of the Spirit of God, which I felt in my heart," she confessed in her memoirs. Finally, believing it to be her only recourse, she decided to write her autobiography as a testimony to God's call.[9]

Fear of women preaching

During the history of the Christian church, one of the controversial issues has been whether or not women should be allowed to preach. Pauline passages from the New Testament have been dissected, defended, attacked and critiqued either to uphold a woman's right to speak in church or to support the position that woman's place has been divinely decreed not to be behind a pulpit, but in the home.

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9 Mary McCoy Bradley, A Narrative of the Life and Christian Experience of Mrs Mary Bradley of Saint John, New Brunswick (Boston: Strong and Brodhead, 1849), passim esp. 150, 163.

It has not been solely the difference in scriptural interpretation, however, which has fanned the flames of this religious debate. Over the centuries, there has been something particularly offensive or threatening about a woman preaching. As James Porter pointed out in his analysis of the question in 1851 in the United States, it is not that women must be kept from speaking, but that they must not speak "too loud or too long." The injunction against women speaking in church, he noted, only applied to women who were "contending with a man in public," who were finding "fault with men," or who were usurping "authority over them." As long as women were not "dictating" to men, or perceived as being "disloyal to the men in public," he wrote, women could speak. But in Porter's opinion, women's preaching fit the proscribed categories.[10]

Two elements in Porter's understanding of preaching are worth noting, particularly as it relates to women. First of all, preaching clearly conveys an authority evidently far beyond that of ordinary speaking which is less "loud" and less "long." Since nineteenth century women were admonished to be submissive to men and not authoritative over them, preaching was ruled out as a proper activity for women. "Nothing will increase your influence and secure your usefulness, more than 'being in SUBJECTION [sic] to your own husbands'," the Christian Guardian informed its female readership in 1829 in its Ladies' Department. Indeed, the subjection should be a "cheerful" act, the same paper pointed out in a later edition, remembering that since "woman was 'first in transgression'," this "ruin was chiefly under her hand" and this subjection was "her just punishment." Although the line between preaching and evangelism was not clearly defined, evangelism was considered to be less authoritarian than preaching. Women described as evangelists were tolerated at a time when women preachers were forbidden. As one late nineteenth-century historian wrote of Mary Barritt Taft in England, "her employment as an evangelist led to her employment as a preacher." Secondly, while the Oxford English Dictionary defines the verb "to preach" primarily as "to pronounce a public discourse upon sacred subjects," there is a less desirable meaning, "to give moral advice in an obtrusive or tiresome way" as in the following conversation from 1834:

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10 Porter, A Compendium, 487-491.

> "Pray Mr. Lamb, did you ever hear me preach?"
> "Damme," said Lamb, "I never heard you do anything else."

As one male church goer in the United States commented after hearing a woman preach, "Oh the sermon was all right, but you see I hear a woman preach six days a week, and on Sunday I like to get a rest." It is this pejorative understanding of preaching which is emphasized in Porter's description and which has been traditionally ascribed to women - from Chaucer's fourteenth-century depiction of the "Wife of Bath," described as a "prechour" to her numerous husbands, to a twentieth-century evangelist's equation of Bobbed Hair, Bossy Wives and Women Preachers.[11]

In the nineteenth century, the inappropriateness of women preaching was sharply contrasted with the appropriateness of domesticity or the "Cult of True Womanhood." Methodist women in both Canada and the United States fell heir to this stereotype. Many of the Methodist women preachers faced the challenges not only of overwork, hard living conditions and economic deprivation as did their male counterparts, but also the added burden of resistance because they refused to conform to the Victorian paradigm. By the middle of the century in both countries, Barbara Heck was more of a household word than were either Eliza Barnes or Dorothy Ripley.

Social disorder

One other thesis needs to be explored for a possible relevance to the Canadian context. In her excellent analysis of women and religion during the period of the Second Great Awakening in the United States, Carroll Smith-Rosenberg suggests that religious disorder mirrors social disorder. Sects, revivalism and other anti-ritualistic religious expressions, she

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[11] Porter, A Compendium, 487-491. John R. Rice, Bobbed Hair, Bossy Wives and Women Preachers (Wheaton, Illinois: Sword of the Lord Publishers, 1941). Geoffrey Chaucer, "The Canterbury Tales" III in The Poetical Works of Chaucer, ed. F. N. Robinson (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1933), 165. Christian Guardian, 12 Dec. 1829, p.28, Ladies' Department; 3 May 1837, p.1, c.2. Taylor, The Apostles, 59. Sweet, The Minister's Wife, 140.

maintains, are a response to social, economic and political chaos or instability. Once individuals or groups have been accepted and successfully incorporated into the bourgeoisie or mainstream, they no longer have a need to destroy or challenge old institutional and hierarchical arrangements. In this way, Smith-Rosenberg explains how women who became marginalized in the process of industrialization and urbanization were especially attracted to revivalism in the first half of the nineteenth century. Adolescent women were particularly vulnerable, as they were doubly marginalized. After the women married and their families became successful and safely ensconced in the new middle class which emerged around the 1840s, and after society became more firmly urbanized and less in a state of flux, most of the women returned to more traditional religious expressions, she claims.[12]

Methodism and Politics

All of these reasons have something to say about the Canadian situation. Yet none by itself adequately explains why there were few women preaching in the Methodist Episcopal tradition - the group which united with the Wesleyan Methodists in 1833 - and why they suddenly stopped preaching around 1830. Nor can they answer why a number of women were ordained, in spite of opposition, in the United States in the late 1800s, the first Methodist woman in 1866, and several others were officially licensed to preach. Yet in Canada, women were eased out of the pulpit in the different denominations in the second half of the century and ordained only in 1936 in the United Church of Canada.

Both countries experienced the same trends towards urbanization and industrialization. In fact, the United States was substantially more advanced than Upper Canada, particularly in the East. Yet many women were very active in the church in the New England States as well as on the western frontier. The professionalization of the ministry and the institutionalization of the church were phenomena which existed in both countries, with the United States again ahead chronologically. And women

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12 Smith-Rosenberg, Disorderly Conduct, Ch.3 and "Women and Religious Revivals," passim.

in both countries were bombarded with articles, columnists' advice, and sermons declaring not only that women's place had been divinely decreed to be in the home but that women in fact had always remained there. Passive, submissive role models were held up in both countries for women to emulate.

Smith-Rosenberg's theory is tempting and helps to explain why the Bible Christian and Primitive Methodist movements were successful in Canada between the 1830s and 1850s. Cholera in 1832; the influx of immigration; the shift from a pioneer country to a more urbanized country; the unions and separations in the Methodist Episcopal church; and the rebellions of the late 1830s all contributed to unsettled conditions which could explain the popularity of the more anti-ritualistic and sect-type Methodist denominations and women's prominent leadership roles in them. Yet this thesis cannot be applied easily to women's situation in the Methodist Episcopal Church. In spite of constant political and social upheaval, there is little evidence of women preaching in this stream in Upper Canada in the first half of the century, and an abrupt cessation of what activity there was, occurred in 1830. In fact, while intense revivalism swept across the United States for several decades, very little took place in Upper Canada at all. There were camp meetings and protracted meetings and a brief period of revivalism at the beginning of the Indian Missions when Eliza Barnes was first preaching in Canada in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the same kind of activity in the early years of the Bible Christians and the Primitive Methodists. Compared with the United States, however, revivalism affected a very small proportion of the Canadian population.

I suggest that the major difference which allowed women greater progress in the United States was the political climate which permeated all of society, including its religious institutions. The United States had been born out of rebellion, and encouraged democracy. "By no people are women treated with more respect and consideration than by native born Americans," a Cobourg newspaper noted. "An instance of one of them beating his wife rarely occurs." This was hardly an example of equality of men and women, but it did symbolize a dramatic difference in the American and Canadian mind-set. Although women in the United States had to work hard to swim against the current of the 'Victorian leisured lady'

paradigm, they did make some headway. On the other hand, the Upper Canadian governing *élite* was continually trying to prevent revolution, discourage democracy, and keep a lid on any kind of emotional religious expression. Because of the more conservative attitudes in that country, women slipped more comfortably into the Victorian mould. For example, the British immigrant Anne Langton gave up canoeing in 1839 not long after she came to Canada, because her husband John considered a canoe to be "an unfit conveyance for so helpless a being as a woman." Having enjoyed her previous canoe rides, she confessed to being glad that John's "idea did not spring up earlier," but she did not travel in a canoe again.[13]

Women preaching in the Methodist Episcopal tradition in Upper Canada were caught in a double bind. Not only were they socialized into a less liberal atmosphere than in the United States, but they found themselves part of a Methodist stream which intentionally adopted a more conservative and rigid stance than its American counterpart in order to achieve more privileges and gain greater respectability. British Wesleyans in England had undergone a similar metamorphosis after John Wesley's death in order to be more acceptable. But in order to understand why the Canadian Methodist Episcopals deliberately chose conservative policies, we need to review how they were received in Upper Canada in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

When the first American Methodist men and women had arrived in Upper Canada at the end of the eighteenth century, they had been warmly welcomed. Many of them were British loyalists, fleeing from the United States, a traitorous and rebellious country in Great Britain's eyes. The Methodist itinerants, too, who first came to Canada from the United States in the 1780s, were enthusiastically received by isolated settlers and people in pioneer communities who were devoid of almost any formal religious opportunities. The itinerants not only brought spiritual nourishment, but their style of delivery met the needs of a backwoods people. Whereas the few Church of England and Presbyterian clergy already in Upper Canada expected the people to come to worship services in

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13 Plain-Speaker, 14 Aug. 1838, p.40. Anne Langton, A Gentlewoman in Upper Canada, The Journals of Anne Langton ed. H. H. Langton (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin and Co. Ltd, 1950), 99.

established church buildings, Methodist itinerants took the services to the people. In a country where roads were either non-existent or treacherous, settlers lived miles apart, the weather was either unbearably cold or too hot, the Methodist approach met with resounding success. Their emotionally charged services were far better suited to a spiritually starved, isolated and rough people than was a staid, reserved British liturgy. Later, in the early 1800s, when Methodist camp-meetings were introduced into Upper Canada from the American frontier, they provided social opportunities welcomed by families who had little access to social intercourse. Indeed for many adults and children, the outdoor camp meeting and the later indoor "protracted" meeting provided a break in an otherwise tedious and hard life, and were eagerly anticipated as the social highlight of the season.[14]

While the Methodist itinerants achieved an enormous popular following in Upper Canada, many of the British governing *élite* had little use for Americans, and especially the Methodist clergy. After all, the eighteenth-century Methodist movement had been a damning critique of the sterile condition of the Church in England, and it was that church to which the government officials adhered. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when democratic initiatives had only recently resulted in the overthrow of governments in France and the United States, the British ruling classes in England understandably feared a movement which consisted mainly of the middle and working classes, and which appeared to provide these classes with a voice and a measure of equality. In 1794, Jacob Mountain, the Anglican Bishop of Quebec, had reported to the Secretary of State about the Canadian condition noting that:

> The greatest bulk of the people have and can have no instruction but such as they receive occasionally from itinerant and mendicant Methodists, a set of ignorant enthusiasts, whose preaching is calculated only to perplex the understanding, & corrupt the morals & relax the

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[14] John S. Moir, The Church in The British Era, Vol 2 of A History of the Christian Church in Canada, gen. ed., John Webster Grant (Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson Ltd, 1972), 88f.

> nerves of industry, & dissolve [sic] the bonds of society.

The first lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, John Graves Simcoe, assured the Secretary of State, the Duke of Portland, that it was his intention to render Upper Canada "as nearly as may be 'a perfect Image and Transcript of the British Government and Constitution'" and that "a regular Episcopal establishment, subordinate to the primacy of Great Britain" was in his opinion, "absolutely necessary."[15]

After the war of 1812 between the United States and Great Britain and the ravages of parts of Upper Canada by the Americans, to be an American and a Methodist in Upper Canada was seen to be a double threat to the security of that country. In 1814, General Gordon Drummond, the administrator of the government of Upper Canada, reported that the Methodists were "itinerant fanatics, enthusiastic in political as well as religious matters," who came from the United States to Upper Canada deliberately to disseminate "their noxious principles." For a number of years after the War ended, Americans were officially discouraged from emigrating to Upper Canada, and at one point, Lord Bathurst, the British Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, considered taking away the land of all those Americans who had entered the country since the War. Later on, in the opinion of the British, the abortive rebellions of the late 1830s appeared to have justified these anxieties. The aptly named newspaper, the Patriot, noted in 1839:

> ...Yankee missionaries have preached in the pulpit, at Camp Meetings, in the wigwams of our simple-hearted Indians, and at the family hearths of our unsophisticated yeomanry. Yankee schoolmasters have preached in our common schools; Yankee Doctors have preached at the bedsides of their patients; Yankee tavern-keepers have preached in their bar-rooms; Yankee stage-drivers have preached on the highways, and eke [sic] multitudes of Yankee squatters have preached in

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15 Gerald M. Craig, Upper Canada, The Formative Years 1784-1841 (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963), 165f. J. M. Bliss, ed. Canadian History in Documents 1763-1966 (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1966), 34f.

> our backwoods. All these preachings have been for thirty years; and thus has the poison been unsparingly preached, promulgated, punched, poked and pummelled into the people from the whining schoolboy to the old gray beard.[16]

Book after book by authors of British background, who lived in Upper Canada or visited the country in the early nineteenth century, described American Methodists as boorish, uncultured, unmannered, and above all, democratic, even as the writers begrudgingly admired American urban centres, technical advances and their "greater number of comforts and conveniences." John Howison travelled throughout Upper Canada for two and a half years with brief visits to the United States. In 1821, he wrote that the Methodists in St Catharine's "carry their religious mania to an immoderate height," holding meetings there three or four times a week. Their "fanaticism and extravagance," he felt, were "degrading to human nature." He criticized the Methodists for condemning card-playing and dancing, "while their own lives were, in many instances, one continued outrage against decency, decorum and virtue." Although more charitable toward the Methodists, William Cattermole, who also spent time in Upper Canada, wrote ten years later that it would be better to have Methodist preachers from England rather than from the United States. Republicanism, he noted, "is as natural" to Americans "as piety is to the English Methodist preachers." Catherine Parr Traill found the "Yankee manners" annoying and John Howison wrote that Americans went to bed with their boots on. Even the iconoclastic Anna Brownell Jameson found "the frantic disorders" of Methodist love-feasts and camp-meetings much worse than she had imagined, although she realized that without the Methodist "religious teachers," the people would have been "utterly abandoned."[17]

The Presbyterians, too, had little love for their Methodist sisters and brothers. On coming to Canada in 1832, the Scottish Secessionist minister, William Proudfoot, was appalled at the "ascendancy" which Methodists had "acquired" throughout the country. "Their doctrines," he

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16 The Patriot, 19 Feb. 1839 as quoted in Craig, Upper Canada, f.n.24, 196f. Craig, Upper Canada, 114, 166.

17 Howison, Sketches, 135, 296, 309. Cattermole, Emigration, 185. Jameson, Winter Studies, Vol. 2, 218. Traill, The Backwoods, 99.

wrote, "are frightfully in opposition to the grand, the glorious doctrines of the Gospel." In fact he went as far as to declaim that:

> Something must be done to dislodge these pretenders, these so distant [Methodist] preachers. The country will never become Christian till these fellows be dislodged.[18]

Even working class British Methodists were outspoken in their criticisms of Canadian Methodist Episcopal preachers. Describing their experiences in attending a Methodist Episcopal chapel in York, a group of British families noted that

> they submitted patiently for some time to laxity of discipline, and various indignities, together with the rudeness of vulgar and ignorant men who occupied the pulpit. They had never been accustomed in England to see ragged and dirty preachers with beards 'that shewed like a stubble at harvest home,' nor had they ever been outraged and disgusted, by seeing their minister put his finger on his nose, and lean over the pulpit first on one side, and then on the other, and blow like a snorting horse, and then wipe with the cuff or the lap of his coat, and after vociferating nonsense for an hour, sit down in the pulpit and cram his hands into his waistcoat pockets, and bring out of one a plug of tobacco, and a short pipe, and out of the other a Jack knife, and deliberately cut his plug, and fill his pipe, then light it at the pulpit candle and come down puffing away to salute his brethren.[19]

By and large, however, at the beginning of the century, the ordinary Upper Canadian resident, whether of British or American origin, was more consumed by eking out a sustenance in the wilderness and more interested in providing for a family than in the geographical origin of his or her

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18 Landon, "The Common Man," in Armstrong, Aspects, 160.

19 Patriot, 6 Sept. 1833: letter from York signed "A British Methodist," as quoted in Edith Firth, The Town of York 1815-1834 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1966), 180.

neighbours. The Methodists, particularly, tended to be apolitical, and the itinerants had barely enough hours in any one day to fulfil all their denominational requirements of reading, visiting, preaching, praying and theological reflection.

Methodist political involvement, however, became acute in the 1820s when Egerton Ryerson, a twenty-three year old Methodist itinerant only recently received "on trial," and the Venerable John Strachan, Archdeacon of York, who had been raised in the Presbyterian tradition and ordained in the Church of England, became embroiled in a public controversy which sent shock waves across the Atlantic Ocean, and had ramifications which lasted until the final settlement of the Clergy Reserves in 1854. In fact, it resulted in the union of the Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church and the British Wesleyans in Canada, permanently changing the face of the Canadian Methodist Church.

While delivering the oration at a funeral service for Bishop Mountain in the summer of 1825, Strachan made outrageous statements about the current status of the Protestant religion in Canada, and especially the Methodists. He inflated the strength of his own church, dismissing all other denominations as inconsequential with the exception of the Kirk and independent Presbyterians. Calling the Methodists "ignorant" and lazy, he noted that they had "no settled clergymen." He suggested that they probably had around thirty itinerants in all of Canada, but they were all "subject to the orders" of the American body and therefore "hostile to our [Canadian] institutions, both civil and religious." Strachan quite genuinely believed that the Methodists were filling the people's minds with "low cunning" and with "republican ideas of independence and individual freedom." In his opinion, this was anathema.[20]

The red flag had been waved. This was the third formal attack which Church of England clergy had made on the Canadian Methodists. The itinerants decided that they had suffered enough abuse, for in addition they were denied privileges such as the right to solemnize marriages and to hold land as a church body for chapels and cemeteries. They called on Egerton to make a response. Much to the delight of his co-workers, Egerton

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20 Craig, Upper Canada, 172ff. Errington, The Lion, 187. Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, Vol. 1, 20ff., 244ff. Playter, The History, 272f.

prepared a brilliant rebuttal which was published in the Upper Canadian left-wing newspaper, the Colonial Advocate. Proud to be of British loyalist stock, himself, Egerton pointed out that the Methodist itinerants were loyal British subjects, that all but eight of them had been born or educated in "British domain." Of those, only two were not naturalized British subjects. He elaborated on the high quality of their training, hard work and supervision, although it is interesting to note that the Second Canada Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church had resolved in 1825 that its itinerants needed to become better educated and improve their minds "to meet the wants of society." In fact, in May 1826, the Colonial Advocate found it necessary to print a course of study which was recommended as indispensable for Canadian preachers. The course consisted of "Divinity, Logic, Ecclesiastical History, Grammar, Geography" as essential subjects, and "Natural Philosophy, Ancient and Modern History, Poetry, Biography, and Chronology" as optional, with five hours each morning to be spent in reading.[21]

Strachan made another stinging statement in the spring of 1828. He reiterated his stand on the need for confirming the Church of England as the established church in Upper Canada. In his opinion, it followed that this church was legally entitled to all the financial proceeds from the Clergy Reserves. Even earlier, Strachan had succeeded in setting up a Clergy Reserves Corporation under Church of England administration, although the 1791 Canada Act which had stipulated that one-seventh of all lands should be set aside as Reserves for the "support and maintenance of a Protestant clergy" made no specific connection between "Protestant clergy" and the Church of England. Egerton continued the debate in the Christian Guardian, the Methodist newspaper established in 1829 which he edited, arguing for a complete separation of church and state and the secularization of the Reserves. As a member of a voluntarist denomination, he believed that the Reserves should be sold and the proceeds used to support education.[22]

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[21] Colonial Advocate, 11 May 1826, p.1,118, 28. John S. Moir, The Church, 116ff. Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, Vol. 1, 20ff. Playter, The History, 260.

[22] Playter, The History, 272f. Craig, Upper Canada, 172ff. Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, Vol. 1, 20ff. Moir, The Church, 113 ff.

The Church of England, Egerton wrote, "maintained ceaseless warfare against Methodism" in the early nineteenth century. Historians agree that intense pressures were brought to bear by that denomination in the ensuing controversy. In 1828, Sir Peregrine Maitland, the lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, told the Mississauga Indians at the Credit River that if they persisted in attending Methodist camp-meetings, they would not receive a school or other government assistance. It is reported that Strachan also threatened the Indians, insisting that they give their allegiance to the Church of England. He helped fund the "Ryanites" who broke away from the Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church because the itinerant Henry Ryan believed the Canadian Methodists were too slow in disassociating themselves from the American parent body. Strachan, it was reported, wanted to stir up trouble among the Methodists. And because of his intense dislike for American Methodists, while he was in England, he negotiated with the British Wesleyans to send more of their missionaries to Upper Canada even though this was completely out of his jurisdiction. While a committed Church of England clergyman, Strachan admired the British Wesleyans, believing that they displayed "respectability" and a consistency of "organization."[23]

The Methodist Episcopals were involved in lobbying and political action of their own. In 1828, they separated from the American Methodists to form an independent Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church. This was not an unanimous decision. Out of one hundred and seventy delegates, one hundred and five voted in favour, forty-three against and twenty-two abstained. Nathan Bangs, whose sister had been preaching in the Niagara region, was one of those opposed. But those itinerants who favoured the separation from the United States believed that it would be politically advantageous for them. Just as the British Wesleyan leadership had taken earlier actions in England to be more accepted in that country, the Canadian Methodist Episcopals felt that this would give them more credibility and allow them greater privileges in Upper Canada. The Primitive Methodists noted that the Methodist Episcopal preachers exerted a "Wonderful

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23 Ryerson, Canadian Methodism, 86, 304. Playter, The History, 285, 336. Sissons, Egerton Ryerson Vol. 1, 54ff. Colonial Advocate, 2 Mar. 1826, p.1, c.3. Grant, Moon, 77, 83: The Methodists themselves were not entirely innocent. Some of their actions were designed to gain Indian converts from Church of England Missions.

Political influence in the Country." "Their Preachers," wrote William Lawson, "attend popular Elections and make violent Speeches and run all over the Country influencing the Electors." Indeed, the Methodist Episcopals obviously achieved some of the respectability they sought and influenced the governing body, for one year later, they were given permission to conduct marriage ceremonies. Presumably with this separation from the United States, the Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church was perceived as having acquired more "sober and regulated modes of thinking" which the Upper Canadian legislation had specified as the criteria for granting that privilege to other religious denominations in 1798. In 1828 as well, the Canadian Methodists forwarded a petition to the British government with eight thousand signatures, protesting against the claims of the Church of England. George Ryerson, who was in England on personal business, was asked to have it put before the British House of Commons.[24]

George was the most liberal of five Ryerson brothers who became Methodist itinerants in Upper Canada. While he was visiting England, he had opportunities to visit with the Wesleyans, and was appalled at how reactive they had become. They were "too *churchified*," George wrote to Egerton, and too legalistic. "Every act is a legislative act, even on so trifling a subject as, whether a certain chapel shall have an organ, etc.," he exclaimed. In fact, he pointed out, "altogether I fear that the Wesleyan Conference [in England] is an obstacle to the extension of civil and religious liberty." Because of his observations, George opposed any close affiliation with the British Wesleyans, recommending to Egerton that they suffer "the temporary censure of enemies in Canada" rather than consider "the permanent evil & annoyance of having a Church & State Tory Superintendent" from England.[25]

Egerton, however, declined to heed George's advice. More closely attuned to another brother, John, Egerton listened instead to his opinion. John had been inspired to unite with the British one day while he was walking along Bay Street in downtown Toronto. He believed this to be the

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24 Craig, Upper Canada, 56, 175. Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, Vol. 1, 77ff. Letter from Lawson et al. from York to Hugh Bourne, 1 Oct. 1830, United Church Archives.

25 Sissons, Egerton Ryerson Vol. 1, 138f: Letter dated Aug. 6, 1831.

only action which would achieve complete acceptance and harmony with the Upper Canadian establishment. As a result, Egerton steered a course for the Canadian Methodists which united them in 1833 to the British Wesleyans. It is one historian's assessment that John wielded more influence in the Canadian Conference than any other itinerant during almost thirty years, and it is said that Egerton always sought his advice. Egerton, himself, wrote that he found his brother John to be "the most cool and accurate judge of the state of the public mind" of any man he had known in Canada. Whereas George believed the British Wesleyans were too conservative, John felt that the Canadian Methodists were too radical. George had been refused entrance into the Anglican priesthood and this may have helped shape his attitude. However, George's wife, Sarah Rolph, the first Indian missionary teacher to die while at work on the Canadian Indian missions, was a sister of the noted Reformer John Rolph. John Ryerson had no use for the Upper Canadian Reform party, and in the 1836 election worked hard to ensure that, as he put it, "not a ninny" of the Reformers would be elected in the riding where he preached.[26]

Only one itinerant voted against the 1833 union - Joseph Gatchell, husband of Ellen Bangs who had preached in the Niagara district. Joseph, more radical in his attitudes, was dishonourably removed from the roll. But there were other after-affects. A group of itinerants who had already left in opposition to the union formed a continuing Methodist Episcopal Church attracting more liberal Methodists and a number of American settlers. Mary Lewis Ryerson, John's wife, wrote that it was a good move, for they took "the rubbish from our church." In this continuing Methodist Episcopal Church a preaching licence was issued to Emma Richardson in 1864. And it was this body the Primitive Methodists considered joining in 1836 because of the treatment they had received from their own British parent body. George Ryerson became an elder and later an "Angel" in the

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26 Sissons, Egerton Ryerson Vol. 1, 43, 154, 190. Letter from John to Egerton 15 Nov. 1833: 211; Vol 2, 60. O. E. Tiffany, The Canadian Rebellion of 1837-38 (Buffalo, New York: Buffalo Historical Society, 1905) reprinted (Toronto: Coles Pub. Co.), 18, and Craig, Upper Canada, 247: Rolph was considered to be devious, clever, subtle-minded, sagacious and accused of playing a double role, working both for the government and for the reformers.

Irvingite Church in Toronto, a denomination which he had come upon in England, and which accepted women in leadership roles.[27]

In the newly-united Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada, the same attitudes were adopted as in Great Britain. Camp-meetings were frowned upon. Local preachers could no longer be ordained as they had been, when an emergency need for more preachers arose. Women, who had been preaching on the Indian missions became silent, and in fact few women remained even as teachers. Legislation against women preaching had been passed in England in 1803. Women such as Mary Barritt Taft and Elizabeth Tomlinson Evans were still preaching in the 1840s in England; in Ireland, Alice Cambridge had retired only in 1830 and Ann Lutton preached throughout the 1830s. Yet Canadian women were discouraged from following their example, as were Wesleyan women in Great Britain. Instead they were informed that women preached by knitting socks and they were encouraged to be a missionaries in the nursery. The Church became more "autocratic" and lay members were not highly regarded. Many of the Methodists believed that they had been "sold" by the Ryersons. A number of men and women joined other more liberal denominations, although the Primitive Methodist itinerant, William Summersides, noted that there was "tumult and confusion" in all the denominations except his own. On the Yonge Street circuit alone, membership in the newly united church declined from nine hundred and fifty-one to five hundred and seventy-eight between 1833 and 1836. Between 1833 and 1839, the church as a whole lost five percent of its members, while the population of Upper Canada increased. But the Methodists who entered the union did achieve a certain measure of the "respectability" they sought. They abandoned their voluntarist stance by accepting financial aid for the Indian missions. The radical Reformer William Lyon MacKenzie included in his "seventh Report on Grievances" which he presented to the Upper Canadian Assembly in 1835, a statement that "payments of gifts, salaries, pensions and retired allowances" were being made to Methodist clergy as well as to other denominations. In 1837, the Methodist Conference passed a

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27 P. E. Shaw, The Catholic Apostolic Church Called Irvingite (New York: King's Crown Press, 1946), 117ff. Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, Vol. 1, 36, 271. Letter of Mary Ryerson to James Lewis, 8 Dec. 1835. Letter from Wm. Summersides, John Rylands University Library.

resolution allowing for the use of funding from the Clergy Reserves other than for educational purposes. At the beginning of the next year, the President of Conference and the Superintendent of the Toronto District signed a statement that they saw no objection to the Church of England being recognized as "*the Established Church* of all the British colonies" which included Canada.[28]

However, the marriage of the Canadian and British Methodists was definitely not a happy one. In 1840, both groups separated. Even John Ryerson was appalled. "Never did high-churchism take such rapid strides towards undisputed domination in this country as it is now taking," he wrote to Egerton. "Never were the prospects of the friends of civil and religious liberty so gloomy and desperate as they are now." The Indian missions remained under the British Wesleyan jurisdiction, and among those who remained with the Wesleyans was William Case. Case had opposed women preaching, and although both his wives - first Hetty Ann Hubbard and secondly Eliza Barnes - had at one time been preachers, both "settled down" shortly after they arrived on the Canadian missions. Whereas the Methodists had lost members with the union, by June 1841 after the separation, they had a net gain of six hundred and sixty-three. A second, and this time permanent, union took place between the Wesleyan Methodists and the Canadian Methodists in 1847, partly in an attempt to receive a share of the payments from the Clergy Reserves. By this time, British conservatism had firmly taken hold of Canadian society.[29]

There is no question that the 1833 union with the British Wesleyans orchestrated by Egerton and John Ryerson helped seal the fate of women preachers in the Canadian Methodist Episcopal stream. The climate which was already not very conducive to women preaching or even working outside the home was made increasingly more conservative. Certainly Egerton gave them no encouragement. Like Biblical literalists of his day,

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28 Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, Vol. 1, 39, 168, 170, 260. Shaw, The Catholic Apostolic Church, 119. Clark, Church and Sect, 209: By the 1830s, fences were used to separate men and women at camp meetings. Sanderson, The First Century, Vol. 1, 324. William Lyon MacKenzie, "Seventh Report on Grievances, 1835" in Bliss, Canadian History, 38. Letter from Summersides, 20 March 1833, from York to Hull Circuit, United Church Archives.

29 Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, 58, 171, 155, 260, 381, 535.

he subscribed to the concept that wives were to submit themselves to their husbands, including this injunction in a later Canadian school textbook on Christian morals. Both he and John educated their daughters to be 'genteel' ladies by sending them to a French convent, and Egerton took his daughter Sophie on the traditional European tour to become more cultured. He favoured modesty in a woman. On the education of farmers' daughters, he wrote:

> But let it not be imagined that I would wish to see farmers' wives and daughters lay aside country plainness and simplicity of manners, and attempt the silly foppery of city fashions and vanities. I have found, in more than one instance, that a city, or village, belle is as superficial and ignorant as she is fine and vain, while a well-educated farmer's daughter is as intelligent and well-informed as she is plain and modest.

In 1842, when Egerton became President of Victoria College, women were no longer permitted to attend classes there, ostensibly because of lack of space. He made allowances for young men to attend who had trouble learning the classics. Although he realized that they would be able to stay at the College only for "one or two years' instruction," yet he insisted that room be made for them. He believed sincerely what he wrote in his own history of Methodism, that the religion which declared that all were "equal in the sight of God" would "not refuse to acknowledge that all citizens are equal in the eye of the law." Yet because of his socio-cultural context, this did not fully apply to women. Formerly Upper Canada Academy, the school had been founded by the Methodists in 1836, the first Protestant institution of higher learning in Canada open to women. With the shift from an Academy to a degree-granting institution, as well as expelling women because there was not enough room for them, the two leading liberals on the Academy committee were replaced by more conservative members, and money was requested from the Upper Canada legislature. The union with

the Wesleyans had dried up the earlier sources of funding which had been mainly from reform-minded Methodists.[30]

Egerton had little love for Americans. He found their manners unrefined and disliked their democratic system of government. When he formed a poor impression of the French in Europe because he felt they were unable to apply themselves, he wrote in his diary that they were the "Yankees of Europe." His family had been driven from their New Jersey home during the American Revolution and his widowed aunt's farm had been burned by American marines in 1814. And even though he had turned down an invitation to become a Church of England minister in favour of the Methodist tradition, his sympathies lay with the British. As he wrote to Jabez Bunting in 1844, "You will probably recollect that I ... stated [in 1840], that my principles were strictly British, & such alone as could perpetuate British authority in Canada."[31]

He was authoritarian, and although he was applauded for the contribution he made particularly to Methodism and to education in Canada, he suffered extreme criticisms. He considered himself a moderate, and on different occasions, leaned in opposite directions. He displayed an anti-institutional bias when he criticized Jabez Bunting for introducing "laying on of hands" during the ordination ceremony, yet he resigned very briefly when the Canadian Church refused to relax the regulation of compulsory attendance at class meetings in 1852. As a result, he was subject to attack from all sides. The radical Canadian paper, the Globe, termed him a despot and the Reformers at one point put a price on his head. The Provincial Auditor, John Langton, a British sympathizer, called him the "Pope of Methodism" suggesting that he mistook his profession since "nature intended him for a Jesuit." The British Methodist leader Jabez Bunting accused him of displaying "an utter want of integrity." Yet

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30 Ryerson, The Story, 99. Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, Vol. 1, 575; Vol. 2, 23, 147, 161, 343. Goldwyn French, Parsons and Politics (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1962), 152. Ryerson, Canadian Methodism, 138.

31 Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, Vol. 1, 3ff., 15; Vol. 2, 81, 85. Prentice, The School, 108. Ryerson, The Story, 44.

because of the influence he wielded, his pro-British attitude contributed to the increasing conservatism of the Methodist Church in Canada.[32]

Although women no longer preached in the united Methodist Church, other women in Upper Canada were accepted as preachers in the more radical Methodist denominations, the Bible Christian and Primitive Methodist movements. When the "old" Methodists turned their back on their earlier voluntarist principles, "the torch of voluntarism" passed to the other sectarian groups attracting the more liberal minded Methodists. But British conservatism was permeating all of Canadian society, and it was not long before most of the women preaching in these groups also left the pulpit and settled into a more acceptable existence. Women were scarcely heard of preaching in the Bible Christian Church beyond the early 1860s, although Ann Copp Gordon appears to have been an exception. And it was not long before the Primitive Methodists, as well, became too traditional to accept women in the pulpit. The natural institutionalization process occurred in these denominations as they shifted from a sect to the status of the church, yet it was mainly the conservatism of Canadian Methodism and of society which rendered them far less amenable to women in the pulpit than their sister churches in the United States.

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32 Sissons, Egerton Ryerson, Vol. 1, 404; Vol. 2, 4, 123, 126, 287ff.,371. Although legislated, compulsory attendance at class meetings was not being enforced.

Appendix A

SELECTED NINETEENTH CENTURY METHODIST WOMEN
IN THE UNITED STATES AND CANADA

name	birth/marriage/death	workplace	work
Abbott, (Mrs Abbott)	b. [England]	P.E.I., Canada	B.C. preacher
Adams, Elizabeth (Mrs Henry Adams)	b. [England]	England/ P.E.I., Canada/ Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Adams, (Mrs John Adams)	b. [England]	P.E.I., Canada	B.C. preacher
Allen, Jane (Mrs Jane Trimble)	b. 1755 d. 1839	United States	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Armstrong, Isabella (Mrs Wm Harris)	m. 1858	P.E.I., Canada	B.C. preacher
Ash, Sally (Mrs Sabine Frazer)	m. ca 1828	Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Baker, (Mrs William Baker)		New England	M.E. exhorter
Bangs, Ellen [Eleanor] (Mrs Joseph Gatchell)	m. 1812 d. 21 Oct. 1857	Upper Canada	M.E. exhorter
Barnes, Eliza (Mrs William Case)	b. 11 Nov. 1796, Boston m. 28 Aug. 1833 d. 16 Apr. 1887	United States/ Upper Canada	M.E. preacher/ Indian Missions teacher
Bayles, Miss	b. [New York]	Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Benham, (Mrs John Benham)	b. [New England States]	Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Bennis, Eliza[beth] (Mrs Bennis)	b. 1725 [England] d. 1802	England/ [United States]	W.M./[M.E.] "called people to repentance"
Bowes, Margaret (Mrs Samuel E. Taylor)	b. 1806, Ireland m. 1828 d. 18 Mar. 1859	Upper Canada	M.C. - worker at camp meetings/ class leader

Brink, Nancy		Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Butterfield, Fanny (Mrs Ebenezer Newell)	m.1810	Northeastern United States	M.E. accompanied husband/exhorter
Calloway, Frances	b. [England]	P.E.I., Canada	B.C. preacher
Cantrell, Elizabeth (Mrs William Calloway)		United States	M.E. accompanied husband/exhorted
Cook, (Mrs Cook)		United States	A.M.E. preacher
Cook, Sophia	b. 1798, Pompey, New York d. 8 Sept. 1849	Upper Canada	M.E./W.M. Indian Missions teacher
Copp, Ann (Mrs Andrew Gordon)	b. 19 Dec.1837, Beaford, Eng. m. 23 June 1859 d. 9 Aug. 1931	England/ Ontario/ Manitoba	B.C. preacher
Cory, (Mrs Andrew Cory)		Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Cox, Rebecca (Mrs Jackson)		United States	A.M.E. preacher
Curtis, Natio (Mrs Nelson Barnum)	b. 1812 m. 1834 d. 1853	United States	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Dart, Elizabeth (Mrs John Hicks Eynon)	b. 13 Jan. 1792, Cornwall m. 18 Mar. 1833 d. 13 Jan. 1857	England/ Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Davidson, Helanor M.		United States	M.P. ordained preacher
De Merritt, Ella	b. 16 Aug. 1866, Ohio, U.S. d. 22 Apr. 1898	New England States	P.M. preacher
Dorsey, Eleanor (Mrs. Dorsey)		New York State	M.E. accompanied itinerant
Dulmage, Ann 1.(Mrs Samuel Coate) 2.(Mrs Archibald McLean)	b. ca 1777, [New York State]	Upper Canada	M.E. class-leader /accompanied husband
Dulmage, Margaret (Mrs Sylvester Hurlburt)	b. 30 Aug.1803, [U. Canada] m. 1826 d. 13 June 1873	Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher

Edmonds, Phoebe		Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Edwards, P.		Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
"Elizabeth"	b. 1766		A.M.E. preacher
Evans, Rachel (Mrs Evans)		New Jersey, U.S.	A.M.E. preacher
Farley, Susannah (Mrs Solomon Waldron)	b. 19 Sept. 1802, Connecticut, m. [11 Sept. 1826] d. Dec. 1890	Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Farrington, Sophronia		from U.S. to Liberia	M.E. missionary
Fitzgerald, Osie	b. ca 1813 [United States]	New England States	M.E./Holiness preacher
Fletcher, Eliza		New England States	P.M. preacher
Fletcher, Jane		Ontario	P.M. preacher
Ford, Elizabeth Atkinson (Mrs Charles G. Finney)	b. ca 1799 m. 5 Nov. 1848 d. 27 Nov. 1863	England/ United States	Holiness preacher
Giles, M. (Mrs Giles)		Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Gordon, (Mrs James A. Gordon)		Ontario	M.C. supply preacher
Haviland, Laura	b. 1808 d. 1898	United States	Q./W.M. preacher
Heard, Sister (Mrs Heard)	b. [England]	England/ Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Hermes, Susan		United States	M.E. preacher
Henwood, Jane (Mrs Charles Harris)	b. 6 Jul. 1831,Upper Canada d. Nov. 1928	Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Hill, (Mrs W.C. Hill)		United States	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Holt, Mary (Mrs Livsey)	b. ca 1837 d. Oct.7, 1896	New England States	P.M. preacher

Hubbard, Hester Ann (Mrs William Case)	b. ca 1796, Granville, Mass. m. 4 May 1829 d. 24 Sept. 1831	Upper Canada	M.E. preacher/ Indian Missions teacher
Huntingdon, Miss	b. [United States]	Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Inskip, Martha Foster (Mrs John S. Inskip)		United States	Holiness preacher
Jago, Martha (Mrs Thomas Jago Sabine)	b. Cornwall, England d. 1 June 1930	England/P.E.I./ Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Jenkins, (Mrs Jenkins)		from U.S. to Buenos Aires	missionary
Kemys, Mary Ann (Mrs John Kemys)	b. [England]	Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Kent, Sister		Upper Canada	P.M. preacher
Knowles, H.M. (Mrs W.M. Knowles)	b. [England]	[England] United States	P.M. preacher
Kunze, Miss		Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Lacount, Miss		New England States	P.M. preacher
Lancaster, Sarah	b. [Upper Canada]	Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Lee, Jarena	b. 1783, New Jersey, U.S. m. 1811	United States	A.M.E. preacher
Low, Sarah (Mrs John Norton)	b. 1790 m. 1807 d. 1856	mid-west United States	M.E. -"useful" "argued intelligently"
Lyle, Mary Ann (Mrs Wm Lyle)	b. 29 Jan.1797, Cornwall m. 1823 d. 7 May 1862	England/ Upper Canada	B.C./P.M preacher
Manwaring, Mercy Miner (Mrs Andrew Moffatt)	b. 1809, Connecticut, U.S. m. 28 Dec. 1834 d. 12 Oct. 1891	Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Markham, (Mrs Markham)		Upper Canada	P.M. exhorter
Mathers, Judith		United States	M.E. preacher

McColloch, Elizabeth (Mrs Ebeneezer Zane)	b. 1748	United States	M.E. exhorter
McMullen, Sister		Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Miller, Miss (Mrs Wm A. Smith)		mid-west United States	M.E./M.P. preacher
Millett, Deborah (Mrs Edward Taylor)	m. 1819	New England, U.S.	M.E. preacher
Murray, Sister		Upper Canada	P.M. preacher
Nan(ce)kivell, Susan	b. [England]	England/ Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Newton, Margaret (Mrs Van Cott)	b. 1830, New York City d. 1914	United States	M.E. licensed preacher
Newton, (Mrs T. Newton)		England/ New England	P.M. preacher
Nicholls, Mary (Mrs Thomas Green)	b. [England]	England/ Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Opheral, Charity		United States	U.B. preacher
Parker, Ann (Mrs George Parker)	b. ca 1807, England d. 11 Nov. 1889	England/New England States	P.M. preacher
Parker, Sister	b. [England]	England/en route to Canada	B.C. preacher
Pearce, Hannah (Mrs William Reeves)	b. 30 Jan. 1800, Devon, Eng. m. 5 July 1831 d. 13 Nov. 1868	England/ mid-west United States	B.C./M.P. preacher
Perry, Jane		United States	M.E. preacher
Pigman, Sarah (Mrs Walter G. Griffith)	b. 1783 m. 1803 d. 1845	United States	M.E. accompanied itinerant husband
Pinny, Miss		Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Richards, Lucy	b. 1792	United States	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Richardson, Emma (Mrs Richardson)		Upper Canada/ United States	M.E. licensed preacher

Riden, Elizabeth (Mrs John Williams)	b. [England] m. 1844	England/en route to Canada	B.C. preacher
Riden, Sister	b. [England]	England/en route to Canada	B.C. preacher
Ripley, Dorothy	b. ca 1767, Whitby, England d. 23 Dec.1831	England/ United States	W.M./Q. preacher
Rippin, Sarah (Mrs George Rippin)	b.1824, Devon, England m. 1844 d. 11 Mar.1883	England/ Upper Canada/ United States	B.C. preacher
Rolph, E[lizabeth][1]	b. 24 June 1796 [England] d. 18 Mar. 1835	Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
or Rolph E[mma] (Mrs Wm. Salmon)	b. 8 July 1797 [England] d. 1838	Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Rolph, Sarah (Mrs George Ryerson)	b. 7 May 1799 [England] m. 1821 d. 10 July 1829	Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Roszel, Sarah		Virginia, U.S.	exhorter
Ruckle, Barbara (Mrs Paul Heck)	b. 1734, Ireland m. 1760 d. 17 Aug. 1804	United States/ Upper Canada	M.E.-encouraged preaching and classes
Russell, Marcella		from U.S. to Rio de Janiero	M.E. missionary
Scelec, Miss		Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Scott, Amey	b. ca 1805 m. 1826	Vermont, U.S.	M.E. accompanied husband/exhorted
Sealy, Miss		Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Sellicks(Sillick), Eliza		Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Sexton, Lydia		United States	U.B. licensed preacher
Shaw, Anna Howard	b. 1847, England d. 1919	United States	M.E./M.P./U. preacher
Shipman, (Mrs M.F. Shipman)	b. [England]	England/New England States	P.M. preacher

Smith, (Mrs Isaac H. Smith)		United States	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Smith, (Mrs Aaron Choate)	m. 1839	Upper Canada	M.E./W.M. Indian Missions teacher
St. John, Eugenia F.		United States	M.E./M.P. ordained preacher
Stephenson, (Mrs Stephenson)		Upper Canada	P.M.-husband assisted her
Stockton, Miss		Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Stovold, Ruth (Mrs Wm Woodger)	b. 1818, Hampshire, England m. 1851 d. 22 Jan. 1889	England/ Upper Canada	B.C./P.M. preacher
Stubbs, Harriet		United States	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Suddard, (Mrs Suddard)		New England States	P.M. preacher
Sutton, Sister		New York State	P.M. preacher
Swales, Ann		Ontario	P.M. preacher
Thompson, (Mrs Thompson)		United States	M.E. preacher
Towle, Nancy		United States	Holiness preacher
Towler, Mary Ann (Mrs Wm Towler)	b. [England] m. 1830	United States/ Upper Canada	P.M. preacher
Trick, Elizabeth (Mrs Charles Henwood)	b. 27 Apr. 1801, Devon, Eng. m. 2 Jan. 1822 d. 8 Jan. 1872	England/ Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Trueman, Elizabeth (Mrs Hoskin)	b. ca 1807, [England] d. 26 Feb. 1882	England/ Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Verplanck, Sister		Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Vickery, Ann (Mrs Paul Robins)	b. 1800, [England] m. 1831 or 1832 d. 18 Sept. 1853	England/ Upper Canada	B.C. preacher
Watkins, (Mrs Nathaniel Watkins)	b. [England]	[England]/ Upper Canada	P.M. preacher

Watkins, Ruth	b. 1802, [England]	England/New England States	P.M. preacher
Watson, Caroline	b. [Canada]	[Canada]/ United States	P.M./M.E. preacher
Way, Amanda	b. 1824 d. 1914	United States	Q./Methodist preacher
Wearing, Ann	b. [Devon, England]	England/New England States	W.M./P.M. preacher
Wilkins, Ann (Mrs Wilkins)	b. 1806, New England States d. 13 Nov. 1857	from U.S. to Liberia	missionary
Wood, (Mrs Wm Wood)		New England States	P.M. preacher
Woodill, Jane (Mrs Isaac Wilson)	b. 20 Feb. 1824, York m. 27 Dec. 1849 d. 17 July 1893	Upper Canada	P.M. preacher
Worrall, Phoebe (Mrs Walter Palmer)	b. 18 Dec. 1807, New York m. 28 Sept. 1827 d. 2 Nov. 1874	United States/ Ontario/ Great Britain	M.E./Holiness preacher
Yeomans, S.		Upper Canada	M.E. Indian Missions teacher
Zilpha, Elaw (Mrs Elaw)		United States	A.M.E. preacher

Abbreviations:

A.M. African Methodist Episcopal
B.C. Bible Christian
M.C. Methodist Church
M.E. Methodist Episcopal
M.P. Methodist Protestant
P.M. Primitive Methodist
Q. Quaker
U. Unitarian
U.B. United Brethren
W.M. Wesleyan Methodist

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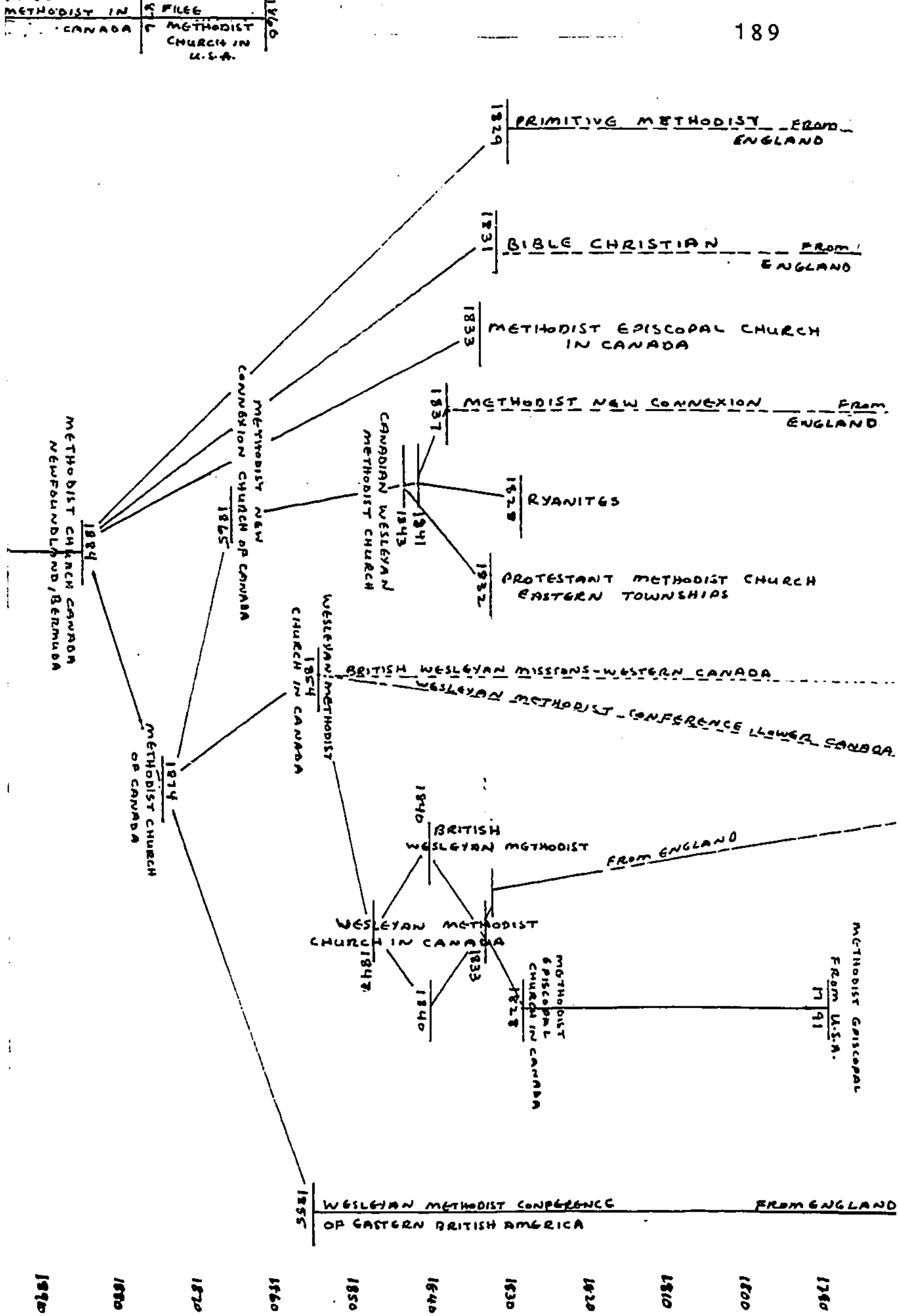
[1] Only one of Elizabeth Rolph or Emma Rolph worked on the Indian Missions.


FREE METHODIST IN CANADA
FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN U.S.A.
1860
1829 PRIMITIVE METHODIST FROM ENGLAND
1831 BIBLE CHRISTIAN FROM ENGLAND
1833 METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CANADA
1837 METHODIST NEW CONNEXION FROM ENGLAND
CANADIAN WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH
1843
1841
1828 RYANITES
1832 PROTESTANT METHODIST CHURCH EASTERN TOWNSHIPS
METHODIST NEW CONNEXION CHURCH OF CANADA
1865
METHODIST CHURCH CANADA NEWFOUNDLAND, BERMUDA
1884
WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA
1854
BRITISH WESLEYAN MISSIONS - WESTERN CANADA
WESLEYAN METHODIST - CONFERENCE LOWER CANADA
METHODIST CHURCH OF CANADA
1874
1840 BRITISH WESLEYAN METHODIST
FROM ENGLAND
WESLEYAN METHODIST CHURCH IN CANADA
1847
1833
1840
1828 METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN CANADA
METHODIST EPISCOPAL FROM U.S.A. 1791
1855 WESLEYAN METHODIST CONFERENCE OF EASTERN BRITISH AMERICA
FROM ENGLAND
1890
1880
1870
1860
1850
1840
1830
1820
1810
1800
1790

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Canadian Statesman.

Christian Advocate.

Christian Guardian.

Christian Journal. (Primitive Methodist)

Cobourg Star and Newcastle Commercial and General Advertiser.

Colonial Advocate.

Evangelist. (Primitive Methodist)

Methodist Magazine.

Morning Herald. (New York)

New Outlook.

Northwestern Christian Advocate.

Observer. (Bible Christian)

Orillia Times.

Plain-Speaker.

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