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*Disciples of Christ Historical Society*

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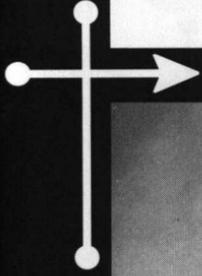
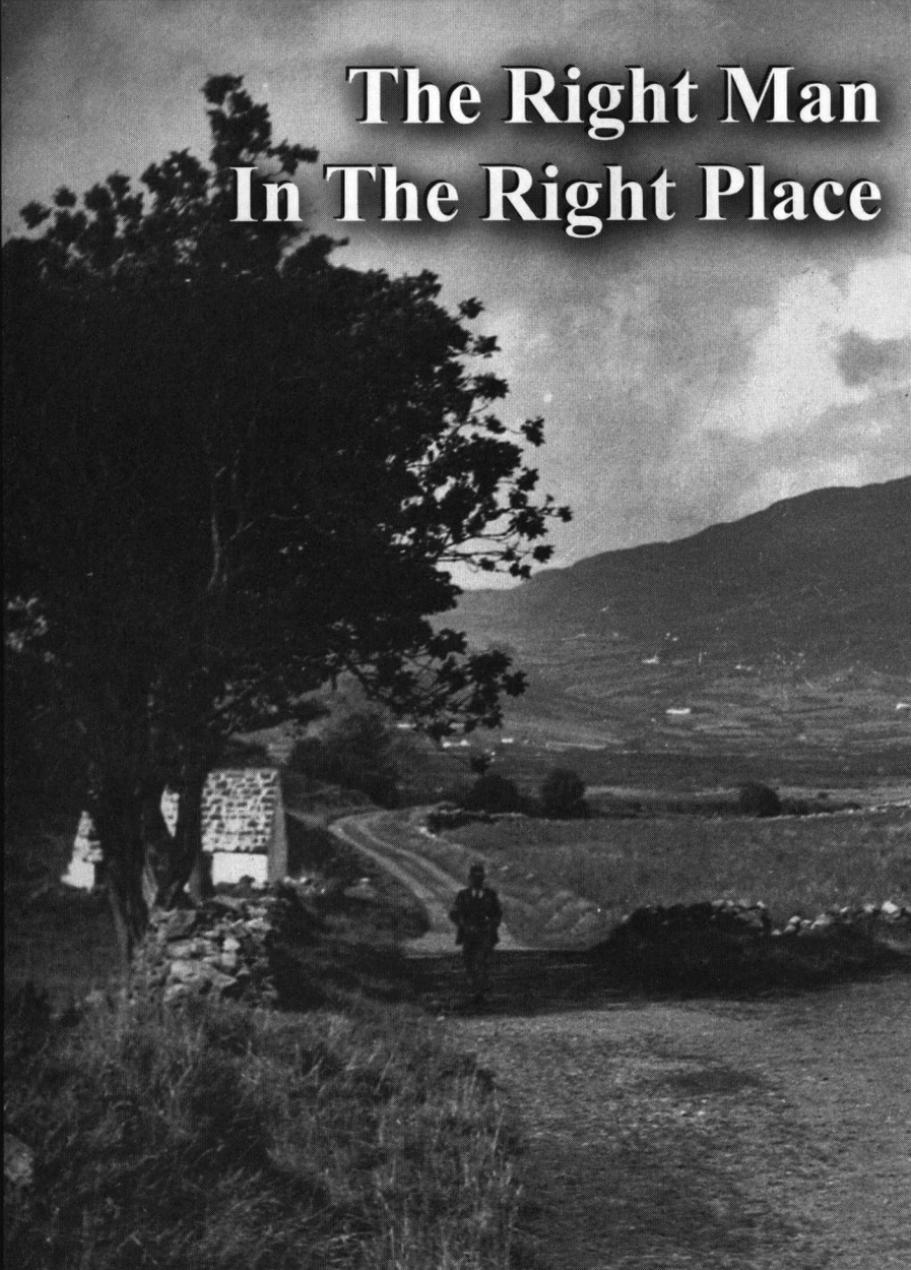
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# Discipliana

*a journal of Stone-Campbell history*

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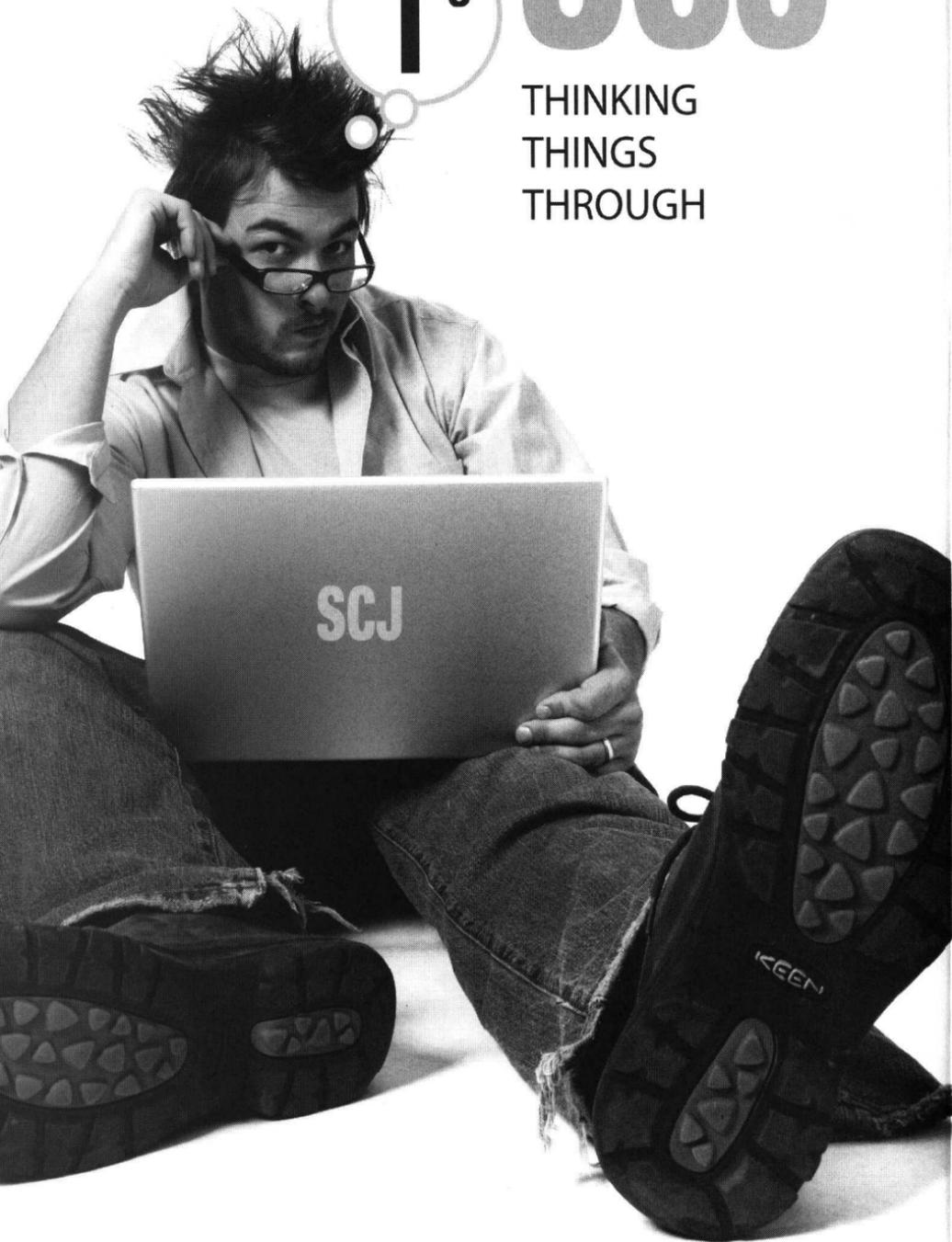
## The Right Man In The Right Place



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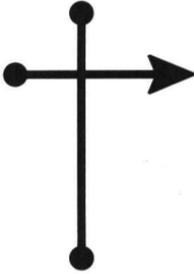
**T<sup>3</sup>**

THINKING  
THINGS  
THROUGH



# Discipliana

*a journal of Stone-Campbell history*



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# Discipliana

*a journal of Stone-Campbell history*

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## THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

*Story.* It is the place where everything begins. Whether one is thinking of cultures, societies, nations, or religions, the birthplace for all is Story. The facts and myths, and the legends and fables that mix together to create a compelling Story are the necessary ingredients to begin the process of germination. Once

begun, the formation of Story depends upon many factors, known and unknown, to turn a so-so tale into a persuasive, passionate Story that can be used as a foundation on which to build. Great cultures can be built that can contribute tremendous things to people's lives, but the building will never stand without Story at its base.

Life, as far we know, requires water for its creation and sustenance. When space probes are sent across our solar system, the first item on the list for possible discovery is water, because scientists know that if there is no water on a given planet, then

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*No culture of any lasting significance can be sustained, and in fact would not have been created in the first place, without Story.*

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there can be no life as we understand it. As water is to biology, so Story is to cultures, societies, and

religions. No culture of any lasting significance can be sustained, and in fact would not have been created in the first place, without Story. The water, and oxygen, and blood of any culture is the Story which resides at its very heart. It is not too much to say that for the health and well-being of any culture, *Story is everything.*

In our case as Christians, we were given a marvelous Story. For us it is the greatest Story of all time. The original followers



of Jesus, after his death, cobbled together a nascent group of the faithful and began crafting the Story of who, exactly, this Jesus of Nazareth was. Through experience, and borrowings, and imaginings, they told, and then wrote, a Story so compelling that it literally changed the world. While the efforts of early believers cannot be discounted for the spread, and ultimate triumph, of Christianity in the western world, we must realize that not only was the Story driving them in their efforts, but the Story was the product they were delivering. The Apostle Paul, for example, told his story of conversion on the Damascus Road again and again. It was his story itself which made him a person of persuasion. In the final analysis, Story was the legacy left to us by the original Christians. It was nothing more than Story. And just as surely it was nothing less.

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*Since Story is the all of culture, both religious and societal, it is clear that the preservation of Story is the most important mission there is.*

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Human beings have always known the power of Story. From the various

creation stories of the ancients, to Homer and Virgil, then Dante, down to Twain, Lucas, and Rowling, we have been formed and nurtured by Story. It is easy to see how no religion of any kind whatsoever would ever have taken hold of the human imagination without an exciting Story to draw people into the fold. Christianity became universal precisely because it told a universal Story, one that resonated in the minds and memories of people regardless of varying backgrounds. The Story of Jesus in his life, death, and resurrection captured attention, and continues to do so, because it is the grand Story of earth and life in all of their glorious cyclings, centered in a mesmerizing biography that gives us the sense that we are truly able to touch the divine.

Since Story is the *all* of culture, both religious and societal, it is clear that the preservation of Story is the most important mission there is. If a particular faith group, for example, hopes to exist in the future, the preservation of its special Story is an absolute necessity. Would Christianity have continued its life across centuries of change if its Story had not been passed from one generation to the next? One might attempt to argue that the institutions of a culture can insure its survival. But one doesn't have to look too hard to see that institutions



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are only shells, and one doesn't have to look too far to find fallen institutions by the wayside that no longer connected with the hearts and minds of people. The only way for the connection to happen, and to last, is through Story. It has not been the institutions of Christianity that have fed its vitality. It has been the sharing of Story by one generation, and the accepting and living of that Story by a subsequent generation, that have caused the Church of Jesus Christ to continue its lively trek across space and time. It is the Story of Jesus that brings Spirit and life to the Church. The 'who' of the risen Christ is presented intact in the 'what' and 'why' of his-story.

Will Disciples of Christ be here in the generations to come to proclaim the good news of God's love? The only 'Yes' to that question is in the cherishing and preservation of our Story. There is no other mission in the Church that is more vital. It is, in fact, our highest calling. We have always said that we yearn to connect with first century Christians and to understand our faith in the same way they did. They knew well that Story is the genesis and fulfillment of faith. Once we understand that as clearly as they did, we will have taken a giant step toward keeping our promise to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth.

—Glenn Thomas Carson

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*Be sure to see  
the back cover for  
a special  
announcement  
from the President.*



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## OVERVIEW

Throughout the history of African-Americans in the Churches of Christ there has been healthy debate about the role of Alexander Campbell. In *The Right Man in the Right Place: African-Americans and Alexander Campbell* Edward Robinson explores many significant African-American leaders and their roles in the debate. Some believed that Alexander Campbell was a “vessel and vassal whom God used to point people back to the bible” while others did not view Campbell as a reformer and had no allegiance to him.

Leaders among the African-American churches such as Samuel Robert Cassius, G.P. Bowser, G.E. Steward, and Floyd Rose viewed Alexander Campbell as a man of God who brought Christians back to more biblically based worship. These men gave credit to Campbell and worked to carry on his teachings. However, there were some, like Jacob McClinton and Jack Evans, who held Campbell in high esteem as a preacher and teacher but did not recognize him as the founder of the Churches of Christ.

These opposing viewpoints provided an atmosphere for lively debate and differences of opinions that, as Dr. Robinson points out, made Campbell “the right man in the right place.”



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# THE RIGHT MAN IN THE RIGHT PLACE: African-Americans and Alexander Campbell

— Edward Robinson

In 1938 Marshall Keeble (1878-1968), the pre-eminent African-American preacher in Churches of Christ during his era, conducted a two-week meeting in Moundsville, West Virginia. While there, Keeble visited nearby Bethany, home of Alexander Campbell (1788-1866), the nineteenth-century religious reformer. Keeble recalled that “Brother [Boyd] Fanning carried us to Bethany, W. Va., where Alexander Campbell once lived. We had the privilege of going through his home and standing at his grave.”<sup>1</sup> That Keeble found time in his busy preaching itinerary to tour Campbell’s house and stand at his gravesite attests to his own high regard for the great reformer but tells us little of how Keeble and other African-Americans perceived Alexander Campbell’s role or what they really thought about him.

A close analysis reveals that black Americans in Churches of Christ have held divergent and ambivalent views of Alexander Campbell. On the one hand, many praised and venerated Campbell as a vessel and vassal whom God used to point people back to the Bible, yet others ignored the Bethany sage or denied any indebtedness to him as a reformer. Many of Keeble’s predecessors and contemporaries readily acknowledged Campbell as their spiritual ancestor; but some of his successors, even among Keeble’s students, claimed no allegiance to Campbell, thereby denying their spiritual roots.<sup>2</sup>

During the excited emotionalism of the revival at Cane Ridge in 1801, a black slave converted to Christ and assumed the name *Alexander Campbell*. After purchasing this slave’s freedom, white leaders in Kentucky educated him at Transylvania University. Armed with a sound academic and religious



*Marshall Keeble*



education, *Alexander Campbell*, the former slave, served and stabilized black Christian Churches in Midway and Lexington, Kentucky, until his death in 1870. Two sons followed him in the preaching ministry. Alexander Campbell, Jr. and Stafford Campbell served Christian Churches in Kentucky and Ohio.<sup>3</sup> This adoption of the founder's name tends to show that some African-Americans highly esteemed Campbell.

In 1832, Andrew Marshall, pastor of the Baptist First African Church of Savannah, Georgia, invited Alexander Campbell, then editor of the widely read religious journal, *Millennial Harbinger*, to preach in his pulpit. Campbell's "new doctrines" of baptism for the remission of sins stirred up trouble for Marshall and his African-American flock. Convinced that Marshall imbibed what they termed "Campbellism," leaders of the Sunbury Baptist Association silenced the black pastor and eventually expelled him from the Georgia organization. Even though Campbell's visit cost Marshall his place and position in the Sunbury Baptist Association, black Georgians had so respected the Virginia visitor that they accorded him an attentive and responsive hearing.<sup>4</sup>

In 1881 M. F. Womack, a black preacher from Tennessee, acknowledged Alexander Campbell as a reformer and urged white preachers to be patient with black listeners. Womack explained that African-Americans "will not receive the truth at once; if so they would be more noble than many others who have had a better opportunity than they. I well remember the days when white people were less willing to receive the reformation

of A. Campbell than [we] are today."<sup>5</sup> Womack clearly viewed Campbell as chief of an important reform movement.



*Samuel Robert Cassius*

Although Womack cursorily referenced Alexander Campbell, the most extensive black testimony about the founder came from Samuel Robert Cassius (1853-1931). Born a slave in Prince William County, Virginia, in 1853, Cassius converted to the Stone-Campbell movement



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in the 1880s. Afterward, he consistently applauded Campbell as a hero. When announcing his own evangelistic undertakings and later when launching his educational enterprise, the Tohee Industrial School in Oklahoma in the mid-1890s, Cassius appealed to the life and work of Alexander Campbell.<sup>6</sup>

Cassius described the religion of slaves as an amalgam of elements drawn from African “heathen superstition” and white American Protestantism, whereas the religion of white Americans he disdained as a “mixture of Catholicism and protests of individual thought and action.” But, according to Cassius, when Catholicism began to eclipse Protestant Christianity, God raised up Alexander Campbell to show people the way of the Lord.

It was then came Alexander Campbell, that great man of God—for if there has ever been a man in America sent of God, he was one; sent not to start a new religion, but to show men that they were going slowly but surely away from God and heaven . . . and you all know that the influence of that man’s voice in the wilderness of sin and sectarianism was so loud and far-reaching that it arrested the attention of every denomination, and brought them back to the Bible and God.<sup>7</sup>

In 1899 Cassius lamented that two of the congregations he had served in Oklahoma, Springvale and Macedonia, “went sparking after some strange gods.” The Springvale church endorsed the “great train of missionary aid [society],” while the Macedonia flock joined hands with Methodists by participating in a “festival.” “The Christian lamb and the Methodist lion laid down together,” reported Cassius, “and when they got up the lamb was on the inside of the lion.” Convinced that these congregations had deviated from the right path, Cassius insisted that his sheep needed to be revived. “What we need now is a few Campbells, Stones and Rowses—men that are broad enough to allow for men’s shortcomings without making a sacrifice of the truth.”<sup>8</sup> While Cassius knew something of the work of Thomas Campbell, Barton W. Stone, and John F. Rowe, he recognized Alexander Campbell as the true paladin of the



movement.

In 1902 Cassius traveled to California to work briefly among west coast churches, and he found much that disappointed him. He deplored preachers who used “their calling as a business profession for the sake of compensation,” and denounced singers who were like “a wounded bear growling to keep off his assailants” or a “cat smiling in the dead hours of the night out on some back fence.” Cassius rigidly opposed the use of musical instruments in worship. “When your soul is yearning to hear God’s children pour forth their souls in song, that lifeless, soulless and meaningless organ jars upon your ear drums like a

braying mule in a fodder stack.” The church, according to Cassius, needed “another Alexander

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*The churches according to Cassius, needed “another Alexander Campbell...to call the churches back to Christ and his word.”*

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Campbell...to call the churches back to Christ and his Word.”<sup>9</sup>

Yet in spite of his misgivings, a decade later Cassius accepted the presidency of the ‘Missionary Executive Board of the Colored Disciples of Oklahoma.’ Anticipating criticism from his friends, Cassius justified this more by arguing that he must lead his flock and not let “the herd run wild.” Such leadership could not be expected from white brethren since black Christians were neither wanted nor welcomed in white congregations. Cassius also leaned on the example of Alexander Campbell, who served as president of the American Christian Missionary Society in 1849, in defending his own actions sixty years later. “A Christian preacher accused me of being ‘digressive,’ because I allowed myself to be made president of a mission board, yet that same preacher believes that A. Campbell was the greatest character in the Church of Christ, and Campbell was the first president of the American Christian Missionary Society.”<sup>10</sup>

Cassius never slacked in praising Alexander Campbell as God’s instrument to effect change in the religious world. In 1916 Cassius commended Campbell as the “right man in the right



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place.” He held that “Campbell saw America going further and further away from God and his word, and he saw that the only way to save them was to stop them and direct them into the right way.”<sup>11</sup> Cassius apparently viewed himself as a black Alexander Campbell whom God would use to disseminate the “pure gospel” among African-Americans.

Later, just after World War I, Cassius lamented attending a revival at a large Christian Church in an unspecified location. He listened to “one of the best choirs” singing Zion’s songs on a stage, joined by “two small fiddles, two horns, a bass fiddle, a large pipe organ, a piano and some other instruments.” After witnessing what he regarded as such elaborate and fashionable, but non-biblical, practices, Cassius mused: “I wonder what Alexander Campbell would think, or say, if he could see some of the things that are being done in churches of Christ today under the name of apostolic Christianity.”<sup>12</sup> Throughout his ministerial career, Cassius often reached back to the life and teaching of Alexander Campbell to find credibility and validation for his own evangelistic endeavors

Cassius, however, did not stand alone among black preachers in Churches of Christ who held Campbell in high esteem. George P. Bowser (1874-1950), an influential black evangelist and educator among Churches of Christ, similarly recognized Alexander Campbell as the Lord’s agent to turn men back to God and his word. “[Thomas] Campbell, whom it seems was inspired of God, to call the people back to the Bible and teachings of the Apostles” Bowser said. “Then his son, Alexander Campbell, the greatest preacher, writer, and restorer of his day, worked hard to do the same.”<sup>13</sup> Bowser celebrated both Campbells as the spiritual fathers of Churches of Christ.

George E. Steward (1906-1979), another noteworthy black minister in Churches of Christ, also praised the Bethany preacher. Born in 1906 in Gayles, Louisiana, Steward moved to Texas as an infant, and an accident caused his blindness shortly before he reached his teens. In Fort Worth, Texas, he heard the persuasive preaching of George P. Bowser and became a member of Churches of Christ in 1931. After launching his own preaching career, Steward often lectured on Bible study and sermon preparation, citing Alexander Campbell as a worthy



exemplar.

In reading the history of Alexander Campbell as a preacher, it was said that he had a little room built out in his yard that didn't have any windows in it. He would go out there and spend several hours studying. It did not have any windows in it because he did not want anything to detract his attention. We know of the great work he did as a preacher and you have read his great writings.<sup>14</sup>

Steward clearly knew details of Campbell's life and efforts. Perhaps by digesting biographical information about the late reformer, Steward had gained inspiration to challenge black preachers to deepen their study of the Word of God. (Campbell's place of study actually had windows in the ceiling.)

In 1973, John S. Winston (1906-2002), an eminent historian and preacher in black Churches of Christ, penned a series of articles under the heading, "Why Are There Not More Churches with Elders among the Black Brethren as among the White Brethren of the Church of Christ?" In responding to the question he had framed, Winston first noted that the Stone-Campbell movement began among white southerners before spreading to African-Americans. He further explained that access to formal education enabled white congregations to develop leadership much earlier than did their black counterparts. "To understand why there are more Churches among the white brethren, with Elders and Deacons," wrote Winston, "we must first consider that the 'Restoration Movement' of the Church of Christ had its beginning with the white brethren over 140 years ago. Great men like Barton W. Stone, Thomas and Alexander Campbell... and others preached the New Testament Doctrine and established



*The Other Alexander Campbell*

Churches in Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee." Alexander Campbell, Winston continued, ranked among the first leaders to see the "great need for prepared and qualified men to preach and defend the doctrine of the New Testament." Other white leaders in the Stone-



Campbell movement followed Campbell's lead in establishing good schools, but their schools served only white students. Thus, Winston concluded: "It stands to reason that through their extensive religious educational program they should have more prepared, qualified men to serve in their ministry as elders and deacons, plus able teachers."<sup>15</sup>

Winston's historical references indicate his effective grasp of the history of the Stone-Campbell movement. He explicitly acknowledged that African-American Churches of Christ descended

from the work and leadership of Alexander Campbell and other

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*Winston's historical references indicate his effective grasp of the Stone-Campbell movement.*

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white reformers. In so doing Winston reflected a view common among black preachers in his era.

Some black preachers in Churches of Christ, however, have repudiated any connection with Alexander Campbell. In 1954 Jacob McClinton, a fiery black preacher in Indianapolis, Indiana, affirmed: "Most sectarian preachers have *misrepresented* Alexander Campbell. He never claimed to be the originator [sic] of the church of Christ. The church of Christ was established on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Christ and Alexander Campbell was not living at that time."<sup>16</sup> With this statement, McClinton categorically insisted that Churches of Christ were the direct spiritual descendants of New Testament Christians who had nothing to do with Alexander Campbell. The point should perhaps be noted here that McClinton argued not against Campbell's theology but in opposition to any notion of Campbell as the founder of a new denomination.

In 1984, Jack Evans and Floyd Rose, African-American leaders in Churches of Christ, debated a variety of theological issues. One of their chief propositions was whether Churches of Christ were heirs of the religious movement launched by Alexander Campbell in the nineteenth century. Rose readily acknowledged Campbell as the spiritual father of Churches of Christ and that the 1906 Census marked the beginning of "the



church of Christ *as I knew it.*” Evans, however, vehemently rejected Rose’s argument, asserting: “I am a Christian FIRST—a member of the church purchased by the blood of Jesus, which existed nearly eighteen hundred years before the birth of Alexander Campbell or Walter Scott. The church *AS I KNOW*

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*“The church AS I KNOW IT did not originate in America in 1906, but in the mind of God, and was begun on the earth in the city of Jerusalem over 1950 years ago.”*

*—Jack Evans*

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*IT did not originate in America in 1906, but in the mind of God, and was begun on the earth in the city of Jerusalem over 1950*

years ago.”<sup>17</sup> The Evans-Rose debates of 1984 reflect the tension between ‘progressives’ and ‘conservatives’ in African-American Churches of Christ. The former readily acknowledge their indebtedness to Campbell and see him as a hero; the latter trace their origins to New Testament times and claim no descendance from Campbell or any other earthly leader.

African-American leaders in Churches of Christ remain conflicted over the legacy and legitimacy of Alexander Campbell as God’s man. For such black preachers as Samuel Robert Cassius, G. P. Bowser, G. E. Steward, and Floyd Rose, Campbell was a true man of God who pointed men back to God’s Word. These black ministers acknowledged their indebtedness to Campbell and his work and have perpetuated his legacy. Others, such as Jacob McClinton and Jack Evans, may recognize Campbell as a preacher and teacher of God’s Word, but they do not acknowledge him as a founder of Churches of Christ. Yet, ironically, in their love of debate they follow the very course charted by Alexander Campbell.<sup>18</sup> So, whether openly acknowledged, or not, Campbell was, indeed, “the right man in the right place.”





Edward Robinson, Ph.D. is Assistant Professor in the College of Biblical Studies of Abilene Christian University.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>1</sup> Keeble, "Keeble Baptizes Preachers" *Gospel Advocate* 80 (Aug 4, 1938): 733.
- <sup>2</sup> C. Leonard Allen and Richard T. Hughes, *Discovering Our Roots: The Ancestry of Churches of Christ* (Abilene University Press, 1988), 3.
- <sup>3</sup> Claude Walker, "Negro Disciples in Kentucky, 1840-1925" (Thesis, College of the Bible, 1959), 5-9.
- <sup>4</sup> Alexander Campbell, "Incidents on a Tour to the South" *Millennial Harbinger* (April 1839): 188.
- <sup>5</sup> M.F. Womack, "Work among the Colored Brethren" *Gospel Advocate* 23 (Aug 4, 1881): 484.
- <sup>6</sup> Cf. Edward J. Robinson, "Samuel Robert Cassius: A Forgotten Trailblazer in Churches of Christ" *Restoration Quarterly* 48 (First Qtr 2006): 11-24
- <sup>7</sup> Samuel Robert Cassius, *Negro Evangelization and the Tohee Industrial School* (Christian Leader Print, 1898), 10.
- <sup>8</sup> Cassius, "Among Our Colored Disciples" *Christian Leader* 13 (Sept 5, 1899): 5.
- <sup>9</sup> Cassius, "A Trip to the Golden Gate" *Christian Leader* 16 (Aug 16, 1902): 13.
- <sup>10</sup> Cassius, "The Annual Meeting of the Oklahoma Colored Disciples" *Christian Leader and the Way* 23 (Aug 24, 1909): 13.
- <sup>11</sup> Cassius, "The Right Man in the Right Place" *Christian Companion* 23 (Sept 14, 1916): 2.
- <sup>12</sup> Cassius, "I Wonder" *Christian Leader* 33 (Dec 30, 1919): 9.
- <sup>13</sup> George P. Bowser, "Gems for Thought" *Christian Echo* 74 (Oct 1974): 10.
- <sup>14</sup> George E. Steward, *Our Pulpit* (Steward Publications, 1965), 26-27.
- <sup>15</sup> J.S. Winston, "Why Are There Not More Churches with Elders among the Black Brethren as among the White Brethren of the Church of Christ?" *Christian Echo* 71 (April 1973): 6.
- <sup>16</sup> Jacob McClinton, "Among the Colored Brethren" *Gospel Advocate* 96 (Sept 30, 1954): 782-783.
- <sup>17</sup> Jack Evans, *Before the Thicket* (Jack Evans, n.d.), 6.
- <sup>18</sup> Richard T. Hughes, *Reviving the Ancient Faith: The Story of Churches of Christ in America* (Eerdmans, 1996), 21-46.



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## THE ENLIGHTENED BIBLE

— Gary Holloway

In 1807 when Thomas Campbell moved to the frontier of western Pennsylvania, he formed an organization that is commonplace in our day, but radical for his: an undenominational Bible study group. Called the “Christian Association of Washington, Pennsylvania,” this group met to promote “simple evangelical Christianity, free from all mixture of human opinions and inventions of men.”<sup>1</sup> Campbell penned a speech to the Association in 1809, called the *Declaration and Address* in which he outlined his proposal for Christian unity.

His plan was simple. Christians “ought all to walk by the same rule, to mind and speak the same thing; and to be perfectly joined together in the same mind and the same judgment.”<sup>2</sup> To Campbell, it was obvious that all Christians could understand the clear meaning of Scripture. Over sixty times in the *Declaration and Address* he uses phrases and words like “expressly taught,” “plainly exhibited,” “clear,” “manifest,” “simple,” and “clear.” Where the Bible is not clear, he said, Christians should allow disagreement without condemning one another and excluding some from communion.

Thomas Campbell was not the only one calling for Christians to “speak where the Bible speaks and be silent where the Bible is silent.” Many in the philosophical movement known as the Enlightenment made that appeal before he did. Tired of the violence of religious wars between Catholics and Protestants, Enlightenment thinkers believed religion should be reasonable. They were optimistic about the human ability to resolve differences without bloodshed. Thomas shared that optimism and brought it to biblical interpretation: Christians ought to be able to agree on what the Bible says. He later gave certain questions that one should ask when reading



Thomas Campbell



the Bible,<sup>3</sup> but he never gave a detailed method of understanding what the Bible expressly says.

Thomas's son, Alexander Campbell (1788-1866), does give a method of Bible interpretation in his book, *The Christian System*. His rules reflect both common sense and the best biblical scholarship of his time. Like his father, his approach had its roots in the Enlightenment, which called for reading the Bible scientifically as one would any other book.

The Enlightenment view of Bible study informed the modern approach to theological education. In universities, and in

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*The Enlightenment view of Bible study  
informed the modern approach to  
theological education.*

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seminaries,  
the Bible  
was to be  
studied  
scientifically,  
objectively,  
and

critically. At times this has caused tension between the academic and congregational worlds, with the former exhibiting a more intellectual approach to scripture, and the latter a more emotional.

In the Stone-Campbell movement, this tension between 'head and heart' led some in the early to mid-twentieth century to discount emotion almost completely. In the Panel of Scholars Reports, W.B. Blakemore characterizes the Disciples of Christ as "reasonable, empirical, and pragmatic,"<sup>4</sup> leaving little room for emotions. The emphasis on being "biblical" among Churches of Christ and Christian Churches/Churches of Christ, gave even more focus on the rational: Bible facts were just to be memorized for use in defense of the faith.

Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)<sup>5</sup> had an approach to theological knowledge that was surprisingly similar to Alexander Campbell. Campbell does give rational rules for interpreting the Bible, but he is not a thoroughgoing Enlightenment rationalist. Indeed, he said "we must come within the understanding distance." One may follow all the rules of reason and still not hear God in Scripture. To truly understand, one must be "ravished with the moral scenes that the Bible unfolds." One must have "one ardent desire--intent only to know the will of God."<sup>6</sup>



We know that Campbell read Pascal, but not whether he borrowed ideas directly from him. Like Pascal, Campbell saw the heart as the seat of our deepest moral intentions. In other words, for both, the Bible must be read with more than the mind.

Campbell says that to “read the Scriptures for the sake of carrying into practice all that we learn, and to read for the sake of knowing what is written, are very different objects and will produce very different results.”<sup>7</sup> For Alexander, and his father, Enlightenment thinking was foundational, but went only so far. In the end, the “speaking” of scripture was for the heart, as well as the head.



Gary Holloway, Ph.D. is Executive Director of World Convention.

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Campbell, “The Declaration and Address to the Christian Association of Washington,” in C.A. Young, ed., *Historical Documents Advocating Christian Union* (Joplin, Missouri: College Press, 1985), 74.

<sup>2</sup> Declaration and Address, 108.

<sup>3</sup> *Millennial Harbinger* (1839), 394.

<sup>4</sup> W.B. Blakemore, “Reasonable, Empirical, Practical: The Mind of Disciples of Christ,” in Ronald E Osborn, ed., *The Reformation of Tradition*. (St Louis: Bethany Press, 1963), 161-183.

<sup>5</sup> For an accessible introduction to the religious thought of Pascal, see Thomas V. Morris, *Making Sense of It All* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992).

<sup>6</sup> Alexander Campbell, *The Christian System*, 18.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 275.



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## Gary Holloway at the helm of World Convention

Dr. Gary Holloway is the new Executive Director of the World Convention. Holloway came to the World Convention from Lipscomb University in Nashville, Tennessee where he was the Ijams Professor of Spirituality and a minister to the Natchez Trace Church of Christ in Nashville. Holloway has also served at Harding Academy of Memphis, Greater Atlanta Christian School, and Austin Graduate School of Theology.

“The main question I think I will be answering is: What is the World Convention?” says Holloway. As he settles into a chair in the newly redecorated Eva Jean Wrather Alcove in the Thomas W. Phillips Memorial Archives, Holloway gives his answer, “It is a ministry that gives ways of expressing visible unity among Christians.”

But, World Convention is more than that simple answer. Holloway points out that for eighty years, the World Convention has worked to express the visible unity of those churches in the Stone-Campbell movement worldwide.

The words of Christ who said that all who believe in him should ‘be one’ drew Holloway to answer the call to World Convention. The World Convention is a ministry of prayer for unity. He believes that if we pray for unity, we must be prepared for God to work through us for unity.

“I think the mission is good but I think we need to dream and be creative about the ways in which we fulfill that mission,” he says. “At the first meeting that I’ll be at in April I want our board to think that if money and time were no object, what would they want World Convention to be? Or maybe better, if someone is writing an article about World Convention in 2020 and looking back on the decade before what would we want them to say? We need to be a bit more creative and up-to-date and think of a way we can connect people.”

A large appeal of World Convention to Holloway is its global view and the organization’s ability to bring those people together that would normally not have a place to gather.

“One thing that excites me about World Convention is that it is a *world* convention and I think sometimes we get too narrow in our view of church,” he says. “It’s either ‘me’ or



---

‘my congregation’ or ‘a congregation like mine’ or it’s ‘the South’ or it’s ‘America’ and so one thing I really like about this organization is that half of our board members are from outside of the United States.”

While the World Convention is associated in most peoples’ minds for the global gatherings every four years, it is much more than that. It is a place where Christians can gather daily—through the internet, through prayer, and through sharing what God is doing among us.

“We’ve had these global gatherings and most of them have been outside the United States. So it’s a way for me to have interaction face-to-face with a wider church,” Holloway says. “And that is really what I think the organization is about, allowing people ways to do the same thing.”

As Holloway looks to the future he sees exciting new opportunities to reach out and expand the World Convention and include more people in the dialogue. He hopes that his background in the churches of Christ will help him encourage those congregations to take time to learn from each other and other Christians and, in a sense be there at the table with other Christians.

“God can work through the smallest non-profit organization in the world. It’s a small group but I think it has a great vision.”

---

*World Convention offices are now located at Vine Street Christian Church, 4101 Harding Rd., Nashville, TN 37205. The new phone number is (615) 298-1824*



# DISCIPLIANA CLASSIC

*The following appeared in 'The Harbinger and Discipliana' in August 1954:*

## **Nashville, Tennessee, August 15**

The Disciples of Christ Historical Society today announced the purchase of two lots at 1802-1804 Grand Avenue for the permanent site of the DCHS headquarters and library. Options have been taken on lots adjoining the Grand Avenue location which would give the Society a quarter block of property. Since April, 1952, when the agency was moved to Nashville, the Society has occupied rent-free quarters in the Joint University Library building. The Grand Avenue property is located in the University Center area, one block from the Disciples' Divinity House, three blocks from the Vanderbilt University School of Religion and the Joint University Library, and adjacent to Scarritt College.

Full details on the building site purchase and the Society's expansion plans will be covered in the September issue of *The Harbinger*.

---

*In January 1955 it was announced that the Grand Avenue lots had been rejected in favor of the corner, two blocks away, where the Thomas W. Phillips Memorial Archives now stands.*



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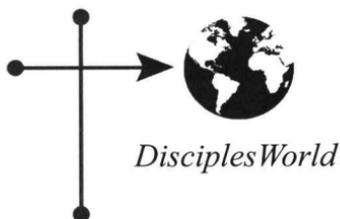
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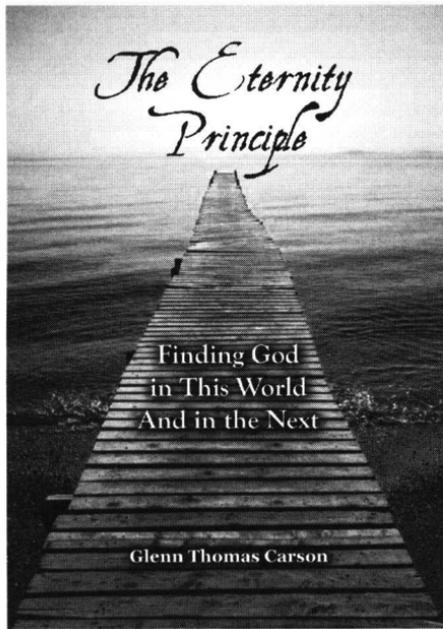
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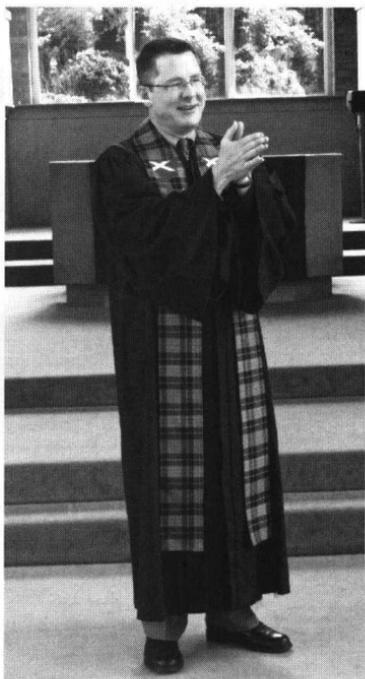
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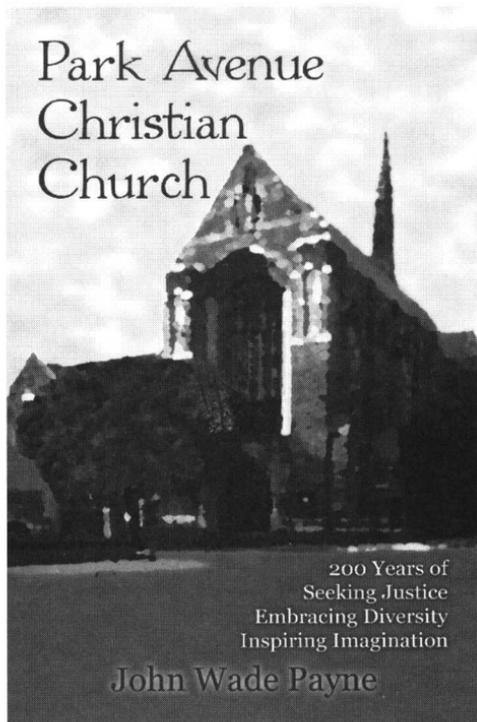
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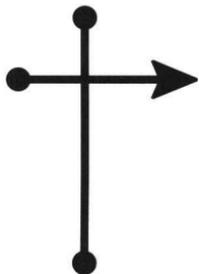
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# Discipliana

*a journal of Stone-Campbell history*



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# Discipliana

*a journal of Stone-Campbell history*

Published by  
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## THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

*Legacy.* It is a word that is much used with an individual tilt. We ask, *What will your legacy be?* That is an important question and one which each of us should seriously consider. Personal legacy for family and for vocation forms the frame in which each one of us will be remembered.

The desire to be remembered is as much a part of the human condition as the desire to procreate. And not just remembered, but remembered for some outstanding trait of character, or contribution to the greater good. A grounded, established legacy that places *my name* among the twinkling stars of great accomplishment: each person yearns for such status.

As elemental as the desire for personal legacy is, it pales in the light of the Christian idea of what legacy is all about.

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*As elemental as the desire for personal legacy is, it pales in the light of the Christian idea of what legacy is all about.*

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Just as the New Testament almost always uses the address 'you' in

the plural, so our Christian path to legacy is not so much the journey of an individual, but the joint-steps that can only be taken in, and with, a community. The real question, then, is *What will **our** legacy be?*

The life of faith in service to our Lord places us, automatically, as a spiritual community, in a stance of looking more outward than inward. Must my personal relationship with Christ be so healthy that I am growing in my likeness to him? Yes. But that personal relationship is only a beginning in the life of faith, not an ending.

Each person growing individually in spirit and grace strengthens each for the purpose of increasing the vitality



of the whole community. The entire Church is the Body of Christ, correct? And individual believers are only parts, members of that whole, holy Body. The testimony of every book of the Bible is that God primarily reaches out to *us* and only afterwards reaches out to *me*. We speak of ‘the life’ (singular) of faith, not ‘lives’ (plural), because it is a greater life beyond ourselves that we are sharing in. It is, in fact, a life lived together at the very center of the source of life: the heart of Jesus Christ.

This knowledge heightens our sense of connection with the human family. Every person born appears on planet earth as a result of two persons joining to initiate a new life. From the very beginning, then, each one of us is intimately

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*Our legacy together is our life together — the life of faith. And faith is action; it is doing.*

---

connected to other people. It is not too much to say that, quite

literally, *we are other people*. We are born as a result of the most tender human community, and we are born, from the first day, into a community of all human beings. Our connections are so fundamental to our nature that one might consider it a contrivance to individuate and separate. “It’s well known,” Sir Isaac Newton writes in *Opticks*, “that Bodies act upon one another by the Attractions of Gravity, Magnetism and Electricity.” Such is the “tenor and course of nature,” he adds. Attraction to one another, and the fusing of all, is at the core of our makeup.

More particularly, those of us ‘in Christ’ belong to the community of faith that traces its connections over the course of two thousand years, tens of thousands of locales, and billions of believers. I do not stand alone, nor does a congregation, regardless of place or time, stand alone. The Holy Spirit moves along the timeline, lives among the people, and re-creates the many into one, so that the universal, timeless Body of Christ exists in a spiritual harmony that

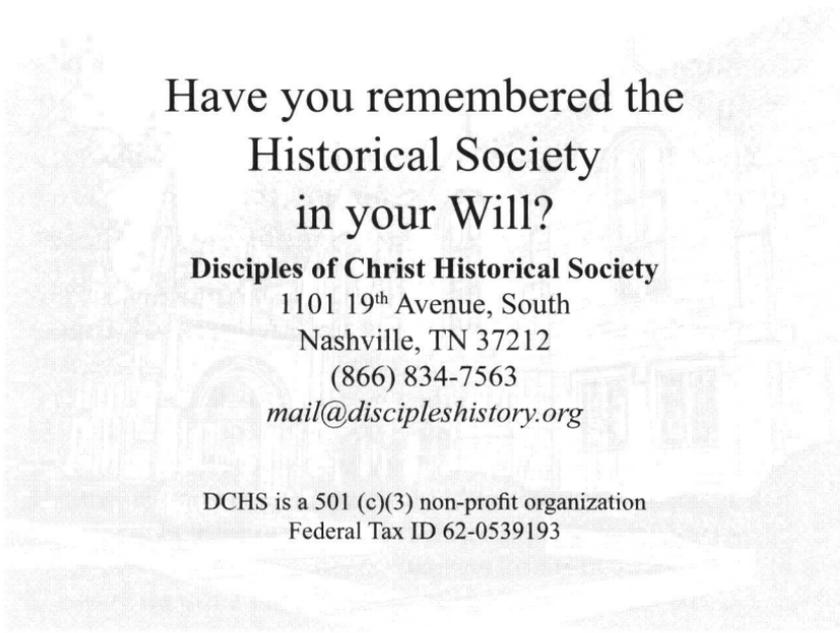


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transcends all. Far from being cut-off and alone, no matter the circumstances experienced, each believer, and each singular community, is born from the intimate relationship of the triune God, and born to the eternal bond of connectivity in the Spirit.

Understanding these truths produces a clear, unequivocal answer to our deeply held question: *What will our legacy be?* Our legacy will be precisely that which we were born to. It will be that which we have abided in all our days. Our legacy together is our life together – the life of faith. And faith is an action; it is doing. Faith is working to bring about the peace of Christ among all people the world over. Faith is sharing in the communally held belief that this life we cherish is worthy of devotion. We inherited this life of Christian community, we live it connected to the joys and challenges of the whole Body, and we stand ready to pass it on to the next generation of this very same family, so that at once the life of faith is delivered and the legacy itself remains intact, and glorious, and alive.

— Glenn Thomas Carson



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## OVERVIEW

In the article *THE IMAGINATIVE DISCIPLES: Disciples Publications in Canada from 1833 to 1929* Jennifer Garbin explains how journals and other publications promoted dialogue in Canada during this era. Canadian Disciples embraced sharing ideas, advancements, and achievements, which led to a surge in print media.

Many journals served both clergy and laity and were written so that people of various educational levels were able to understand the material. A significant factor in the success of such publications was Canada's great open spaces. With churches spread from coast to coast, communication was not easy and publications provided people with the opportunity to be part of a community of readers who shared common ideas and beliefs. Before these words were written, distributed, and read, there had only been a scattering of churches. Afterward, there was a community.



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## THE IMAGINATIVE EDITORS: Disciples Publications in Canada from 1833 to 1929

—Jennifer Garbin

In his contribution to Shirley Muir's *Disciples in Canada*, Elmer Stainton, a prominent figure in this era of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Canada<sup>1</sup> describes the humble beginnings of churches in Canada as rising out of the Scotch Baptist congregations which had sprung from new settlements in the Maritime Provinces (PEI, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick) and in Ontario in the early 1800s.<sup>2</sup> Stainton describes the theology of this group as one similar to the teachings of Stone and Campbell, specifically in their belief that

...a man bring[s] his mind to the reading of the scriptures and their conviction that the New Testament provides an all-sufficient basis for bringing one to salvation, plus their desire to organize and conduct the work and worship of the church on the basis of New Testament practice,<sup>3</sup>

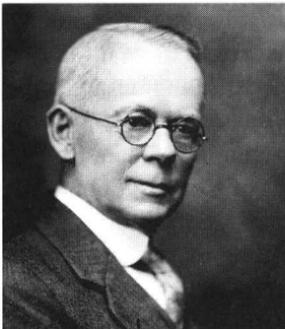
and as such were a “fertile field,”<sup>4</sup> accepting and espousing the core belief and systems of the Stone-Campbell heritage. Having organized themselves in congregations in and around 1811, the Scotch Baptists were exposed to these ideas as if by chance, taking in Disciples immigrants from the south and procuring ministers also with Disciples roots. Two names in particular are associated with the burgeoning of the Disciples in Canada, Elder E.T. McIntyre and William Ashley, both evangelists and “agent[s] of Alexander Campbell’s journal,”<sup>5</sup> *The Christian Baptist*. The congregations soon embraced the Stone-Campbell way as taught them initially by these two prominent figures, and soon undertook another Disciples’ characteristic activity, publishing. In 1836 and again in 1837, two journals in the Stone-Campbell tradition began in Canada, first *The Gospel Vindicator* (Joseph Ash, editor)<sup>6</sup> out of Cobourg, Ontario and then *The Christian Gleaner* (Lewis Johnstone, editor), out of Halifax, Nova Scotia,<sup>7</sup> respectively. According to Stainton, it was the advent of these two new journals disseminating the Stone-Campbell message that was the impetus for the rapid spread in Canada,<sup>8</sup> transcending the barrier of isolated congregations and allowing “people...to come together for the strengthening of their



purposes through fellowship and sharing of ideas and concerns,”<sup>9</sup> at first in the form of a journal.

Like their American cousins, the early Canadian Disciples believed strongly in the power of the pen and the importance of sharing ideas, advancements and achievements with each other.<sup>10</sup> Thus, since the first publication appeared in 1836, the Canadian Disciples have kept journals of their thoughts, their actions and their theology. They shared news of each others progresses and hardships, they updated their brothers and sisters on missionary achievements and offered exegetical materials for local pastor’s sermons, for the edification and education of the laity as well as for the unchurched. Reuben Butchart, author of the only detailed account of the Canadian Disciples history, surmises that “the Disciples have always created and maintained religious journals as if their ongoing and success depended upon them.”<sup>11</sup> Butchart has a point. These documents served a purpose greater than a mere sharing of information. They “bridged the gaps between themselves and other bodies...[and proved]...valuable in informing and inspiring the rank and file of the Brotherhood.”<sup>12</sup> They served to bring together a geographically disparate group of believers into community one with the other which could not have existed to the extent it did without the aid of these publications.

Benedict Anderson in his work *Imagined Communities* explains that in places where no community exists, print media serves to establish community as it fills in the gaps left by the absence of face-to-face encounters. The advent of print media, with its accessible presentation of ideas, notions and “imaginings,” promote development of communities through the development, dissemination and reading of a common document (ie, periodicals, newspapers, journals).<sup>13</sup> The



*Ruben Butchart*

existence of Disciples publishing in Canada fits the model proposed by Anderson. With churches ranging from coast to coast, primarily in rural towns, with no easy means of communication but occasional visits from an evangelist, a printed monthly discussing the roots and tenets of their faith, the news from those like-minded followers and eventually the development of organization, gave the reader an opportunity to recognize



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him/herself as a member of a community, linked simply by reading the same words on a printed page as a brother/sister a thousand miles away. The words written on the page, of course, told the editor's story of how he<sup>14</sup> *imagined* this community. In the case of the Canadian Disciples, this vision was in line with the vision of Campbell and the New Testament representation of church. Before these words were written, distributed and read, there had only been a scattering of churches. Now there had sprung up a community.

The way this community of Canadian Disciples was shaped hinged upon the *imaginings* of the editors of the fifteen publications examined within the scope of this paper.<sup>15</sup> Although published at different times over a period of approximately 100 years and in different provinces, they share fundamentally four main areas of interest: (1) presentation and promulgation of core *Campbellite* values such as Christian unity, anti-sectarianism, Biblical authority, and a return to primitive Christianity; (2) an emphasis on theological discussion, exploration and biblical exegesis including incorporation of other denominational views on these matters (compare and contrast); (3) a substantial commitment to reporting news and correspondence both subscribers (laity and clergy), other congregations, evangelists and other denominations which shared their views; and as Disciples grew and began to organize itself into co-operations and conventions, (4) reports, updates and reprintings of proceedings of these new organizations. These four emphases proved to be vehicles of identity and community, each one saturated with *Campbellite* ideals, serving to united and hold the wide-flung Disciples together. Thus, the *imaginings* of the editors began to build an image of the desired community – one that prized unity and inclusiveness, equality of all believers be they laity or clergy, the authority of scripture, and especially the need to be in constant communication with each other, a living body in the truest sense.

The content of these early publications was undoubtedly influential to the success of this community, however, it is not the only measure by which we may examine their role in developing and sustaining this particular community. Although understanding what value defined the group, equally important is determining the community's composition – who were the writers and who were the readers? If the editors and subscribers were strictly clergy then the community these publications define may not be indicative of the entirety of Disciples in Canada. In a broad scan of the journals it appears that the editors were generally clergy or recognized leaders (evangelists, key supporters, etc.), keeping in line with the tradition



of the early Disciples fathers who also tended to be editors as well as pastors.<sup>16</sup>

Although the editors were predominantly clergy, or leaders, it appears that the readers, the intended audience of Canadian Disciples' publications were both lay and clergy alike. Articles did not generally employ excessive amounts of *higher criticism* characteristic of the scholarship of the age (that is to say, a reader would not need to have a college education to be engaged by the text), although the general tone of the majority of papers is of scholarly quality. The discussion of biblical themes is in-depth and detailed, indicative of educated individuals dedicated to the faith but most likely not seminary-trained theologians. Although the style of the early papers is dense (that is to say, by our modern standards, not the fare you would generally find in a regular newspaper), it is not necessarily what one would refer to as "academic." That being said, one needs to consider that the depth of biblical familiarity and knowledge of scripture during the 19<sup>th</sup> century undoubtedly far exceeded that of the average layperson today. The texts assume biblical familiarity but not excessive knowledge of Reformation thinkers and theologians. Without exception, the quality and substance of articles and exegeses offered in the journals has a wide-spread appeal, not limited to clergy. In addition, there are occasional specific articles concerning such things as congregational conduct,<sup>17</sup> public speaking tips,<sup>18</sup> and "Pulpit Dos and Don'ts,"<sup>19</sup> and still others which "will venture to say something to mothers in reference to their children"<sup>20</sup> and how to "help your minister,"<sup>21</sup> topical pieces written for specific groups within the community (but, of course, applicable to a wider Christian audience).



*The Christian*

As in the previous discussion concerning the intended audience of the publications, the content and tone also aids in determining the composition of the community under examination. We can see from the balance of topical articles and accessible exegetical pieces that the community envisioned by the editors of Disciples publications was inclusive, not limited to only evangelists, clergy or laity.

Not only is the content of



the publications geared towards both clergy and laity but the correspondence received and reprinted is likewise from both groups, who are “encouraged to write to benefit the churches.”<sup>22</sup> It appears in some cases that letters with theological/doctrinal questions came from average lay people either in response to articles they have read or to events which are impacting their daily lives (ie, prohibition, dancing, card playing,<sup>23</sup> etc.). In other cases, letters were printed from evangelists and leaders of congregations (or regions) with responses, articles or news of their own. There seems seldom a preference for one over the other. Both are given equal space (although letters from clergy tend to be longer than those from the laity). Exemplary of the majority of the publications, one editorial in *The Christian* states that anyone can “respond and disapprove” of the content and discussion of the journal, provided it is done properly and in “gentlemanly” fashion.<sup>24</sup> As important as the content is to establishing the editor’s vision of who is part of the community, the letters chosen to reprint were confirmations of that community. Granted, the choice made by the editor reveals his interest and his own *imaginings*, but given the evidence produced from the journals examined, the editor’s wrote for a combined clergy-lay audience and were true to that vision in the letters they chose to reprint.

In terms of specific content, fundamental to the development of the Disciples community in Canada was the proliferation of core *Campbellite* doctrines, namely a return to primitive Christianity, a union of Christ’s church and an end to sectarianism. The earliest journal, *The Christian Gleaner* which began publication in 1833 out of Halifax, NS announced its intent as being,

...to investigate and incite to the knowledge and practice of primitive Christianity...to disentangle them from perplexities and metaphysical subtleties of system makers of theology...to destroy sectarianism, and in its stead promote Christian union...by exhibiting the truth itself of the New Testament.<sup>25</sup>

True to its Prospectus, *The Christian Gleaner* presented articles, opinions, sermons, lectures and notes concurrent with this theme, using language to present a “popular interpretation”<sup>26</sup> of both scripture and the *Campbellite* view of primitive Christianity. Indeed, in many of the articles familiar phrases such as “not a new creed” and “essentially, intentionally and constitutionally one”



emanated from the editor but are renditions of well known catch phrases of the Stone-Campbell heritage.<sup>27</sup> The *Gospel Vindicator*, the first Ontario publication (1837-8), urged its readers to seek unity “because we walk in him we ought to walk together,”<sup>28</sup> still others reprinted verbatim the *Last Will and Testament of the Springfield Presbytery*,<sup>29</sup> highlighting the emphasis on the church as one body. Even in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup>, editors spoke of “the empty deception of sectarianism,”<sup>30</sup> the “true meaning of union,”<sup>31</sup> and “Christian union not [as] a fraternity

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*Themes of union and a return  
to primitive Christianity figure  
promenently in all publications prior  
to the turn of the century...*

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of sects and  
parties but  
a union of  
individuals  
to Christ  
himself...  
primitive  
faith and

primitive method of confessing that faith,”<sup>32</sup> and still others wrote articles such as “Conversations on the Christian Religion” a series describing Alexander Campbell’s “essentials” and representations of what union means, presented in dialogical form, similar to treatises by ancient philosophers.<sup>33</sup>

The themes of union and a return to primitive Christianity figure prominently in all publications prior to the turn of the century, not only in articles written by the editors but in letters from subscribers chosen for printing<sup>34</sup> and in articles reprinted from other denominations’ publications. *Campbellite* themes are woven throughout each piece of writing, regardless of the source, to present fully and in unified fashion the central ideas which will bond this community together. According to Anderson’s theory, the Disciples in Canada became community even though they seldom if ever actually met one another face-to-face, and thus developed identity. They were empowered and strengthened because of the continuity and consistency of their message and the distribution of that message via print media over an extended period of time. Anderson uses the advent of the French Revolution as an example of this phenomenon, positing that this process is less a single event and more a series of events culminating in the building of identity building and formation of community, but which happens silently but is always somehow *known*:

“Like a vast shapeless rock worn to a rounded  
boulder by countless drops of water, the experience



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was shaped by millions of printed words into a ‘concept’ on the printed page, and, in due course, into a model. Why ‘it’ broke out, what ‘it’ aimed for, why ‘it’ succeeded or failed, became subjects for endless polemics on the part of friend and foes: but of its ‘it-ness’, as it were, no one ever had much doubt.<sup>35</sup>

Through its repetition and reinforcement of Stone-Campbell maxims in the periodicals of the time, Campbell’s essentials became the community’s essentials, Stone’s vision, the community’s vision...in essence, its identity.

The Canadian Disciples did not only print the words of Stone and Campbell but true to their desire to pursue a more “primitive Christianity” with an emphasis on biblical primacy and authority,<sup>36</sup> published sermons and exegetical articles (often in series format) on a wide range of biblical topics. Equal space was given to both New and Old Testaments, but the emphasis was always on a true interpretation, unaided by manmade creeds or doctrines, of what scripture was actually saying. Their interpretation, therefore, does not rely on Luther or Calvin, or even Campbell or Stone to support its exegesis, but rather, through the editor’s *lens*,<sup>37</sup> letting scripture speak for itself. In the early journals, articles dealt primarily with doctrinal issues such as Christ’s divinity,<sup>38</sup> discussions of the Eucharist or Lord’s supper,<sup>39</sup> the biblical duties of officers of the church,<sup>40</sup> and one of the hottest topics of the day, the immersionist controversy.<sup>41</sup> In later years, as the churches became more organized, topics strayed from strictly scriptural exegesis and entered the realm of worship. Articles begin to appear on “How to Conduct a Bible Class” and discussions of hymnody,<sup>42</sup> the role of women in religious life,<sup>43</sup> snapshots of worship styles of other denominations,<sup>44</sup> “sermon[s] and essays on Bible themes,”<sup>45</sup> the issue of creeds,<sup>46</sup> and what to do with the issue of the “pious unimmersed.”<sup>47</sup> Towards the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, curriculum ideas and practical programming made their first appearances in the form of Sunday School Lessons and ideas for Juniors.<sup>48</sup> The last paper examined, *The Canadian Disciple* begun in 1923, the first “national” paper of the denomination, no longer undertook outright theological discussion or straightforward exegesis but rather concentrated more on the organization, with biblical support indicated within the justifications for projects, programs and identity issues. When considering the theological content of



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early Disciples publications, one may assess the practical side of the matter and claim that the importance of these journals was to bridge the gap of geographic isolation experienced by the churches including the difficulty obtaining new study materials. The early publications became necessary tools for the pastor's library and sermon preparation. But in terms of community development, these publications offered so very much more, but most importantly a forum of sustained discussion and communal worship:

...newspapers serve modern man as a substitute for morning prayers...it is performed in silent privacy, in the lair of the skull. Yet each communicant is well aware that the ceremony he performs is being replicated simultaneously by thousands...of others of whose existence he is confident, yet of whose identity he has not the slightest notion.<sup>49</sup>

If what Anderson says is true, then the dissemination of theological materials, regardless if they were scriptural exegesis or doctrinal discussion, served as a means to forge community through the ritualistic act of simply reading them. Consider the present day congregation who exist as a society made up of communities formed from the time we spend together in common praise, prayer and worship. Those who attend a Wednesday night Bible study develop community through their common experience of regularly studying scripture together. Those who come to Sunday morning worship share community when they break bread together and discuss matters of the church, whether scriptural, doctrinal or of a social/business matter because these are the activities in which individuals share and which put them into relationship with one another. Indeed, even the newsletters produced each month widen community, casting a net of common information to others outside the regular the Sunday morning attendance, and bring in others into common knowledge and understanding of who this community is, how they define themselves and how the individual relates to it. Likewise, historically for Canadian Disciples the regular dissemination of a monthly periodical and the consumption of that information not only by congregants but by other non-Disciples subscribers brought those *others* into a community relationship, bound by the reception and consumption of shared theological discourse and regular (albeit unorthodox by our modern standards) worship.

What is most fascinating about this *imagined* community of





they “multiply the labourers!”<sup>57</sup> featured prominently in all late 19<sup>th</sup> century Disciples publications. In the even later days of *The Canadian Disciple*, there was news not only of what congregations in ‘All Canada’ were doing within the union, but what local churches were doing with other denominations, evidence that their unity cause was right and succeeding.<sup>58</sup>

As co-operations were organized around the country (primarily in the Maritimes and Ontario in these early days), discussion ensued,<sup>59</sup> annual reports were printed as were details of additions to the fold and treasurer’s reports.<sup>60</sup> Articles concerning pleas for finances to assist in works and program development,<sup>61</sup> and even the publication of a new hymnal all suggest the growth of the community and its awareness of itself as such.<sup>62</sup> For those in

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*Through the examination of Disciples’ journals in Canada....comes the understanding that community was established here primarily through there publications*

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support of unity among the Disciples congregations in Canada, this news was inspiring and provided a rule by which

they might measure their own success.<sup>63</sup> The community once only imagined had come to fruition and now was sustained in its identity and functioning through the printed word.

Through the examination of Disciples’ journals in Canada over the course of the first century of their existence comes the understanding that community was established here primarily through these publications. The printing and distribution of *Campbellite* ideas of unity and a return to primitive Christianity furthered the spread of those ideas into communities touched perhaps only by an evangelist or the migration of Disciples from one area of the country to the next. Sharing news from a variety of areas and types of people widened the net of influence, fostered support and encouragement, built identity and brought others into relationship. Theological discussion generated new ideas which further strengthened the group’s identity and empowered its clergy and laity in the spirit of mutual ministry through its accessible language and invitation to common worship. Reports of the physical manifestation of this *imagined* community encouraged and gave evidence to the success of what for so long subscribers had known existed – a unified body of believers. Given the widespread

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national growth of the churches and the relative rapidity with which they became established in adverse conditions, the existence of journals is proof positive to Anderson's theory of the imagined community.

The implication for today is, of course, that once again we are faced with a few scattered churches, many miles between, and fewer chances to worship and be in each other's physical company. Journals which incorporate theological discussion, news of member churches and the greater cause, and a re-presentation of Stone-Campbell theology and ideas, would serve not only as a means of informing Canadian Disciples, but provide the impetus for a renewed sense of community. Through sharing news we see beyond ourselves, and witness through another's experience, the breadth and width and depth of Christ's Church.

Through the revisiting of Stone-Campbell ideas, namely unity and a return to a New Testament spirit, we find once again our commonality, our ecumenical purpose and can begin again a discussion which promotes not organic union, but unity amongst all Christians, uniting in the work of social justice, healing and peace. In theological discussion, we join with our brothers and sisters in finding new and rescuing old revelations of God which are fundamental to our existence and experience communal worship as a unified body although we are sometimes thousands of miles apart. By inviting brothers and sisters of both laity and clergy to contribute to the publishing enterprise we reinforce our core belief that ministry belongs to everyone and begin again the process of defining this *imagined* community.

The Disciples of Christ in Canada is a small community. We cannot survive if we do not begin again the work of the Gospel which begins with God-talk, encouragement, prayer, faith and worship together. As evidenced by over a century of journals and papers, this can happen in the form of a renewed and empowered communication enterprise in Canada. Our congregations risk being isolated once again, if we do not increase the depth of contact we currently undertake. The spiritual growth of our clergy and our congregants are at risk if they do not receive regular outside injections of Canadian Disciples' theology. Our country risks losing a unique and ecumenical voice of social justice, scholarship and biblical interpretation if we do not begin again what once was prolific and prominent. We can once again be "vindicators of the Gospel," "promoters of Christian union," and "popular interpreters of scripture" if only we will once again pick up our quill and write.

APPENDIX

The following list was extracted from Reuben Butchart's 1949 work *The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830*.<sup>1</sup>

<b>Publication</b>	<b>Editor</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Dates Examined</b> <sup>65</sup>
<i>Adviser, The</i> <sup>66</sup>	C.J. Lister, E. Sheppard	Toronto, ON	1860, 1862, 1863, 1864
<i>Banner of the Faith</i>	David Oliphant	Birgton, ON	1859, 1861, 1863
<i>Bible Index</i> <sup>67</sup>	James Beaty, Q.C., M.P. and Robert Beaty	Toronto, ON	1882, 1883, 1884, 1885
<i>Bible Indicator, The</i>	Charles J. Lister	Owen Sound, ON	1869, 1870
<i>Canadian Disciple, The</i> <sup>68</sup>	Reuben Butchart	Toronto, ON	1923, 1924, 1926, 1927, 1929
<i>Christian, The</i>	Donald Crawford, <sup>69</sup> W. Wentworth Eaton, W.H. Harding	St. John, NB	1839, 1842, 1847, 1885, 1886, 1887, 1888, 1912, 1916
<i>Christian Banner</i>	David Oliphant	Cobourgh, UC	1852, 1853, 1854, 1855, 1856
<i>Christian Gleaner, The</i> <sup>70</sup>	Lewis Johnstone	Halifax, NS	1833, 1836, 1837, 1838, 1886
<i>Christian Messenger, The</i>	A.T. Campbell	Toronto, ON	1844, 1845
<i>Christian Sentinel, The</i>	Hugh McDiarmid	Unknown	1880-?
<i>Christian Worker</i>	C.A. Fleming & H.B. Sherman	Owen Sound, ON	1881, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886
<i>Disciple, The</i>	T.H. Blenus John Gauld	Falmouth, NS River John, NS	1879, 1880
<i>Gospel Vindicator, The</i>	Committee: Joseph Ash, Murdoch McDonnell, E. S. Hubbell	Cobourg, ON	1837, 1838
<i>Ontario Evangelist, (NA)</i>	T.L. Fowler, George Munro	Guelph, ON	1886-1890
<i>Witness of Truth (NA)</i>	David Oliphant	Unknown	1845





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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> In the interest of brevity, to be referred to from this point on as "Disciples in Canada."

<sup>2</sup> Shirley Muir, *Disciples in Canada*, (St. Louis, Missouri: Christian Board of Publication, 1966), 25.

<sup>3</sup> Shirley Muir, *Disciples in Canada*, 25.

<sup>4</sup> Shirley Muir, *Disciples in Canada*, 25.

<sup>5</sup> Shirley Muir, *Disciples in Canada*, 27ff. McIntyre was also a correspondent for Barton Stone's journal, *The Christian Messenger*.

<sup>6</sup> Shirley Muir, *Disciples in Canada*, 27ff

<sup>7</sup> Reuben Butchart, *The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830*, 232.

<sup>8</sup> Shirley Muir, *Disciples in Canada*, 29.

<sup>9</sup> Shirley Muir, *Disciples in Canada*, 31.

<sup>10</sup> E. Sheppard, "Evangelist's Address to the Disciples of Christ in Canada," in *The Advisor*, Vol I, No. 1, (July 1860), 1ff.

<sup>11</sup> Reuben Butchart, *The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830*, 231.

<sup>12</sup> Reuben Butchart, *The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830*, 231.

<sup>13</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), 6.

<sup>14</sup> It should be noted that although non-gendered language is desirable, there were no female editors in any of the papers studied and so editors will be referred in the masculine.

<sup>15</sup> Please refer to Appendix A for a complete bibliographic list of publications examined within the confines of this paper, as proposed by Reuben Butchart in *Disciples History*. Please note that copies of the *Witness of Truth* (1845), the *Christian Mirror*, *Message of Goodwill and Living Laborer* (1845-1882), as well as *The Ontario Evangelist* (1886-1896) were either not found in any available archives or library collection or did not arrive in time for inclusion in this paper.

<sup>16</sup> It should be noted that of the fifteen periodicals examined three were edited by laypeople not designated as "preacher," "evangelist," "minister," or "pastor" by Reuben Butchart in his definitive list on the subject. See Appendix A.

<sup>17</sup> "The Design of 'The Christian,'" in *The Christian*, (Vol III, No. 1, (January 1847), 5, and also D. Oliphant, "Efforts for the Current Year," in *The Christian Mirror*, No 1, Whole Number 61, (1851), 24-26. (Please note that due to the restricted length of this paper, detailed accounts and examples of these instances and like future references cannot be fully herein reproduced. Each publication contained, without exception, similar content on similar themes with very little variation. In the forthcoming discussion, examples will be limited to one or possibly two individual instances for illustrative purposes. However, it should be noted that from the fifteen publications examined (see Appendix A for a list of the years, examined), where one illustration is chosen, ten or

more could have easily been substituted from practically any of the other publications, their individual volumes or issues.)

<sup>18</sup> Dr. Blair, "How to be a Good Public Speaker," in *The Christian*, Vol II, No. 6, (Nov 1840), 163.

<sup>19</sup> "Pulpit Do's and Don'ts," extracted from *Christian Union* reprinted in *The Christian*, Vol III, No. 11, (September 1886), 3.

<sup>20</sup> W. Wentworth Eaton, "Prospectus," in *The Christian*, Vol I, No. 1, (June 1839), 5.

<sup>21</sup> "Help Your Minister," in *The Disciple*, Vol I, No. 2, (March 1879), 5.

<sup>22</sup> "The Second Volume," in *The Bible Indicator*, Vol II, No. 1, (June 1869), 1.

<sup>23</sup> "Queries," in *The Gospel Vindicator*, Vol I, No. 1, (June 5, 1837), 15.

<sup>24</sup> W.W. Eaton, "The Design of 'The Christian,'" in *The Christian*, Vol III, No. 1, (January 1847), 5. It is interesting to note that although the journals use primarily gendered language (ie, references to male readers, male pastors, etc.), and noting also that the editors of the journals were all male, a surprisingly high number of female correspondents can be found usually within the letters to the editor sections or in areas dealing with questions and concerns, or in later journals, missionary activities.

<sup>25</sup> "Prospectus of the Christian Gleaner," in *The Christian Gleaner*, Vol I, No 1, (January 1833), 2.

<sup>26</sup> Reuben Butchart, *The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830*, pg 231.

<sup>27</sup> "Prospectus of the Christian Gleaner," in *The Christian Gleaner*, Vol I, No. 1, (January 1833), 3.

<sup>28</sup> "Our Unity Ought to Be In Faith Not in Opinion," in *The Gospel Vindicator*, Vol I, No. 10 (August 6, 1838), 162

<sup>29</sup> "A Brief Sketch of the Different Kinds of Baptists: The Christian Connexion," in *The Christian*, Vol II, No. 6, (November 1840), 142ff.

<sup>30</sup> "Christian Union," in *The Christian*, Vol IV, No 5, Whole No. 53, (March 1888), 5.

<sup>31</sup> "Christian Union," in *The Christian Messenger*, Vol 9, No. 5, Whole No. 197, (March 1, 1905), 4.

<sup>32</sup> "Editorial," in *The Disciple*, Vol I, No. 1, (February 1879), 5.

<sup>33</sup> "Union – An Interesting Dialogue, Chapter 1: A Meeting of the Members of the Various Churches of the Town of Unity, Dec. 3, 1856," in *The Christian Banner*, Vol XI, No 1, (January 1856), 8. (There is a possible typo on this page, notation in margin of date "1857" which would be correct given the position of this document on the film, following December 1856.)

<sup>34</sup> ie, *The Christian Banner*, March 1856, p71ff, prints a letter from Walter Scott on union, and *Banner of the Faith* reprints "Union Spirit in Pennsylvania," "from a journal published by what is entitled the Christian Connexion" (D. Oliphant) in June 1861, Vol XV, No. 3, 139ff.

<sup>35</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 80.

<sup>36</sup> "Introduction," in *The Gospel Vindicator*, Vol I, No. 1, (June 5, 1837), 1.

<sup>37</sup> I was surprised to find a number of identical articles in a variety of publications concerning *lenses*, years apart. The story claims that the reason there is sectarianism is because all the parties are looking at a white sheet of paper but have on different glasses and so see the sheet as only the color through which they view it. The claim being made is, of course, that Disciples, because they do not wear a sects "glasses" see the sheet for what it really is, white, uncolored by the methods of men.

<sup>38</sup> "Divinity of Our Saviour," in *The Christian Gleaner*, Vol I, No. 9 (February 1838), 208.

<sup>39</sup> W.W. Eaton, "Letter 2: To the Friends of the Present Reformation," in *The Christian*, Vol II, No 7, (November 1840), 156ff.

<sup>40</sup> D. Oliphant, *Christian Banner*, VII, No. 6, (June 1853), 159ff. (Previous pages missing so title unknown.)

<sup>41</sup> "The Design of Immersion," in *The Christian*, Vol III, No. 10, (October 47), 1ff.

<sup>42</sup> Selected, "How to Conduct a Bible Class," in *The Christian*, Vol III, No. 2, Whole No



- 26, (December 1885), 2; and Rev T.L. Cuyler reprinted from *The Evangelist*, "The Rock of Ages," in *The Christian*, Vol III, No. 10, (August 1886), 2.
- <sup>43</sup> J. Lediard, "Woman's Work in the Church," in *Christian Worker*, Vol VI, No. 9, (July 1885), 3. Discussions concerning the development of a new hymnal begin in and around 1840, "Prospectus for a Hymn Book," in *The Christian*, Vol I, No. 9 (February 1840), 216.
- <sup>44</sup> "Religious History," in *Gospel Vindicator*, Vol I, No. 1, (June 5, 1837), 2; and "Attitudes Towards Denominations" in *The Canadian Evangelist*, Vol VII, No. 5 (July 1, 1892), 2ff.
- <sup>45</sup> "Editorial," *The Disciple*, Vol I, No. 1, (Feb 1879), 4.
- <sup>46</sup> "A Creed of Negatives," in *Christian Messenger*, Vol XII, No. 12, Whole No 36, (June 17, 1898), 4.
- <sup>47</sup> "Things as They Are," in *Index and Christian Sentinel*, Vol II, No. 1, (Jan 1882), 6ff.
- <sup>48</sup> "Sunday School Lessons," in *The Christian Messenger*, Vol XIII, No. 1, (Jan 9, 1899), 3; and "The Junior's Jubilee: A Whole Page of Letters and a Little Over for Girls and Boys," in *The Christian Messenger*, Vol V, No 8, Whole No. 104, (April 23, 1901), 7.
- <sup>49</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 35.
- <sup>50</sup> Shirley Muir, *Disciples in Canada*, 32.
- <sup>51</sup> Shirley Muir, *Disciples in Canada*, 34.
- <sup>52</sup> Any issue of the *Canadian Disciple* is evidence of this dramatic change in the content of the Canadian papers.
- <sup>53</sup> Not as common in the early papers are the discussions of the problems and challenges faced by the churches in Canada. However, in later publications, especially in *The Canadian Disciple*, these issues often take the cover story (ie, "Ontario's Problems Common to All," Vol I, No. 7, (July 1, 1923), 1ff)
- <sup>54</sup> *The Christian*, October 1840, 119.
- <sup>55</sup> *The Adviser*, Vol I, No. 1, (July 1860), 1.
- <sup>56</sup> *Christian Worker*, Vol IV, No 4, Whole Number 40, (February 1885), 1ff.
- <sup>57</sup> *The Adviser*, Vol I, No. 2, (August 1860), 84.
- <sup>58</sup> "News of Church and School," in *The Canadian Disciple*, Vol I, No 4, (April 1, 1923), 2ff.
- <sup>59</sup> "The Co-Operation," in *The Advisor*, Vol II, No 6, (November 1862), 1ff.
- <sup>60</sup> "The Annual Meeting," and following articles in *The Canadian Evangelist*, Vol VII, No.s 3 & 4, (June 1892), 1ff; and *The Christian*, Vol XXIX, No. 12, (October 1912), 1ff.
- <sup>61</sup> "B.B. Tyler's Work in Halifax," in *The Christian*, Vol V, No 12, Whole Number 60, (October 1888), 6
- <sup>62</sup> Earlier printings of Disciples identity statements and discussions have proven effective in solidifying the community's understanding of itself. "The Disciples of Christ," in *The Christian*, Vol III, No. 8, (Jun 1886), 1ff. (A series which continues through the following months publications.)
- <sup>63</sup> "Brightest Outlook Ever," *The Christian Messenger*, Vol 9, No 8, Whole Number 200, (April 15, 1905), 4.
- <sup>64</sup> Reuben Butchart, *The Disciples of Christ in Canada Since 1830*, 231-232.
- <sup>65</sup> Where "not found," Butchart's referenced dates included.
- <sup>66</sup> Butchart does not list this publication.
- <sup>67</sup> The publications list Geo. Clendenan as editor in 1874-5.
- <sup>68</sup> This is the only remaining publication existing in Canada today.
- <sup>69</sup> Butchart claims W. Wentworth Eaton as editor at inception (Butchart, 232), however, the first year's issues print Donald Crawford, editor.
- <sup>70</sup> Butchart lists this entry as "The Gleaner" a publication out of Brantford, ON in and around 1886. The date also seems to be in error.

# CAMPBELL BY RAIL

## By Claude Cox

In 1855 Alexander Campbell traveled to Canada (specifically southern Ontario). Interestingly, the trip's timing and itinerary were determined by the completion of the Great Western Railway (GWR), which connected Niagara Falls, Hamilton, London, and Windsor.<sup>1</sup> The completed track opened on January 17, 1854;<sup>2</sup> it carried passengers 408.6 km. (254 miles).

The development of the railways along the American components of Campbell's tour was no less significant for his trip than that on the Canadian side. Campbell, his wife, and daughter Decima, set out from Bethany on Thursday, July 26, 1855. Leaving the station at 9:00am, the Campbells headed north by rail to Cleveland and then east to Buffalo, covering 230 miles in one day.

On Monday, July 30, Campbell arrived at St. Catharines. This was the first stop on the GWR, where its station on Great Western Street is still used by VIA Rail today. At St. Catharines, Campbell 'took the cure' at the medicinal springs while staying at Stephenson House.

On August 6, Campbell traveled to Eramosa: by rail on the GWR from St. Catharines to Galt. From Galt the Campbells traveled by stage coach to Guelph and then by private conveyance to the residence of James Black.<sup>4</sup> The stop at Eramosa included a preaching opportunity on the 7<sup>th</sup> in John Stewart's barn.

The Campbells traveled by steamer to Bowmanville, 75 km. east of Toronto on August 12. There was no rail service yet, but doubtless it was a pleasant trip by boat.<sup>5</sup> On Monday, the 13<sup>th</sup>, the Campbells returned by steamer to Toronto, arriving at 9:00pm. They went on to other cities, eventually winding their way back to Cleveland, Ohio, returning to Bethany by August 24.

Newly built railway lines permitted Campbell, at the age of sixty-six, to make his trip to Canada in 1855. During his stay, at every stop he was visited by church leaders, some of whom had been students at Bethany. That, in turn, was made possible by the recent developments in transportation. New modes of transportation were still decades away, but one imagines that Campbell was quite content with the swiftness of travel offered by the sleek new railways.

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## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> “Alexander Campbell’s Tour of Canada in 1855,” in *The Campbell-Stone Movement in Ontario*, ed. C. Cox (Studies in American Religion, 62; Studies in the Campbell-Stone Movement 1; Lewiston, NY and Queenston, ON: Edwin Mellen, 1995), pp. 61-72.

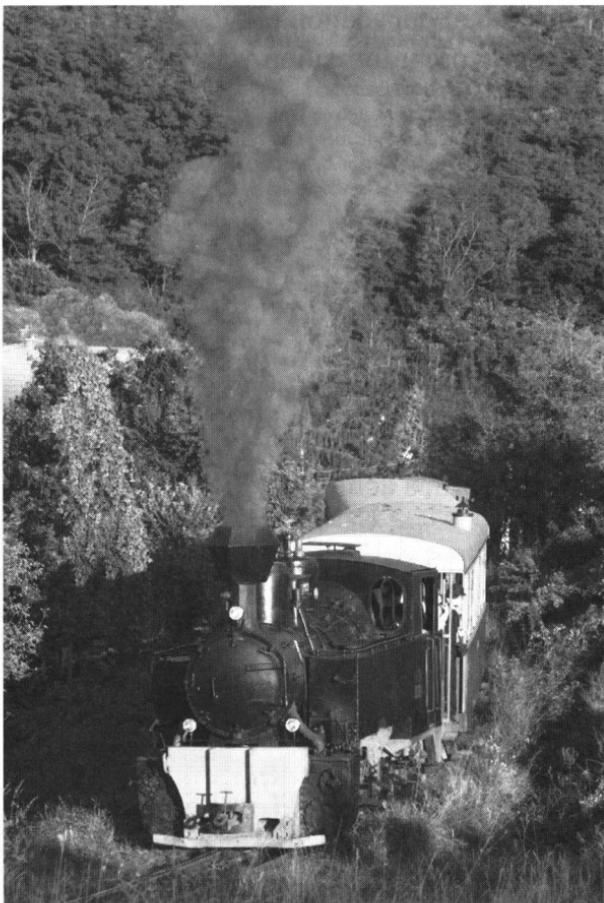
The details of this trip appear as “Notes of a Tour to Canada West—No. 1,” *Millennial Harbinger*, 4<sup>th</sup> series, vol. 5, no. 9 (Sept., 1855), pp. 529-537, available on-line at <http://www.mun.ca/rels/restmov/texts/acampbell/mh1855/NTCW.HTM>

<sup>2</sup> Stevens, *Canadian National*, p.106. The stretch from Niagara Falls to Hamilton opened on Nov. 1, 1853; that as far as London a few weeks later, on Dec. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Morton, *History*, p. 48.

<sup>4</sup> The Galt & Guelph Railway opened between Harrisburg and Galt in Aug. 1854; the line between Galt and Preston opened in Nov. 1855, but the line was not open to Guelph until Sept. 1857; in 1860 the G & GR amalgamated with the GWR. See “The Great Western Railway” at <http://home.primus.ca/~robkath/railgwr.htm>

<sup>5</sup> The Grand Trunk Railway between Toronto and Oshawa—Bowmanville is east of Oshawa—did not open until a year after Campbell’s visit, i.e., in August 1856, according to “The Founding of Pickering Village,” at <http://www.townofajax.com/Page376.aspx>



## DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that the Disciples Seminary Foundation in Claremont, California has one of the largest collections of materials about Disciples outside of the Historical Society? DSF is an institution in covenant with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and works with other ecumenical partners on the west coast. Their collection includes biographical and organizational material, and also contains general religious literature written by Disciples. Students of Disciples history and polity are aided in their studies by the collection, but DSF also makes the materials available to the public at the Foundation offices, or through interlibrary loan. For more information visit [www.dsf.edu](http://www.dsf.edu).

### *Heard it Said*

“No institution can live upon its history. The value of history lies in its power to instruct and inspire toward future achievements. The history of the Church has that power, but the living present must apply it if the hopes of the future are to be realized.”



Disciples Minister Frederick W. Burnham (1871-1960)





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A JOURNEY TO WHOLENESS”

In this centennial year of its founding in 1910, the Council on Christian Unity has produced a series of resources of congregations that celebrate not only the past history, but lift up an exciting vision for the future in witness to unity and wholeness in a divided and fragmented world:

- A commemorative booklet written by Peter Morgan, president emeritus of the Disciples of Christ Historical Society, celebrating the “Century of Witness” (copies available for *free* from address below)
- Worship resources prepared by Ron Allen and Linda McKiernan Allen for use throughout the year highlighting God’s call to unity and reconciliation (available on CCU website at <http://www.disciples.org/ccu/100thAnniversaryResources.html>)
- Call to Unity, a publication that brings together the presentations and report from the 2nd Century Visioning Conference in June, 2010 that looks to the journey ahead for Disciples in our witness to Christian unity in the 21st century (copies may be ordered from the address below for \$6.50 per copy).

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