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## Pacifism in Churches of Christ in Western Canada During World War 2 and the Influence of Nashville Bible School

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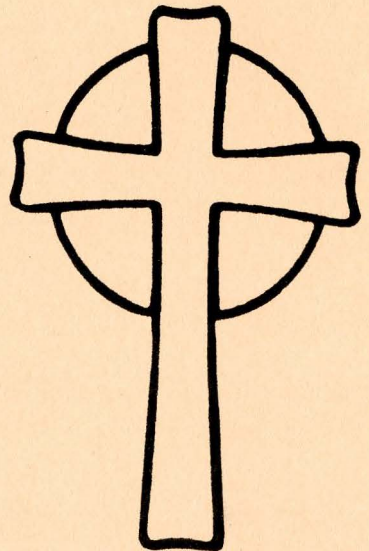
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# PACIFISM IN CHURCHES OF CHRIST IN WESTERN CANADA DURING WORLD WAR II AND THE INFLUENCE OF NASHVILLE BIBLE SCHOOL\*

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The Canadian primitivist movement that became associated with the American Restoration Movement (Stone-Campbell Movement) has its origins in the British tradition and was established by Scottish Baptists in the early nineteenth century. The movement was well established in Ontario by the middle of the century and migrated west to the prairies (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta) in the early twentieth century.<sup>1</sup> Canadian restoration theology is rooted in the British tradition, and the British pacifistic influence was strong in Ontario.<sup>2</sup> However, by the time the Canadian Restoration Movement moved west, the influence of the American South, particularly that of Nashville Bible School, was established in

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\*I would like to thank John Mark Hicks for introducing me to American Restoration theology and the theology of Nashville Bible School. Dr. Hicks has graciously guided the revision of this article, which began as a paper for his restoration theology course at Harding University Graduate School of Religion in spring 2005. I would also like to thank John Bailey, who read my paper and commented on the Canadian content. He has kindly responded to numerous emails with requests for information about his father, J. C. Bailey. Last but not least, I would like to acknowledge the Canadian pioneer preachers who tirelessly preached the gospel in less than ideal circumstances, and often at great personal sacrifice.

<sup>1</sup> David Thompson, "The Restoration Movement in Ontario Part I," *Gospel Herald* 45, no. 1 (Jan. 1979): 7. Hereinafter referred to as *GH*.

<sup>2</sup> See "Yearly Meeting," *The Christian Banner* 7, no. 8 (Aug. 1853): 221; [Brother] Wallace, "The Disciples and Carnal Warfare," *The Christian Banner* 10, no. 9 (Sept. 1856): 274-75; David Oliphant Jr., "Shall Christians Be Exempt from Military Duty?" *The Christian Banner* 8, no. 3 (March 1854): 71-73. From 1854 to 1856, the Disciples in Ontario discussed application for legal exemption from bearing arms. David Oliphant was opposed to making this move but advised the Disciples to apprise the government of their pacifist stance on an individual basis. Had the Disciples applied for and been granted exemption, they would have enjoyed the same status of exemption as the historic peace churches in Canada.

Canada,<sup>3</sup> and the influence of David Lipscomb fed the stream of pacifism in the west.<sup>4</sup> This paper will explore pacifism in western Canada through the pages of the (Canadian) *Gospel Herald* and trace its connections to Nashville Bible School.

### Nashville Bible School

Nashville Bible School was established in 1891 by David Lipscomb and James A. Harding in Nashville, Tennessee. It was a liberal arts college that required daily Bible study as part of the curriculum. Following the death of Lipscomb in 1917, the name of the school was changed to David Lipscomb College.<sup>5</sup> In 1901, Harding left Nashville Bible School to establish Potter Bible School in Bowling Green, Kentucky, and through the work of his students influenced the establishment of numerous Bible schools. Harding was considered the father of the Bible school movement among Churches of Christ, while Lipscomb was considered the father of the southern Churches of Christ.<sup>6</sup>

Foundational to the theology of Nashville Bible School is, what Richard Hughes has called, the "apocalyptic" worldview. This worldview is not necessarily connected to theories regarding "end times,"<sup>7</sup> but is a worldview based upon a kingdom theology. It emphasizes Christian citizenship in a heavenly kingdom, not an earthly one.

One who holds to an apocalyptic orientation takes very seriously the promise of the end of this age and the assurance that the Kingdom of God will finally triumph. But more than that, he or she seeks to live his or her life as *if* the final triumph of the Kingdom of God were complete. For one who ascribes to this perspective, the Kingdom of God is not something far off in the future. Rather, the Kingdom of God is the defining presence, the only reality that matters.<sup>8</sup>

Commitment to an apocalyptic worldview calls for radical discipleship on the part of Christians. They are called to be non-materialistic, to minister to the

<sup>3</sup> Claude Cox, "The Division between Disciples and Churches of Christ in the Disciples Church at Meaford, Ontario," *ResQ* 27, no.1 (Jan. 1984): 34.

<sup>4</sup> Lynn Anderson, email to author, 6 Dec. 2005; John Bailey, email to author, 20 Nov. 2005.

<sup>5</sup> Robert E. Hooper, "Lipscomb University," in *The Encyclopedia of the Stone-Campbell Movement* (eds. Douglas A. Foster, Paul M. Blowers, Anthony L. Dunnivant, D. Newell Williams; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 482–83.

<sup>6</sup> John Mark Hicks and Bobby Valentine, *Kingdom Come: Embracing the Spiritual Legacy of David Lipscomb and James Harding* (Abilene: Leafwood, 2006), 21–22.

<sup>7</sup> Richard T. Hughes, *Reviving the Ancient Faith: The Story of Churches of Christ in America* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 92.

<sup>8</sup> Richard T. Hughes, *Reclaiming a Heritage: Reflections on the Heart, Soul and Future of Churches of Christ* (Abilene: ACU Press, 2002), 73.

poor and suffering, to live peaceful lives, and to be obedient servants of Christ despite any cost. Christians are called to live counter culturally, and not in step with the world.<sup>9</sup>

The apocalyptic worldview within the American Restoration tradition originated, according to Hughes, with Barton Stone, for whom it was “premised on obedience to the direct rule of God.”<sup>10</sup> Christians are pilgrims on earth, and their allegiance is to God, not current worldly values.<sup>11</sup> Stone believed that “the kingdom of God transcends the church on this earth. He envisioned the kingdom as God’s final, triumphant rule, which will be made complete only in the last age.” He believed that Scripture gave “models for holy living”<sup>12</sup> and was sectarian in that he believed in separation from the world.<sup>13</sup> Stone, toward the end of his life, rejected politics and involvement in government and held an ethic of pacifism that was “grounded . . . squarely in anticipation of the final triumph of the kingdom of God on earth.”<sup>14</sup>

David Lipscomb embodied the apocalyptic worldview of Stone.<sup>15</sup> He held a strong kingdom theology, was sectarian, rejected politics, and was a “rigorous pacifist.”<sup>16</sup> He believed that human government was an institution that belonged to Satan and that Christians should have no involvement with the government or its affairs. “The chief occupation of human governments from the beginning have been war.” Therefore, “[i]t [takes] but little thought to see that Christians cannot fight, cannot slay one another or their fellowmen, at the behest of any earthly ruler, or to establish or maintain any human government.”<sup>17</sup> He believed that the role of the church was to establish the kingdom of God on earth in order to establish divine rule and displace Satan’s earthly government.<sup>18</sup>

For Lipscomb, the Sermon on the Mount represented the core principles of Jesus’ teaching. Jesus’ mission to earth was to “rescue the world” from a fallen state and restore it to “primitive and pristine allegiance” to God.<sup>19</sup> The principles found in the Sermon on the Mount were intended to be “the principles that must

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<sup>9</sup> Hughes, *Reclaiming a Heritage*, 74–77.

<sup>10</sup> Hughes, *Reviving the Ancient Faith*, 92.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 93.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 94.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 109.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 111.

<sup>15</sup> Hughes indicates that Lipscomb was the last one to combine successfully the viewpoints of both Stone and Campbell. For the purpose of this paper, the influence of Stone’s apocalyptic worldview will be discussed.

<sup>16</sup> Hughes, *Reviving the Ancient Faith*, 121–27.

<sup>17</sup> David Lipscomb, *Civil Government: Its Origin, Mission and Destiny and the Christian’s Relation to It* (Nashville: McQuiddy, 1913), iv. Electronic resource found at <http://www.mun.ca/rels/restmov/texts/dlipscomb/civgov.html>.

<sup>18</sup> Lipscomb, *Civil Government*, 12–13.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 46–47.

govern in his kingdom."<sup>20</sup> Lipscomb believed that these principles were essential to Christian living and must "pervade and control the hearts and lives of men, without which no man can be a Christian."<sup>21</sup> He believed that "Christ specially gave this sermon to regulate the hearts and lives of his followers. He gave it at the beginning of his ministry that all might understand the life, to which they were specifically called."<sup>22</sup> Christians are citizens of heaven who are called to walk as Jesus did, which means promoting love, including love of one's enemies.<sup>23</sup>

Lipscomb was the primary spokesperson for the pacifistic vision of Nashville Bible School.<sup>24</sup> He argued, "Jesus would not permit his servants to take the sword to defend him, to establish his rule on earth, or to maintain his kingdom and fight against God's enemies."<sup>25</sup> Christians should not fight and kill one another in the name of war for the establishment of earthly kingdoms. Not only should Christians refrain from participation in war, Lipscomb went so far as to argue that voting to elect a government that might support war was equally contrary to Jesus' wishes.<sup>26</sup> He posed the question, "Does anyone believe that if Jesus were here that he would make war speeches and encourage the spirit of war?" He concludes that "true followers" of Jesus must not participate in human conflict and strife. "The evil begins in participating in the political strifes and conflicts of human governments, drinking into a spirit that is of man and not of God. Unless we have the spirit of Christ, we are none of his."<sup>27</sup>

Harding, the "epitome of the apocalyptic tradition,"<sup>28</sup> shared Lipscomb's view that human government is an agency of Satan, and as such, that Christians should not be involved in the affairs of human government.<sup>29</sup> He extended that to include "any institution or kingdom reflecting human contrivance," including missionary societies and a governing board for Nashville Bible School.<sup>30</sup> Harding placed his trust in the providence of God, not human institutions.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 133.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 135.

<sup>23</sup> David Lipscomb, "War—Its Spirit," *Gospel Advocate* 40 (28 April 1898): 269.

<sup>24</sup> Michael Casey, "Pacifism and David Lipscomb," *The Gospel Advocate* 135, no. 12 (Dec. 1993): 46; Johnnie Andrew Collins, "Pacifism in the Churches of Christ: 1866–1945," (D.A. dissertation, Middle Tennessee State University, 1984), 68.

<sup>25</sup> David Lipscomb, "The Monroe Doctrine," *Gospel Advocate* 38, no. 3 (16 Jan. 1896): 37; Lipscomb, *Civil Government*, iv.

<sup>26</sup> Lipscomb, "War—Its Spirit," 269; Lipscomb, *Civil Government*, iv.

<sup>27</sup> Lipscomb, "War—Its Spirit," 269.

<sup>28</sup> Hughes, *Reviving the Ancient Faith*, 138.

<sup>29</sup> James A. Harding, "The Kingdom of Christ Vs. The Kingdom of Satan," *The Way* 5, no. 26 (15 Oct. 1903), 931. Available at [www.mun.ca/rels/restmov/texts/jharding/KCVKS.HTM](http://www.mun.ca/rels/restmov/texts/jharding/KCVKS.HTM).

<sup>30</sup> Hughes, *Reviving the Ancient Faith*, 137–38.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

Harding's theology included a strong view of God's overriding providence in the affairs of humankind,<sup>32</sup> a dynamic and active role of the indwelling Holy Spirit in the life of a believer,<sup>33</sup> and a fourfold practice of spiritual discipline as a means of grace that consisted of reading and studying the Bible, ministering to the poor, observing the Lord's day meeting and the Lord's Supper, and prayer.<sup>34</sup> Harding was also premillennial, and his millennial views "reflected a deeper worldview" that was premised on his kingdom theology.<sup>35</sup>

#### Canada and Nashville Bible School

Harding's influence moved into Canada prior to the establishment of Nashville Bible School. By 1883 he had preached in two Canadian provinces, Manitoba and Ontario.<sup>36</sup> Two significant locations were Meaford, Ontario, and Carman, Manitoba.

The Disciples church in Meaford met for the first time in the spring of 1848. It grew and built its first building in 1858, and by 1861 had a membership of one hundred. The Meaford Disciples were evangelistically minded and started congregations in nearby Cape Rich and the Euphrasia Township in the 1870s. They worked cooperatively with seven other congregations to secure a full-time evangelist for their county, the County Grey. In 1882, they formed a cooperative with the Euphrasia and Cape Rich congregations in order to secure the services of a full-time preacher to work with the three congregations. But by 1900, the Meaford congregation had withdrawn from cooperation with other congregations.<sup>37</sup>

Claude Cox identifies two reasons for the distancing of the Meaford Disciples from the cooperative and instrumental stream of the movement.<sup>38</sup> First is the influence of James Beaty and the *Bible Index*, which was a Canadian restoration periodical published in Toronto, Ontario. Beaty was opposed to cooperations and the use of the organ and promoted these viewpoints in his paper. Second is the influence of visiting preachers from the "American South."<sup>39</sup> James A. Harding held his first debate in Meaford, Ontario, in 1884<sup>40</sup> and returned to hold protracted meetings in 1885 and 1896.<sup>41</sup> The church records from Meaford identify five additional preachers with connections to Harding and

<sup>32</sup> Hicks and Valentine, 45–48.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 75–76.

<sup>35</sup> Hughes, *Reviving the Ancient Faith*, 137.

<sup>36</sup> L. C. Sears, *The Eyes of Jehovah: The Life and Faith of James Alexander Harding* (Nashville: Gospel Advocate Co., 1970), 49.

<sup>37</sup> Cox, 25–29.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>40</sup> James A. Harding and the Rev. T. L. Wilkinson, *Debate on Baptism: Embracing Mode and Subjects* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1886).

<sup>41</sup> Cox, 31–32.

Nashville Bible School who held protracted meetings in Meaford: Abraham Foster<sup>42</sup> (1897 and 1898), S. M. Jones<sup>43</sup> (1899 and 1901), E. A. Elam<sup>44</sup> (1899 and 1900), J. T. Lewis<sup>45</sup> (1904 and 1905), and Don Carlos Janes<sup>46</sup> (1915).<sup>47</sup>

Cox concludes that “[f]irm ties with the South and Nashville, in particular, were forged through contacts with J. A. Harding. . . . [B]y the turn of the century the Meaford Disciples church had strong ties with Southern, conservative views, especially those current at Nashville.”<sup>48</sup> These ties grew stronger following the division between the Church of Christ and the Disciples in Meaford. The division, which began in the 1880s, gradually progressed over a number of years and was formally recognized in 1919.<sup>49</sup>

The Meaford congregation played a significant role in the establishment and development of Churches of Christ in the Canadian west. The congregation in Carman, Manitoba, was established by the Saunders and Mallory families from Meaford, who moved west in 1889 for that purpose.<sup>50</sup> They were the first of many families who moved from Meaford to the prairies. The first meeting of the Church of Christ in Carman was held in the home of George Saunders in 1889. Over the next few years, others from Ontario joined them, and by 1891, membership was large enough for the congregation to build their first building.

Carman’s connections to Meaford, and thus to Nashville Bible School, are evidenced in the list of visiting preachers. James A. Harding preached at the opening ceremony for the new building in 1892 and returned to preach a protracted meeting in 1893.<sup>51</sup> E. A. Elam preached in Carman in 1895; Abraham Foster was in residence from 1898–1903; and S. M. Jones preached in Carman

<sup>42</sup> Catalogue of Nashville Bible School, imprint Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Pub. Co., 1894–1897. Foster attended Nashville Bible School from 1894–1897.

<sup>43</sup> Catalogue of Nashville Bible School, 1894–1898. Jones attended Nashville Bible School from 1894–1898.

<sup>44</sup> H. Leo Boles, “E. A. Elam and David Lipscomb College,” *Gospel Advocate* 71, no. 17 (25 April 1929), 388. Elam was appointed to the board of directors of Nashville Bible School in 1901 and served 28 years in that capacity. During that time he also served as president of Nashville Bible School from 1907–1913.

<sup>45</sup> Catalogue of Nashville Bible School, 1899–1906. Lewis attended the NBS from 1899–1906.

<sup>46</sup> J. N. Armstrong, “Don Carlos Janes,” *Gospel Advocate* 86, no. 12 (23 March 1944): 202. Janes attended Potter Bible College from 1901–1905.

<sup>47</sup> Cox, 31–33. It should be noted that preachers from other areas of the United States also held protracted meetings in Meaford.

<sup>48</sup> Cox, 33–34.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 34–36.

<sup>50</sup> Rueben Butchart, *The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830* (Toronto: Canadian Headquarters’ Publications, Churches of Christ [Disciples], 1949), 418.

<sup>51</sup> Elizabeth York, “Carman Church of Christ,” in *Up To Now: A Story of Dufferin and Carman* (Altona, MB: D. W. Friesen & Sons Ltd., 1967), 127–28.



in 1907.<sup>52</sup> These men also held protracted meetings in Meaford. The Church of Christ in Carman was the first established congregation of Churches of Christ in western Canada, and Nashville influence formed part of its earliest history.

The Bible School movement that began in Nashville also impacted Canadians. A significant number of Canadians traveled south to be trained at Nashville Bible School. School records indicate that twenty-three Canadians attended Nashville Bible School from 1895 to 1917. Included in that number are ten students from Meaford and five from the Carman area.<sup>53</sup> American students of Nashville Bible School also came to Canada and established the first Bible Schools in Canada.

The Carman Bible School was established in 1897 by Abraham Foster,<sup>54</sup> a student of Nashville Bible School.<sup>55</sup> The first Bible school among the Churches of Christ in Canada, it was patterned after Nashville Bible School. No tuition fees were charged, and students were responsible for finding their own accommodation. In addition to Bible, the school offered courses in liberal arts. The school came to an untimely close after a flood caused irreparable damage to the buildings. Lillian Torkelson, founder of Western Christian College, says of Foster, "The influence Brother Foster exerted over his students cannot be measured. He is certainly one of the great pioneers of Christian education in Canada."<sup>56</sup>

The second Bible School in Canada was established by S. M. Jones, also a student of Nashville Bible School.<sup>57</sup> Harding sent Jones to Canada to preach a

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<sup>52</sup> W. Eatough, "The Church at Carman" *GH* 7, no. 1 (March 1941): 10.

<sup>53</sup> Catalogue of Nashville Bible School, imprint Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Pub. Co., 1894–1897; The . . . annual announcement of Nashville Bible School, imprint Nashville, TN: Gospel Advocate Pub. Co., 1898–1917; Nashville Bible School bulletin, imprint Nashville, TN; Nashville Bible School, 1915–1917. Those from Meaford (and the years attended) are William Cox (1899–1900), John Deegan (1899–1900), Emma V. Falls (1897–99), John Jay (1899–1900), W. J. (or W. T.) Mackie (1897–00), Charles W. Petch (1899–1902), Mrs. Charles Petch (1899–1902), W. E. Trout (1897–98), Samuel Whitfield (1897–98) and Maud York (1899–1901). Those from Carman (and the years attended) are John Mallory (1895–99), Norman Mallory (1897–1900), Wilson Mallory (1895–99), John Saunders (1897–98; 1900–1901) and Stanely York (1899–1901). Those from other locations are George E. Clause (1897–1902) St. Catherines, Ontario; Annie C. Hamm (1915–16), no location given; Henry David Jackson (1899–1901), Jordan Station, Ontario; (J. D. or J. C.) McMurchie (1895–99), no location given; C. G. McPhee (Grad 1917), no location given; E. Sterling (1895–97), no location given; Madison Wright (1899–1901), no location given.

<sup>54</sup> Lillian Torkelson, *Radburn's Memoirs* (Wichita Falls, TX: Western Christian Foundation Press, 1970), 118–19.

<sup>55</sup> Catalogue of Nashville Bible School, 1894–1897. Foster attended Nashville Bible School from 1894–1897.

<sup>56</sup> Torkelson, *Radburn's Memoirs*, 118–20.

<sup>57</sup> Catalogue of Nashville Bible School, 1894–1898. Jones attended Nashville Bible School from 1894–1898.

gospel meeting in Meaford,<sup>58</sup> and Jones remained in Canada. In 1898 he held a successful protracted meeting in Beamsville and in 1902 established the Beamsville Bible School.<sup>59</sup> The Bible School was organized in the same fashion as the Carman Bible School. It was a non-residential school, but students from around the province attended and boarded in the homes of church members. The curriculum included Bible and liberal arts courses. Jones was "one of the most controversial and at the same time one of the most influential persons in the history of the Beamsville church."<sup>60</sup> He was opposed to the use of the organ and to missionary societies and was considered partially responsible for the division of the Beamsville congregation in 1910. Following the division, Jones and those who sided with him moved to a new building down the street, and Jones moved the Beamsville Bible School to the new location. The Bible School ran until 1916, and Jones remained in Beamsville until his death in 1934.<sup>61</sup> The Beamsville congregation was reunited in 1936 under the leadership of C. G. McPhee.<sup>62</sup>

The Carman Bible School was resurrected in 1921 when H. A. Rogers, a student of the earlier Bible School, recognized the need for a Bible School in western Canada.<sup>63</sup> Rogers had moved with his family from Meaford in 1899 and operated a market garden out of Carman. In 1917 the Carman congregation sent him into Saskatchewan to evangelize.<sup>64</sup> He was the first preacher to evangelize in that province and laid the foundation for Churches of Christ in Saskatchewan. By 1918 Rogers had baptized at least fifty people,<sup>65</sup> and by 1920 he had established a number of small congregations in Saskatchewan. Rogers persuaded H. L. Richardson to move from Ontario to Carman to re-open the school. Richardson's father had encouraged Rogers to preach,<sup>66</sup> and Richardson sent occasional reports of Rogers's work in western Canada to *Word and Work*.<sup>67</sup> Richardson had attended the Beamsville Bible School and studied under S. M. Jones.<sup>68</sup> The pending opening of the Carman Bible School received mention in the *Christian Leader*<sup>69</sup> and *Word and Work*.<sup>70</sup> The Carman Bible School offered

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<sup>58</sup> Sears, 156.

<sup>59</sup> Edwin Broadus and Steve Courson, eds. *A Church Upon the New Testament Alone: The History of the Beamsville Church of Christ: 1832-1982* (Beamsville, ON: Beamsville Church of Christ, 1982), 9-10.

<sup>60</sup> Broadus and Courson, 10.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 10-11.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>63</sup> Torkelson, *Radburn's Memoirs*, 120.

<sup>64</sup> "News and Notes," *Word and Work* 10, no. 2 (Feb. 1917): 57. *Word and Work* is available at <http://www.mun.ca/rels/restmov/people/rboll.html>.

<sup>65</sup> "News and Notes," *Word and Work* 11, no. 1 (Jan. 1918): 6.

<sup>66</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Memories," *GH* 45, no. 11 (Nov. 1979): 3.

<sup>67</sup> "News and Notes," *Word and Work* 12, no. 1 (Jan. 1918): 6.

<sup>68</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Memories," 3.

<sup>69</sup> "Field Reports," *Christian Leader* 35, no. 26 (28 June 1921): 13.

<sup>70</sup> "News and Notes," *Word and Work* 14, no. 9 (Sept. 1921): 264.

a three-year program that included both commercial subjects and Bible.<sup>71</sup> Richardson was a capable teacher and well respected, but he was premillennial, and this resulted in dissension at the school.<sup>72</sup> Richardson remained until 1926, then moved back to Ontario. The school operated for one more term and closed its doors in the spring of 1927.<sup>73</sup> J. C. Bailey expresses “deep regret” that “[i]n a few years [Richardson] went to the Christian church and left the fellowship of the church. This was a severe blow to the church in Western Canada.”<sup>74</sup>

Individuals from Meaford continued to move west to homestead on the prairies, and congregations were established as a result. Russell and Annie Elford moved from Meaford to Saskatchewan in 1911 and homesteaded in the Horse Creek area in 1916.<sup>75</sup> As there was no established Church of Christ in his district, Elford established an Undenominational Union Sunday School, which met at Lark Hill School, half a mile from the Elford homestead. He was the superintendent for the duration of the school, which was dissolved once a Church of Christ had been established in the area.<sup>76</sup>

Charles Wesley Petch came to Horse Creek at the request of Elford, his brother-in-law, to hold protracted meetings. Petch and his wife were among the Canadians from Meaford who had attended Nashville Bible School from 1899–1902.<sup>77</sup> Petch also attended one session of the early Carman Bible School.<sup>78</sup> He subscribed to *Word and Work*,<sup>79</sup> and reports of his work in the Horse Creek district were printed in the “News and Notes” column of the publication. Petch visited Horse Creek and held protracted meetings in 1919<sup>80</sup> and 1927, with no

<sup>71</sup> Torkelson, *Radburn's Memoirs*, 120.

<sup>72</sup> J. C. Bailey, *My Appointment with Destiny* (Fort Worth, TX: Star Bible & Tract Corp.: n.d.), 15.

<sup>73</sup> Torkelson, *Radburn's Memoirs*, 121.

<sup>74</sup> J. C. Bailey, “Memories,” 3; J. C. Bailey, *Forty Years a Canadian Preacher* (Abilene, TX: Matthews Printing Company, n.d.), 33. Bailey states that Richardson left the “Ancient Paths” soon after leaving Carman and that in later years, he attempted to “restore” Richardson, but was unsuccessful.

<sup>75</sup> Pansy Bien, “Russell and Annie Elford,” in *From Prairie Grass to Wheat Fields: A History of McCord and Area* (Altona, MB: Friesens Corp., 2001), 244.

<sup>76</sup> Pansy Elford Bien, interview by author, 18 March 2005, Moose Jaw, SK, tape recording. The establishment of the Undenominational Bible School supports Cox’s conclusion that the split between the Disciples and Church of Christ in Meaford was not yet solidified. When Elford came west, he associated and worked with people from the Disciples group who had moved from Ontario to Saskatchewan. For the duration of his lifetime, he maintained a friendship with a family from the “digressives,” but they never worshipped together.

<sup>77</sup> Catalogue of Nashville Bible School, 1899–1902.

<sup>78</sup> “Chas. W. Petch, Evangelist,” *Bible Student* 4, no. 7 (July 1907): 1. The year of his attendance is not indicated.

<sup>79</sup> Petch sent regular address changes that were printed in “News and Notes.” “News and Notes,” *Word and Work* 20, no. 8 (Aug. 1927), 229.

<sup>80</sup> J. C. Bailey, “The Horse Creek District,” in *How the Church Began and Grew in*

response to the gospel message.<sup>81</sup> In 1927 he relocated to Winnipeg, Manitoba,<sup>82</sup> and continued to hold protracted meetings at Horse Creek. The first baptisms in the area took place in 1928.<sup>83</sup> Petch relocated to Horse Creek in 1930<sup>84</sup> and remained there until 1932.<sup>85</sup> By December 1931, Petch was teaching four Bible studies per week,<sup>86</sup> and the books of Hebrews and Revelation were among the topics of study.<sup>87</sup> Petch wrote, "Our studies in Revelation at Horse Creek gave me a new insight into its teaching and opened it up to the church there as they had never seen it."<sup>88</sup> His work in that area established four congregations, named for the schoolhouses in which they met. They later merged into what became known as the Horse Creek congregation. It became one of the strongest congregations in Saskatchewan in the 1930s.<sup>89</sup>

Petch held premillennial views<sup>90</sup> and was also a pacifist. His nephew, Edwin Elford, recalls that Petch's pacifism went beyond fighting in war and extended to the Christian's attitude toward relations with other Christians. "He taught against any form of fighting. It's not just war, but how we treat our brothers. There's a responsibility as a Christian in how we treat our neighbor."<sup>91</sup>

John Carlos (J. C.) Bailey moved from Meaford to Carman in 1921 to attend the Carman Bible School. Bailey's roots in the Restoration Movement extend back to 1882, when his maternal grandparents were baptized into the Disciples church in Grey County, Ontario.<sup>92</sup> His mother, Edith Cann, was baptized at Meaford in 1896 by James A. Harding.<sup>93</sup> His father, Thomas Bailey, was baptized at Meaford in 1901 by Don Carlos Janes,<sup>94</sup> and John Carlos Bailey was named after him.<sup>95</sup> Bailey was enrolled in the three-year program at the Bible School, but

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*Saskatchewan*, (n.p., n.d.), 79.

<sup>81</sup> Pansy Elford Bien, interview.

<sup>82</sup> "News and Notes," *Word and Work* 20, no. 8 (Aug. 1927): 229.

<sup>83</sup> Pansy Elford Bien, interview.

<sup>84</sup> "News and Notes," *Word and Work* 23, no. 6 (June 1930): 169.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, 25, no. 5 (May 1932): 119.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.*, 24, no. 12 (Dec. 1931): 306.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 24, no. 1 (Jan. 1931): 6.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 24, no. 4 (April 1931): 102. Petch taught the book of Revelation during the time frame that Boll was advertising his commentary on Revelation in *Word and Work*. Unfortunately, Petch does not indicate whether he used Boll's commentary for this Bible study.

<sup>89</sup> J. C. Bailey, "The Horse Creek District," 79–80.

<sup>90</sup> Robert Sinclair, interview by author, 29 March 2005, Regina, SK, telephone interview; "News and Notes," *Word and Work* 32, no. 6 (June 1938): 123.

<sup>91</sup> Edwin Elford, interview by author, 18 March 2005, Moose Jaw, SK, tape recording.

<sup>92</sup> J. C. Bailey, *Forty Years a Canadian Preacher*, 9–10.

<sup>93</sup> *The Meaford Journals, 1848–1998* (Meaford: Stan Brown Printers Ltd., 1998): 45.

<sup>94</sup> *The Meaford Journals*, 48.

<sup>95</sup> Cecil Bailey, interview by author, 17 April 2005, Regina, SK, telephone interview.

left after two years because he disagreed with Richardson's premillennial views.<sup>96</sup> He preached in Montana and Ontario before returning to western Canada in 1928.<sup>97</sup> Aside from Petch, Bailey was the only full-time, located preacher in Saskatchewan in the early years. He remained after Petch returned to Ontario in 1932, and his influence significantly shaped Churches of Christ in Saskatchewan.

Rogers, Petch, and Bailey began the work in Saskatchewan and built the foundation of the Churches of Christ in that province. All three had connections to Meaford, Ontario, and Carman, Manitoba, both locations having been directly influenced by Harding. Petch was a student of Nashville Bible School and the early Carman Bible School; Rogers was a student of the early Carman Bible School; and Bailey attended the later Carman Bible School. Although these men held differing viewpoints on eschatology, they chose to work together and did not allow their differences to become a test of fellowship.<sup>98</sup> Prior to the establishment of the *Gospel Herald*, Rogers and Bailey sent regular reports of their work to the *Christian Leader*,<sup>99</sup> while Petch favored *Word and Work*.<sup>100</sup>

These historical connections to Harding and Nashville Bible School establish the presence of their theological influence in western Canada. The influence came directly into Canada through the preaching of Harding and others connected to Nashville Bible School, through students of Nashville Bible School who established Bible Schools in Canada, and through Canadians who traveled south to attend Nashville Bible School. Thus the influence of Nashville Bible School played a significant role in the formation of the theological foundation of Churches of Christ in western Canada. The appearance of dimensions of an apocalyptic worldview in Canadian arguments promoting pacifism, as found in the *Gospel Herald* is evidence of this fact.

#### The *Gospel Herald* and Pacifism in Canada

The *Gospel Herald* was founded in 1936 by Robert Sinclair in the wake of a discussion with J. C. Bailey regarding the need for a Canadian publication.<sup>101</sup>

<sup>96</sup> J. C. Bailey, *My Appointment with Destiny*, 15. It is probable that other issues were also at stake, which is suggested by Richardson's move to the Christian Church. In Saskatchewan Bailey worked with Petch and Sinclair, who were premillennial. Although he voiced his disagreement, he did not make it a test of fellowship.

<sup>97</sup> J. C. Bailey, *Forty Years A Canadian Preacher*, 61–62.

<sup>98</sup> Pansy Elford Bien, interview. Rogers was postmillennial, Petch was premillennial, and Bailey was opposed to premillennial views, yet all of them were pacifist. It is important to note that Rogers also had British theological influences, which is evidenced by his "British Israel" leanings. Attitudes in western Canada were generally more tolerant, and people tended to agree to disagree in order to further the work of the church.

<sup>99</sup> "Field Reports," *Christian Leader* 36, no. 8 (21 Feb. 1922): 10; 44, no. 21 & 22 (3 June 1930): 11; 52, no. 5 (1 March 1938): 26.

<sup>100</sup> "News and Notes," *Word and Work* 20, no. 8 (Aug. 1927): 229; 20, no. 8 (Sept. 1927): 263; 24, no. 4 (April 1931): 102.

<sup>101</sup> Eugene Perry, "A History of Religious Periodicals in the Restoration Movement

Sinclair had attended the Udenominational Union Sunday School organized by Elford and was among the first group to be baptized by Petch at Lark Hill School in 1928.<sup>102</sup> Sinclair was an acknowledged premillennialist and a pacifist.<sup>103</sup>

The launching of the *Gospel Herald* was announced in two American publications, indicating that a connection existed between western Canada and American Restoration periodicals. A letter from Sinclair appears in the "Field Reports" column of the *Christian Leader*, announcing his intent to begin a Canadian paper.<sup>104</sup> In a later issue an advertisement for a joint subscription for the *Gospel Herald* and *Christian Leader* appears.<sup>105</sup> The editorial column of the *Gospel Advocate* announced the new Canadian paper in June of 1936.<sup>106</sup> Reprints from the *Gospel Advocate*, *Firm Foundation*, *Christian Leader*,<sup>107</sup> and *Word and Work* appeared in the early years of the Canadian publication. The *Gospel Herald* was included in a group subscription package with five American publications: the *Christian Leader*, *Gospel Advocate*, *Firm Foundation*, *Apostolic Review*, and *Vindicator*.<sup>108</sup> Thus an established relationship existed between Canadian Churches of Christ and American Restoration periodicals, and the *Gospel Herald* formalized a relationship with American Churches of Christ.

The *Gospel Herald* was inaugurated in Saskatchewan in the years leading up to World War II, and the Christian perspective on war is a recurring theme through those early years. From the opening discussions on war, the *Gospel Herald* took a pacifist stance and never wavered. Christians were encouraged to refrain from active combat in the war. The arguments presented called for allegiance of Christians to the kingdom of God rather than human kingdoms and set forth principles found in the Sermon on the Mount. Kingdom theology and kingdom ethics formed the foundation for the arguments promoting non-participation in war.

The first article on the "war subject" was written by Lillian Torkelson and appeared on the front page.<sup>109</sup> Torkelson wrote, "The War Cloud is rising quickly

in Canada" (MA thesis, Pepperdine University, 1971), 253.

<sup>102</sup> Pansy Elford Bien, interview.

<sup>103</sup> Sinclair, interview.

<sup>104</sup> "Field Reports," *Christian Leader* 50, no. 2 (21 Jan. 1936): 13.

<sup>105</sup> "Advertisement," *Christian Leader* 50, no. 12 (9 June 1936): 13.

<sup>106</sup> "Editorial," *Gospel Advocate* 78, no. 24 (11 June 1936): 556.

<sup>107</sup> Perry, 260–61.

<sup>108</sup> Insert, *GH* 1, no. 2 (April 1936). The offer included a subscription to the *GH* plus one or more of the five publications; Perry, 259.

<sup>109</sup> Lillian Torkelson, "Christians and War," *GH* 1, no. 2 (April 1936): 1. Torkelson was a woman of singular influence on Christian education in western Canada. When her plans to study Bible at Harding College were hindered by the oncoming depression, she decided Saskatchewan needed its own Bible School. Along with Wilfred Orr and Charles Petch, she was instrumental in organizing the first Bible School in Saskatchewan, which was held at Minton in 1931 (Torkelson, *Radburn's Memoirs*, 104–5). This was the beginning of the Bible School movement among Churches of Christ in Saskatchewan. As

on the Horizon of the world. If the storm breaks what should Christians do?" She urged Christians to study the word of God in order to "discover the correct action for good citizens of the Heavenly Kingdom." Jesus declared to Pilate that his kingdom is from another world and that his servants will not fight for his rescue, setting the precedent that Christians cannot fight. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught that anyone who is angry with his brother is guilty of judgment. Followers of Jesus are to love their enemies, for murderers will not inherit the kingdom of God. She encouraged Christians to make a decision regarding a stance on war before the decision was thrust upon them in the heat of emotion, and explained how conscientious objectors could file a claim of status. Included was a list of those legally exempt from war service.<sup>110</sup>

J. C. Bailey was a prominent voice in the *Gospel Herald* on the issue of pacifism. He was familiar with the *Gospel Advocate* and the teachings of Lipscomb and Harding, as his father held a subscription to the publication, and they influenced his pacifistic views.<sup>111</sup> Bailey's opposition to war ran along two tracks: He argued that greed is the driving force behind war<sup>112</sup> and advocated a moral argument based on the teachings of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount.<sup>113</sup>

Bailey noted that war is driven by profiteers who sell armaments. He declared that the spirit of Judas still lives in the armament manufacturers, but with one difference: Judas returned the money, while armament manufacturers keep it and continue to grow richer.<sup>114</sup> Bailey expressed regret that during World War I Canada exported nickel that was used in the manufacture of weapons.<sup>115</sup> He argued, "Jesus said, ye cannot serve two masters. We cannot serve Jesus and the armament manufacturers at the same time, even if our government should be so foolish as to try to force us."<sup>116</sup> Lipscomb expressed a similar sentiment when

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an outgrowth, winter and summer Bible Schools were conducted in various locations in Saskatchewan until the establishment of a more permanent Bible School at Radville, Saskatchewan, in 1945. Torkelson was the first teacher in the high school at Radville Christian College (which later became Western Christian College) and taught at the school until her retirement in 1982 ("Lillian Marian Torkelson," in *Western Christian College: Background and Historical Perspective, 1931-1995* [n.p., n.d.], 248-49).

<sup>110</sup> Torkelson, "Christians and War," 1-2.

<sup>111</sup> John Bailey, email, 20 Nov. 2005. Elford Bell, interview by author, 27 March 2005, Gravelbourg, SK, tape recording. It seems that those with connections to Ontario were familiar with the American publications. Elford Bell, a nephew of Petch, was also familiar with the writings of Lipscomb and Harding as his mother held a subscription to the *Gospel Advocate*. Bell recalls reading the publication as a young man and confirms that western Canadian thought in the early years was reflective of the views expressed in the *Gospel Advocate*.

<sup>112</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Why Armaments?" *GH* 2, no. 4 (June 1937): 5.

<sup>113</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Christian Attitude to War, Part II," *GH* 1, no. 6 (Aug. 1936): 10.

<sup>114</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Christian Attitude to War, Part I," *GH* 1, no. 5 (July 1936): 1.

<sup>115</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Why Armaments?" 5.

<sup>116</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Christian Attitude to War II," 10.

expounding on the same words of Jesus: "To love a ruler is to serve him from the heart. Ye cannot serve God and the ruler of this world. All the powers of the soul, mind and body must be devoted to the service of God."<sup>117</sup>

Bailey held a strong kingdom theology that informed his stance on pacifism.<sup>118</sup> He believed that Christians are citizens of a heavenly kingdom and that their battle is spiritual, not physical.<sup>119</sup> He established the sovereignty of God and his rule over the "kingdoms of men" by citing OT examples of Daniel and Nebuchadnezzar. God gives power to those whom He chooses, both good and evil, and does not need human assistance to bring about his will. When Christians engage in war, they run the risk of interfering with God's sovereign plan. Bailey believed that "[t]here is only one way to preserve a nation and that is to cause that nation to repent of its own wickedness . . . as Christians, we can neither preserve nor d[e]stroy by carnal warfare," for God is in control. He argued, "Should Christians try to thwart the purposes of God? If he rules in the kingdoms of men, shall we by force of arms attempt to turn God from his purpose?"<sup>120</sup> Bailey believed that the Christian's role in the kingdom is to convert people to Christianity, for establishing God's kingdom on earth overrules in human affairs:

Nations sink beneath the weight of their own sins. The purpose of God does not destroy man's free will. Herein lies our opportunity. We can save our country by turning them to God. . . . [W]e can make our country a fit place to live in . . . by renewing our effort in preaching the gospel.<sup>121</sup>

Lipscomb also believed that the Christian's role was to expand God's kingdom on earth, for establishment of God's kingdom on earth is the means by which earthly government will be defeated.<sup>122</sup> Christians are to lead people to Christ for the transference of allegiance from human government to the kingdom of God. It is through "[t]he spread of the peaceful principles of the Saviour" that people will be drawn "out of the kingdoms of earth into the kingdom of God."<sup>123</sup>

Bailey's pacifism was built upon a foundation of kingdom ethics as presented in the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus taught that not only was it wrong to kill, it was wrong to hate one's brother. The Old Law taught the principle of "eye for eye, and tooth for tooth," but Jesus said, "Resist not him that is evil." Bailey asserted that the "Christian engaged in warfare" cannot "obey [the] command" to resist

<sup>117</sup> Lipscomb, *Civil Government*, 68–69.

<sup>118</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Christian Attitude to War II," 10.

<sup>119</sup> J. C. Bailey, "A Chat with the Editor: They Shall Not Pass," *GH* 4, no. 11 (Jan. 1940): 2.

<sup>120</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Our Position in Respect to Carnal Warfare," *GH* 4, no. 8 (Oct. 1939): 1.

<sup>121</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Our Position in Respect to Carnal Warfare," 1.

<sup>122</sup> Lipscomb, *Civil Government*, 87.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 87.



evil.<sup>124</sup> He also believed that killing in war was murder and posed the question, "Can a Christian kill his fellow men and be guiltless? Is wholesale murder proper while individual murder is wrong?"<sup>125</sup> The greatest criminals in the world are those who commit the greatest number of murders in cold blood. "Let these same people in the same ruthless manner cut down their fellow men in war and they are heroes. Governments decorate them and people sing their praises."<sup>126</sup>

Lipscomb also believed that killing in the name of war was contrary to the teachings of Christ. He described Christian participation in war as a "spectacle" in which "disciples of the Prince of Peace, with murderous weapons [seek] the lives of their fellowmen." Christians who engage in war kill others "for whom Christ died" and leave women without husbands and children without fathers.<sup>127</sup>

It took but little thought to see that this course is abhorrent to the principles of the religion of the Saviour, who died that even his enemies might live. He had plainly declared that his children could not fight with carnal weapons for the establishment of his own kingdom. Much less could they slay and destroy one another in the contentions and strivings of the kingdoms of this world.<sup>128</sup>

Although Bailey's theology reflects key elements of Nashville Bible School theology, he differs on two significant points. Bailey was strongly opposed to premillennial views<sup>129</sup> and believed the anti-government stance unscriptural.

The anti-war arguments gained particular emphasis in November of 1939, when three articles were published in that issue. In response to several writers who maintained that fighting in war is employment in the cause of Satan, Bailey cited passages enjoining Christians to obey the government (e.g., Titus 3:1; 1 Pet 2:13-17).

Cecil Bailey recalls that R. H. Boll was popular in eastern Canada because he had attended classes with Canadians at Nashville Bible School.<sup>130</sup> Boll made preaching trips to Toronto in 1927, 1928, and 1929.<sup>131</sup> "News and Notes" contains news items from individuals and congregations from Canada;<sup>132</sup> and early in the history of the paper, a request for a Canadian page appears.<sup>133</sup> Boll states that Canadian subscribers came from "all quarters of the Canadian Dominion."<sup>134</sup>

<sup>124</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Christian Attitude to War II," 10.

<sup>125</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Christian Attitude to War I," 1.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> Lipscomb, *Civil Government*, iii-iv.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> J. C. Bailey, *My Appointment with Destiny*, 15; Cecil Bailey, interview.

<sup>130</sup> Cecil Bailey, interview.

<sup>131</sup> "News and Notes," *Word and Work* 20, no. 6 (June 1927): 167; 21, no. 7 (July 1928): 200; 22, no. 8 (Aug. 1929): 230-31.

<sup>132</sup> "News and Notes," *Word and Work* 10, no. 2 (Feb. 1917): 57; 15, no. 1 (Jan. 1922): 8-9; 21, no. 1 (Jan. 1928): 4.

<sup>133</sup> "News and Notes," *Word and Work* 11, no. 3 (March 1918): 87.

<sup>134</sup> "News and Notes," *Word and Work* 12, no. 2 (Feb. 1919): 38. It should be noted that Boll's influence in the west was not as strong, and was probably primarily with those

Boll's article reflects his premillennial leanings. He argued that Scripture plainly advocates non-violence and that anyone who participates in war and teaches others to do so should not presume to speak on behalf of the Church of Christ. He urged obedience to government as long as it does not interfere with God's will. Christians are to intercede through prayer for government, for it is God who causes the empires of the world to rise or fall. God is the one who determines the future of the nations, and the responsibility of a Christian is to live a peaceful, holy life on earth in anticipation of the millennium.<sup>135</sup>

Janes, also well known by Canadians, preached in Meaford, Ontario,<sup>136</sup> and Calgary, Alberta.<sup>137</sup> He also published in the *Bible Student*, a Canadian periodical that originated in Beamsville, Ontario.<sup>138</sup> Janes wrote, "I am glad that you are speaking out on the war subject, I am enclosing a brief article which may be in some measure informative and helpful."<sup>139</sup> In his article, Janes argued that the early church fathers were opposed to war, and cited Origen as advocating all war as wrong.<sup>140</sup> He mentioned the difficult situation for conscientious objectors in the United States and included an excerpt from a statement made by a congregation in Valdosta, Georgia. The quotation identified the position of that congregation as being identical to the stance held by the Society of Friends (Quakers). The document requested that the Church of Christ be granted the same status as conscientious objectors.<sup>141</sup>

In December 1939 an unsigned article appeared revealing an awareness of current political events in Canada. The writer mentioned the United Church<sup>142</sup> ministers who were opposed to the just war stand of their denomination. They launched the "Witness against War" campaign and lost their pulpits over the issue.<sup>143</sup> The writer was also familiar with J. C. Bailey's arguments on pacifism and added his own thoughts. The writer argued that Christ and the apostles fought against false teaching, not the teachers. He supported the idea that God does not

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who held premillennial views.

<sup>135</sup> R. H. Boll, "Concerning Carnal Warfare: 'What the Church of Christ Teaches,'" *GH 4*, no. 9 (Nov. 1939): 6. Reprint from *Word and Work*.

<sup>136</sup> Cox, 33.

<sup>137</sup> "Calgary Church of Christ: Historical Background," *Histories of Prairie Churches of Christ* (Regina, SK: Church of Christ, 1989), 7.1. "A well known evangelist, Don Carlos Janes, held meetings. . . ." This was prior to 1920, but no date is given.

<sup>138</sup> Don Carlos Janes, "Negligence," *Bible Student* 3, no. 4 (April 1906): 2; "Diligence," *Bible Student* 3, no. 5 (May 1906): 5, 8; "Several Things," *Bible Student* 4, no. 6 (June 1907): 5.

<sup>139</sup> Don Carlos Janes, "The War Subject," *GH 4*, no. 9 (Nov. 1939): 11.

<sup>140</sup> Don Carlos Janes, "Christians and Carnal Warfare," *GH 4*, no. 9 (Nov. 1939): 6.

<sup>141</sup> Janes, "Christians and Carnal Warfare," 6.

<sup>142</sup> The United Church of Canada was formed in 1925 when the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregationalist churches merged under one umbrella.

<sup>143</sup> For more on this, see Thomas Socknat, *Witness against War: Pacifism in Canada 1900-1945* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), 200-11.

need help from humanity in ruling the nations and urged Christians to stand firm in their conviction that they must not fight and must be prepared to face the consequences of their convictions. He stated, "If you want to help your loved ones, do not disobey God. Make this a better country for your loved ones by leading them to Christ."<sup>144</sup>

The pacifistic arguments presented in the *Gospel Herald* reflect a kingdom theology that emphasized Christian citizenship in the heavenly kingdom of God. As such, Christians are to expand the kingdom through preaching the gospel, as this is the way for Christians to make the world a better place. Although premillennial views were held by some, they were not accepted by all. In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus called Christians to love their enemies and taught the way of peace and non-violence, for Christians are engaged in spiritual warfare, not "carnal warfare." As such, Christians are to remain separate from the world; however, this did not necessarily extend to non-involvement with human government. Above all, Christians are called to be pacifists, for Jesus did not allow the use of force to establish his kingdom.

Bailey assumed editorship of the *Gospel Herald* in January 1940. In addition to writing and teaching<sup>145</sup> on the subject of war, Bailey was an advocate on behalf of conscientious objectors. From this point forward, the focus of the *Gospel Herald* shifted toward news items and practical matters concerning conscientious objectors.<sup>146</sup> Bailey used the publication to encourage conscientious objectors and to keep them apprised of government activities that might affect their status.

In "News Reports" of October 1940, Bailey published correspondence between himself and the Canadian government. Bailey had written to the Minister of National Defense in support of all conscientious objectors of the Churches of Christ in western Canada.<sup>147</sup> A reprint of a clipping from the *Ottawa Daily Press* was also published in this issue. It stated that conscientious objectors are exempt from army training, which was the first phase of enlistment. Christians were encouraged to keep the clipping as a reminder of their rights as conscientious objectors.<sup>148</sup>

Bailey also published a sample letter that conscientious objectors could use to declare their status. He wrote, "The following will serve as a pattern for any

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<sup>144</sup> "Shall We Fight for Our Loved Ones?," *GH* 4, no. 10 (Dec. 1939): 3-4.

<sup>145</sup> H. A. Rogers, J. C. Bailey, Wilfred Orr, and others taught pacifist views from the pulpit and at the Bible Schools in Saskatchewan.

<sup>146</sup> As a member of the British Commonwealth, Canada entered World War II in the fall of 1939.

<sup>147</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Military Service," *GH* 5, no. 8 (Oct. 1940): 8; H. A. Rogers, letter to [Prime Minister] Robert Borden, n.d. During World War I, Rogers was the advocate for conscientious objectors. He wrote to Prime Minister Borden to "entreat" the government for exemption from military service for the "Church of Christ (disciples)."

<sup>148</sup> "Can't Make Conchies Take Military Training," *GH* 5, no. 8 (Oct. 1940): 7. Reprint from *Ottawa Daily Press*, 19 Oct. 1940.

young man who is applying for Alternate Service as a Conscientious Objector. Christians must do all in their power to show that they are law abiding citizens. God ordained governments, and they have a purpose."<sup>149</sup>

In the spring of 1942, the Canadian government held a plebiscite vote to determine whether conscription would be extended to overseas service. To this point, conscription in Canada had been for home defense only, and overseas duty was voluntary. As voluntary forces were insufficient, the government sought release from the former agreement to limit conscription.<sup>150</sup> In March 1942, Bailey published a note to conscientious objectors in regard to the upcoming plebiscite vote. He indicated that the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, in a news release on February 20, had announced that "all conscientious objectors who vote in the forthcoming plebiscite vote will be deprived of their rights as conscientious objectors and will be subject to military service." He urged that all conscientious objectors be apprised of this news release.<sup>151</sup> Relatives of conscientious objectors were allowed to vote, but Bailey stated his personal opinion that families of conscientious objectors should refrain from voting if they themselves are conscientious objectors.<sup>152</sup>

In May 1944, Bailey advertised *The Christian Conscientious Objector* by James D. Bales. He stated, "I think this is the book many of you have been wanting for a long time. When ordering, be sure to say that you saw the advertisement in the Gospel Herald."<sup>153</sup> Bailey's brother, Cecil, wrote that Bales had "considerable influence" on pacifism in Canada, as he had preached in Toronto and was married to a Canadian. Cecil noted that following the bombing of Pearl Harbor, Bales became "strangely quiet on the war question" and concluded that "the Bible teaching regarding carnal warfare didn't change, but this brother's interpretation of the Scriptures, surely did."<sup>154</sup>

#### Conscientious Objectors in Canadian Churches of Christ

The arguments opposing Christian participation in war were effective, as the majority of members of Churches of Christ in the west opted to be conscientious objectors. Canadian conscientious objectors were subjected to abuse, imprisonment and sometimes torture. After being called up, men who claimed objector status appeared before a magistrate (or group of magistrates) to plead their case. They were barraged with questions that were intended to provoke them to react in anger or violence. Individuals who displayed any sign of provocation were

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<sup>149</sup> J. C. Bailey, "For Conscientious Objectors," *GH* 8, no. 11 (Dec. 1942): 5.

<sup>150</sup> Socknat, 226–27.

<sup>151</sup> J. C. Bailey, "Conscientious Objectors Please Take Notice!" *GH* 8, no. 1 (March 1942): 6.

<sup>152</sup> J. C. Bailey, "In Respect to the Plebiscite Vote," *GH* 8, no. 2 (April 1942): 4.

<sup>153</sup> *GH* 10, no. 6 (May 1944): 14.

<sup>154</sup> Cecil T. Bailey, Estevan, SK, letter to author, spring 2005.

denied status.<sup>155</sup> Those who received exemption were of two categories. Those deemed as providing essential services were dismissed to return to their jobs, which in many cases was farming. Farmers had an advantage when it came to application for postponement, as they were granted an indefinite postponement. All other postponements were only six months in duration.<sup>156</sup> Those deemed non-essential were either granted a postponement or assigned to work camps specifically created to provide a means of alternate service for conscientious objectors. Those who were denied objector status spent time in prison, and some enlisted in the medical corps.<sup>157</sup> Men from the Churches of Christ served time in all of these capacities.

Edwin Elford, Henry Grasley, Joe Mann, Walter Hovind, Howard Kemp, and Bill Forman were granted status as conscientious objectors. They served in a work camp in Prince Albert National Park, Saskatchewan, in 1941. During their time of imprisonment, they were not allowed to leave the camp for any reason. The men worked six days a week and were required to build a road across the park with the use of hand tools only. Sunday was their only day off. In the afternoon these men walked out into the bush to hold a weekly church service. They took turns preaching, presiding, and teaching Bible classes.<sup>158</sup>

Elford Bell was denied status as a conscientious objector and was assigned a prison term. While in prison, he applied for admission to the medical corps and was accepted. He served in the Kingston Military Hospital in Kingston, Ontario. He began as a ward orderly, but soon rose to the rank of sergeant. By the end of his term of duty, he was in charge of the isolation unit, which was attached to the hospital.<sup>159</sup> When the war ended, conscientious objectors were held for an extra year (until July 1946) because the government feared public outcry if conscientious objectors arrived home before the soldiers.<sup>160</sup> Bell applied for a six-month term of duty in the Canadian Arctic in order to receive an early discharge in the spring of 1946.<sup>161</sup> Disagreement existed among members of Churches of Christ regarding the enlistment of Christians in the medical corps. Bell's family suffered from the hostility and criticism of other Christians because of his decision to enlist in non-combatant service.<sup>162</sup>

Clarence Bien was imprisoned on two occasions because he refused to report for training or apply for a postponement when he was called up. He believed that applying for postponement was equivalent to agreeing to enlist and go to war at

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<sup>155</sup> Elford Bell, interview; Clarence Bien, interview by author, 18 March 2005, Moose Jaw, SK, tape recording; Edwin Elford, interview.

<sup>156</sup> J. L. Granatstein and J.M. Hitsman, *Broken Promises: A History of Conscription in Canada* (Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd., 1985), 147.

<sup>157</sup> Elford Bell, interview; Clarence Bien, interview; Edwin Elford, interview.

<sup>158</sup> Edwin Elford, interview.

<sup>159</sup> Elford Bell, interview.

<sup>160</sup> Socknat, 255.

<sup>161</sup> Elford Bell, interview.

<sup>162</sup> William Bell, interview by author, 2 April 2006, Weyburn, SK, tape recording.

a later date. During his second term of imprisonment, he gained release by appealing to habeas corpus. As a minister of the Church of Christ, he was legally exempt from military service, therefore wrongfully imprisoned. However, he was not immediately released. He was held for a couple of months in the guardhouse under open arrest. While there, he was assigned hard labor, which consisted of cleaning the officers' washrooms.<sup>163</sup>

The legal proceedings for Bien are significant from two historical perspectives. First, habeas corpus had not been appealed to since World War I.<sup>164</sup> Second, as part of the proceedings, Bien's defense attorney submitted a description of Churches of Christ in Saskatchewan in the 1940s, as it was necessary to establish that Churches of Christ were a bona fide religious body.<sup>165</sup> This is the only known "external" source describing the Churches of Christ in Saskatchewan during that time period.

### Conclusion

In the years leading up to World War II, Churches of Christ on the Canadian prairies consisted primarily of small, rural, fledgling congregations that were loosely organized. The membership was comprised largely of immigrants and homesteaders who had traveled west to stake a claim and build a new life for themselves and their families. The theology of those early congregations was influenced by both the British and American restorationist traditions.

The earliest American influences came into western Canada through settlers who moved west from Ontario and through direct interaction with American neighbors to the south, particularly through the influence of James A. Harding and the Nashville Bible School tradition. The influence flowed north into Canada through visiting preachers, students who established Bible Schools in Canada, and the circulation of American Restoration periodicals. Canadians also brought the influence "home" when they returned from studying at Nashville Bible School.

The kingdom theology of Nashville Bible School was foundational to early Churches of Christ in western Canada, as reflected in the pacifistic stance of the *Gospel Herald*. Christians have a higher calling as citizens of God's kingdom and are to make one's country a better place by expanding God's kingdom on earth rather than engaging in war. Killing on the battlefield was considered equivalent to murder and contrary to the teachings of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount. Kingdom theology and kingdom ethics had a strong presence in western Canada. Yet pacifism in Canadian Churches of Christ runs deeper than the influence of a theological tradition. It is the witness of Christians who stood firm on the conviction that it is wrong to kill or harm others, whether friend or foe. It is about individuals who paid the price of persecution and imprisonment in order to remain true to the conviction that Christ called them to live a life of peace.

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<sup>163</sup> Clarence Bien, interview.

<sup>164</sup> Clarence Bien, interview.

<sup>165</sup> *Bien v. Cooke* (1943), 81 Canadian Criminal Cases [C.C.C.] 316 (Sask, K.B.).

PRISONERS FOR CHRIST: WWII CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTORS



L to R: Edwin Elford, Joe Mann, Henry Grasley, Bill Forman, Walter Hovind, Howard Kemp

Photo courtesy of Edwin Elford



L to R: Joe Mann, Howard Kemp, Henry Grasley, Edwin Elford, Bill Forman, Walter Hovind

Photo courtesy of Edwin Elford

Six members of the Church of Christ were granted status as conscientious objectors during World War II. They were detained at a work camp in Prince Albert National Park, Saskatchewan. Every Sunday they walked out into the bush and held Sunday meeting together. They took turns preaching, presiding and leading the Bible class.