

**BULLETIN
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HISTORICAL
SOCIETY**
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"Every Christian ought to be a good historian"
(Caleb Evans)

"Sharpening our sense of the past is the only
way of meeting the future"
(Northrop Frye)

Now in its fourth year of existence, the Canadian Baptist Historical Society is launching this *Bulletin* in the hope that it will become a substantial means of information and incentive for Canadian scholars involved in researching aspects of Baptist history, in particular those relating to Canada. As such it will help further the mandate of the Society, which is to facilitate a better understanding of the Baptist heritage as it has taken root and developed in Canada.

Initially the *Bulletin* will appear twice a year, in January and July. Research notes and notices, current projects and theses, publications, plans for meetings, and book notes that relate to Baptist history in general and the Canadian Baptist experience in particular are all welcome. Please send these to the editor of the *Bulletin*: Michael A. G. Haykin, Heritage Baptist College and Theological Seminary, 175 Holiday Inn Drive, Cambridge, Ontario, N3C 3T2; e-mail: Mghhistor@aol.com.

BUNYAN AND THE BAPTISTS

David T. Priestley

Professor of Historical Theology,
Edmonton Baptist Seminary

“Bunyanists” differ on whether John Bunyan and/or the Bedford Independent Church which he pastored was/were Baptist. As one who answers the question in the negative, I offer this comment to forestall glib identification and to invite closer attention to his tracts and treatises in *Miscellaneous Works*, vol. 4, ed. T. L. Underwood (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). A different conclusion than mine may be possible, but at least one should beware merely assuming.

Independency and Presbyterianism in the Commonwealth and Restoration eras agreed that the church should be comprised only of those who evidenced godliness. Baptists were a particular kind of Congregationalist who restricted baptism itself to “visible saints.” Bunyan objected vigorously in *Differences in Judgment about Water Baptism No Bar to Communion* (1672) that Baptists were violating truth, charity, and unity by their insistence that only those could join the community of saints who were baptised after confession of faith.

English Baptists subsequently adopted a varying practice on the relationship of baptism to membership. A minority, Bunyan-like, left voluntary baptism to personal discretion, accepting any visible saint into full membership. The majority, such as the London Baptists who so incensed Bunyan’s generous spirit, expected that a visible saint would make public confession of faith by immersion and thereby be incorporated into the visible body of Christ.

Bunyan believed that his Baptists’ contemporaries were fundamentally mistaken when they made baptism an embodying act of the church. Foundational to incorporation into the visible body of Christ, he insisted, was the deliberate faith and changed manner of life that one’s assurance of grace generated. He was offended at Baptist pretenses that he was acceptable to them on the basis of his evident faith and holiness when they could not accept him into full fellowship unless he submitted to (re)baptism.

This difference of opinion had already been sketched out in his *Confession of my Faith and a Reason of my Practice* (1672) and was elaborated yet more polemically in *Peaceable Principles and True* (1674). What his Baptist contemporaries declared to be “constitutive” Bunyan defined as “circumstantial.” Once his status as a Nonconformist icon was established, Open-membership Baptists could appeal to his authority for their practice. But I find it impossible to view Bunyan or his Bedford congregation as Baptist, given the definition of terms in effect in the early Restoration and Bunyan’s explicit rejection of Baptist membership criteria.

What thinkest thou?

[Reprinted with kind permission of *The Recorder*, the Newsletter of the International John Bunyan Society. Dr. Priestley’s note appeared in the Winter 1996 issue of *The Recorder*.]



Book Notes

*Biographical Directory of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick
Free Baptist Ministers and Preachers,*
Frederick C. Burnett

(Baptist Heritage in Atlantic Canada, vol. 16;
Hantsport, Nova Scotia: Lancelot Press, 1996),
xx+303 pages. ISBN: 0-88999-589-3.

The latest addition to the “Baptist Heritage in Atlantic Canada” series is the fruit of a life-long labour of love. An elder in one of the few remaining congregations of the Free Baptists in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, Burnett has devoted considerable time and effort to preparing this detailed account of the lives and ministries of 437 Free (i.e. Arminian) Baptist ministers from New Brunswick and Nova Scotia. Around 1870 the Free Baptists formed about a third of the Baptist population of these two provinces. This book thus has great value for those wishing to investigate a major Baptist force in the history of Atlantic Canada. A helpful appendix (there are eight in total) by Burnett and Derrick

G. Chapman outlines the key influences that helped to shape Free Baptist theology.

The Anabaptist Story.
An Introduction to Sixteenth-Century Anabaptism,
William R. Estep
(3rd. ed.; Grand Rapids/Cambridge, U.K.:
William B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1996),
xvi+332 pages. ISBN: 0-8028-0886-7.

Since its first publication in 1963, William Estep's *The Anabaptist Story* has become a standard textbook for courses dealing with the Radical Reformation. Though this newest edition is a revision of the most previous edition and not an entirely fresh study, it seeks to incorporate much of recent scholarship in the field of sixteenth-century Anabaptism. Sections have been enlarged and a distinct effort made to bring the footnote citations up to date. In the final chapter, "Across the Seas and through the Years," Estep seeks to make organic connecting links between the continental Anabaptists and the earliest English Baptists, namely those associated with John Smyth and Thomas Helwys. Despite Estep's careful discussion, his arguments for such a linkage seem somewhat tenuous. His treatment of this question, nevertheless, is typical of the style that permeates the book, fair-minded, incisive, and spiritually engaging.

Bill Wallace of China
Jesse C. Fletcher
(Library of Baptist Classics, vol.9;
Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1996),
xi+276 pages. ISBN: 0-8054-1259-X.

The story of the mediæval Scottish freedom-fighter William Wallace has recently been featured in the Hollywood film *Braveheart*. This stirring account of a twentieth-century namesake could easily have been given the same title. Joyfully relinquishing

the lucrative prospects of a medical career in the southern United States, William L. Wallace (1908-1951) went with the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board to China in the mid-1930s. There, amid primitive conditions, war, and then the Communist revolution, he laboured with great surgical prowess. His childlike faith, zeal for Christ and love for the Chinese people are well captured by Fletcher, and the account of his final days in Wuchow prison, where he was martyred by the Communists, particularly riveting. A study guide at the end of the book helps to deepen the spiritual impact of Wallace's witness.

Baptists Around the World. A Comprehensive Handbook,
ed. Albert W. Wardin

(Nashville, Tennessee: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995),
xxxii+474 pages. ISBN: 0-8054-1076-7.

This recently-published reference work on the world-wide Baptist community is a mine of information for anyone interested in Baptist life and heritage. It contains comprehensive articles on the Baptist presence in almost 180 countries that span six continents. Written by the editor, a third-generation Baptist who is Professor of History, Emeritus, at Belmont University, and various Baptist scholars from around the world, these articles form a marvellous research tool.

The article on the Canadian Baptists (p.359-366) was written by the late Dr. George Rawlyk of Queen's University, Ontario, with the help of two of his doctoral students, Lorraine Coops and Dan Goodwin. Though obviously cramped for space, the article provides a very good overview of the Canadian Baptist experience, touching on central issues, for example, the conflict over open and closed communion in nineteenth-century Ontario, as well as more peripheral ones.



Canadian Baptist Historical Society Annual Meeting

At the annual meeting of the Canadian Baptist Historical Society, held on April 13, 1996, at McMaster Divinity College, the following officers of the Society were elected: President, Theo T. Gibson; Vice-President, John Holmes; Secretary, William H. Brackney; Treasurer, John Irwin; Program Committee Chair, Grant Gordon; Membership Development Co-ordinator, C. Cameron. After a number of items of business, two scholarly papers were given: Alvyn Austin spoke on "Baptist and the Founding of Toronto Bible College" and Paul Wilson spoke on "Baptists and the Business Community in the Nineteenth Century." The next annual meeting is scheduled for Saturday, March 15, 10:00 a.m. at McMaster Divinity College. Following business and a scholarly paper, luncheon will be served around 12:15 p.m. All interested in the Society and its mandate are encouraged to attend.



Membership Matters

Membership dues for the Society are as follows: Life Membership—\$500.00; Full Membership—\$30.00 annually; Associate Membership—\$15.00 annually; Student Membership (for those registered in any seminary or theological institution)—\$5.00 annually. Membership fees can be sent to the Treasurer, Mr. John Irwin c/o McMaster Divinity College, 1280 Main Street West, Hamilton, Ontario L8S 4K1. Cheques should be made payable to the "Canadian Baptist Historical Society."

Student Memberships

The low cost of a student membership — \$5.00 a year — is meant to be an incentive to you who are students to seriously consider joining the Society. The future of Canadian Baptist studies in many respects lies in your hands. What better way to ensure that future than by participating in this academic society which is specifically designed to explore and transmit the rich heritage of our Baptist forebears.



Atlantic Baptist Archives News

reported by
Patricia Townsend

The United Baptist Convention of the Atlantic Provinces has long recognized the importance of an archives programme for preserving the record of the church's achievement and for meeting its administrative needs. Baptist church, personal, and administrative records have been coming to the Atlantic Baptist Archives at Acadia since 1845 when Silas Rand and Isaac Chipman were appointed by the Nova Scotia Baptist Association to collect historical material and deposit it at Acadia. By depositing their records in the Atlantic Baptist Archives, church members facilitate the work of others and ensure that the records of the UBCAP are as complete as possible. In caring for the records and making them available for research we fulfill our responsibility as stewards. Increasingly historians and other academics are examining the records of denominations to interpret the role of churches within Canadian society and, to understand their internal growth and development.



What's New in the Atlantic Baptist Archives

reported by
Patricia Townsend

Recent accessions include:

1. Cora Elliott Fonds

Cora Elliott (1880-1968), a native of the Annapolis Valley was educated at the Provincial Normal College, Acadia and Gordon. She taught for several years in Nova Scotia schools, and then went to India as a missionary in 1907. After six years in Vizianagram and Rayagadda she took charge of the Central Boarding School for girls in Bobbili where she remained for thirty years. Her years of retirement were spent in Nova Scotia in community and church affairs. The fonds consists of 73 handwritten letters from India to family in Nova Scotia. The material came to the Archives from Miss Elliott's niece Dr. Shirley Elliott and is a valuable addition to our missionary holdings.

2. Reverend Kenneth Blakney Fonds

Kenneth Blakney (1910-1996) graduated from Acadia in 1936 and subsequently was ordained to the Christian ministry. He served Baptist churches throughout the Maritimes for over 43 years and was Pastor Emeritus at Kennebecasis United Baptist Church. Through the generosity of his family, his sermons, correspondence and other papers came to the Archives. They will be a rich resource for those studying twentieth-century Baptist work in Atlantic Canada.

3. Reverend Henry R. Bell Fonds

Henry Revel Bell (1881-1961) was born in Scotland and came to Canada as a young man. He became a minister of the Gospel, first

in the Presbyterian Church, then in the Church of Christ (Disciples), and finally in the Baptist denomination. He was ordained in 1918 and served the East Point Baptist and South Lake Disciples churches, P.E.I. for a total of 21 years. His voluminous library, sermons and correspondence came to the Archives from his family. This fonds is a significant and major addition to the archival holdings.

4. In addition there has been accessioned records from 52 Baptist churches in Atlantic Canada during the past year as part of the Archives' ongoing collection programme.



Canadian Baptist Archives News

reported by
Judith Colwell

The Archives has benefited from the estate of Dr. Ronald P. Graham (1915-1995). Dr. Graham was a Chemistry Professor at McMaster University 1942-1980. He was also the author of *The Insignia of McMaster University* (1985), *The Residences of McMaster* (1987), and *The Carvings of McMaster University: A Walker's Guide* (1988). His use of the Archives for these three publications made him realize that more useable organization of the records would be helpful. The Archives will receive about \$70,000 from his estate to be used for the arrangement, description and upkeep of the McMaster University Collections which we hold. Lorraine Brooks, the Archives Assistant, began a new contract year in November, 1996, to specifically work on these Collections.



The Archivist, Judith Colwell, will conduct tours of the Archives upon request. A tour takes approximately 40 minutes. This is an opportunity, particularly for students, to see what types of records are in the Archives and to gain an understanding of the resources

available for research. To book a tour please call Judith at the Canadian Baptist Archives, 905-525-9140, extension 23511.



What's New in the Canadian Baptist Archives

reported by
Judith Colwell

Special records received in 1996 include:

1. Board minutes and correspondence from Canadian Baptist Ministries.
2. Autobiography of John and Eleanor Snyder Crook, missionaries to China.
3. Civil Register of Lac Long Baptist Church, Quebec.
4. Ph.D. theses by Paul R. Wilson (1995) and Mark Parent (1991). Both deal with aspects of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto.
5. Photocopy of the Constitution of the Canada Colored Baptist Missionary Society, n.d. (prior to 1850).
6. A complete microfilm of the women's periodical *The Regular Baptist Call*. This was made available through the courtesy of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto.
7. A complete history from 1844 to 1995 of the Blenheim Baptist Church by Alvin Armstrong.
8. In June the Archives received a special accession via Mrs. Loula Gordon of Montreal. It included the following original letters: two from R. A. Fyfe, dated 1863, to Thos. James Claxton of Montreal regarding the Grande Ligne Mission; one from C. H. Spurgeon, dated 1876; seven from John McLaurin, dated 1876-1879; one

from William McMaster, dated 1884, regarding adversaries of Toronto Baptist College; and one from Alexander Mackenzie, dated 1883, regarding child marriages in India.

9. Three metres of records from First Baptist Church, London, including the Minutes and Registers from its founding in 1845.

10. History of the Tiverton Baptist Church, Ontario, 1855-1995.



The Baptist Review of Theology

In a recent issue of *The Baptist Review of Theology*—vol. 6, no. 2 (Spring 1996)—there is a substantial article by Dr. A. Christopher Smith, Academic Dean of Providence College, Otterburne, Manitoba, on “Echoes of the Protestant Reformation in Baptist Serampore, 1800-1855.” In the article Dr. Smith explores the achievement of John Clark Marshman, the missionary historian and son of the Baptist missionary pioneer Joshua Marshman, one of the Serampore Trio. It is the latest in a series of outstanding articles that he has written in preparation for an extensively researched theological biography of William Carey. Copies of this issue are each \$10.00 and available from Heritage Baptist College and Theological Seminary, 175 Holiday Inn Drive, Cambridge, Ontario, N3C 3T2. Annual subscription for the journal, which appears twice a year, is currently \$20.00.



American Baptist Historical Society Archives, Rochester

The American Baptist Historical Society Archives, Rochester, New York, will be closed temporarily, probably during the month of March, pending their removal to other facilities in the Colgate-Rochester Divinity School, Rochester.



International Conference on Baptist Studies
Regent's Park College, Oxford
13-16 August, 1997

For some time the late Dr. George Rawlyk, of Queen's University, Kingston, and Dr. David Bebbington of the University of Stirling, Scotland, contemplated the possibility of an International Conference on Baptist Studies. Despite Dr. Rawlyk's untimely death in November 1995 more detailed plans were already being framed. This upcoming conference is the fruition of those plans. The aim of the Conference is to explore the history and sociology of the world-wide Baptist community between the seventeenth century and the twentieth century. The gathering is not restricted to Baptists; rather, they are the object of study. The model behind this conference is the conference on the history of Evangelicalism at Wheaton College, Illinois, in 1992 that gave rise to two published volumes, *Evangelicalism: Comparative Studies of Popular Protestantism in North America, the British Isles, and Beyond, 1700-1990* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994) and *Amazing Grace: Evangelicalism in Australia, Britain, Canada, and the United States* (Kingston/Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1993). The expectation is that a book will emerge from this conference too.

Two members of the CBHS will be giving papers. Dr. William H. Brackney will speak on "Hands across the Waters: Transatlantic Interrelationships in the Emerging Community of Baptists, 1626-1927" and Dr. Michael A. G. Haykin will speak on "Particular Redemption in the Transatlantic Baptist Community, 1640-1890."

The charge for the whole conference, including all sessions and full board, is £175 if a single room is occupied or £155 for each of two people occupying a double room. For further information, please contact Rev. Ian Randall, Spurgeon's College, 189 South Norwood Hill, London SE25 6DJ, U.K.