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GO FORTH WITH GOD!

THE HISTORY OF
THE BAY OF QUINTE CONFERENCE
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA
1925 - 1975

by William Joseph Price

Thesis
presented to the Faculty of Theology
of Saint Paul University, Ottawa
as partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy

Victoria, British Columbia, 1980

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W. Joseph Price

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GLOSSARY

The following words or terms, in common use in the United Church of Canada, are explained for readers of other religious traditions. Other terms are defined within the text as they occur.

Basis of Union -- The basic 'law' of the United Church, agreed to by the three uniting churches as the basis on which the union was to take place. It can be changed only by the General Council with the consent of a majority of the Presbyteries.

Conference -- The second of the four courts of the United Church. It is comprised of a number of Presbyteries (seven in Bay of Quinte), and covers a relatively large area (in some cases a province, as Saskatchewan; or provinces, as the Maritimes which consists of Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Bermuda, and part of the Gaspé region of Quebec). It has the oversight of the religious life of the churches within its bounds, and is responsible to ordain and settle ministers on the pastoral charges.

General Council -- The highest of the four courts of the United Church. It is comprised of the twelve Conferences, with equal representation of laity and clergy. It has the oversight of the Conferences, and is responsible for matters respecting the doctrine, worship, membership and government of the United Church.

GLOSSARY

Memorial -- A petition or resolution sent to a higher court of the Church, usually from the Conference to the General Council, requesting a specific action.

Moderator -- The presiding officer of the General Council, elected to the position for a limited term from one General Council to the next.

Pastoral Charge -- The basic unit of organization in the United Church. It is comprised of one or more congregations or churches, served by a minister, and governed by an Official Board.

Presbytery -- The third of the four courts of the United Church. It is comprised of a number of pastoral charges within a geographical area, and has responsibility for the oversight of those pastoral charges. There are seven Presbyteries in the Bay of Quinte Conference: Belleville, Cobourg, Kingston, Lindsay, Oshawa, Peterborough, and Renfrew.

Several abbreviations are used in the footnotes; they include the following:

B.Q.A. -- Bay of Quinte Conference Archives

U.C.A. -- United Church of Canada Archives

U.C.C. -- United Church of Canada

GO FORTH WITH GOD!

INTRODUCTION

"Go forth with God! The day is now that you must meet the test." These words, from the anthem sung at the celebration of the Bay of Quinte Conference's Golden Jubilee in Peterborough on May 25th, 1975, supply not only the title of this thesis, but also reveal something of the spirit of the pilgrimage of a people of God who, through the times of testing, went forth in the confidence that they were not alone in the adventure.

The reason for this research into the history of the Bay of Quinte Conference is to examine and assess certain aspects and events in the life of the United Church of Canada in this region during the period 1925-1975, to illustrate the fact that Church Union was a success, and to note the development of the Conference over those fifty years.

It is the writer's considered opinion that the subject of this thesis is of sufficient importance to warrant the research and study given to it. It is concerned with one of the most historic areas in the province of Ontario and one of the most distinctive parts of the United Church. The Bay of Quinte region was one of the first districts of Ontario to be settled, and was the cradle of religion in the province,

but it is an area that has been largely neglected by church historians for more than a century.

Inasmuch as no previous in-depth study of the United Church of Canada has been attempted in this geographical area, the Bay of Quinte, or in this time-frame, 1925-1975, it is a relatively unexplored and virgin territory for the church historian. Therefore this thesis should not only establish a 'beach-head', but should also expand the frontiers of knowledge in this area of research. While two early Methodist histories have included the Bay of Quinte region, as well as other parts of the province, in their material, they were mainly biographical in manner and chronological in approach.¹ They were written a century ago, and do not deal with the subject in the same way or on the same level as is undertaken in this thesis. Thus there is no previous literature in this field to be surveyed.

The method used in this research is a dual approach, chronological and thematic, set in the context of the geographic, demographic, economic, political, social, and religious environment. Within the framework of chronology the several themes of the thesis will be explored, discussed, and assessed. Time, as 'chronos', can be measured by a clock or

1. John Carroll, Case and His Cotemporaries [sic], 5 vols., Toronto, Samuel Rose, 1867-1877; and George Playter, The History of Methodism in Canada, Toronto, Green, 1862

a calendar; but time, as 'kairos', can also be measured by its content. The latter concept ('kairos') is characteristic of the biblical understanding of time in terms of opportunity, response, and fulfillment, and seemed to be appropriate to the subject matter of this thesis. The events of these formative fifty years have taken place within time, and will be fitted into the chronological structure according to the pattern in the Table of Contents.

The subject has been researched by a detailed study of the considerable body of material listed in the Bibliography. This material was made available in several places: the United Church Archives in Toronto, the Bay of Quinte Conference Archives in Kingston, the libraries of Queen's University in Kingston and the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, as well as the public libraries in Kingston and Victoria. The primary sources were mainly in the form of the Minutes of the General Council of the United Church, the Bay of Quinte Conference, and the seven Presbyteries of the Conference; as well as some correspondence and personal interviews, although these latter two sources proved to be less productive than was at first supposed. The Minutes, as the official documents of the United Church, will be assigned the most 'weight', the other material is supplementary and will be given less 'weight' in reaching any conclusion or making any assessment.

The criteria used to select the chronological divisions of the thesis were simple and natural: the progression of movement from church union through the depression and war years, continuing into the post-war years of growth, to the years of change and challenge. The particular themes were selected from a number of possible choices because they are representative of the Conference's response to a given situation, or because of the impact they made on the Conference and the Church as a whole at a certain point in history.

The thesis opens with an overview of the Bay of Quinte Conference to 1925, and provides the context for the ensuing study. The pioneers who laid the foundation for the future of this part of the province are considered. These were the people who shaped the land and were shaped by it, and who gave substance and colour to the economic, political, social, and religious life of the region, and who are the ancestors of the present-day Quinte people.

The United Church of Canada came into being on June 10th, 1925, bringing together into one new Church all the Methodists, most of the Congregationalists, and two-thirds of the Presbyterians in Canada. The steps leading to this union are reviewed, as is the original organization and the later consolidation of the Conference. The doctrine and polity of the United Church are outlined, indicating the unique contributions of the three uniting churches. Some of the ways in

which the Conference was determined to make church union a success are noted, and these provide some insight into the Bay of Quinte as a distinct and unique region within the United Church of Canada.

The Great Depression was the focal point of conversation, concern, and action in the 1930s. The Church, as the whole country, was deeply affected by this economic and social tragedy. The United Church, just barely consolidated after Union and just beginning to explore its potential, was rudely jolted by the sudden and unexpected demands made upon its resources, but it survived the Depression and emerged from the experience with a new strength and solidarity that convinced both itself and its skeptics that the experiment of church union was indeed a success. It was a decade that tested the spirit of the young Church in its response to the plight of the drought-stricken West, and in its involvement with the provincial government over the issues of the Lord's Day and the liquor traffic.

The United Church, born in the period of optimism that prevailed after World War I, was a peace-minded church that shared a mistaken belief with much of North America that it was safely sheltered from the affairs of the world. The Church's attitude to the pacifists, the armament makers, and the League of Nations is explored, as is its response to the war and its involvement in the struggle in Europe and on

the 'home front', and its plans for the post-war world.

The Church recognized the basic importance of a good organization to confront the coming challenge, and when the war ended in 1945 it was poised on the threshold of a period of unprecedented opportunity and expansion with its wartime energies and resources ready to be channelled into the pursuits of peace. The spectacular growth of a debt-free Church in an era of optimism and prosperity is discussed, as is the manner in which it contended with the changed and changing conditions in the years 1945-1960.

The membership, finances, and property holdings of the Church were lifted to record levels, but this prosperity tended to foster an unfortunate spirit of self-satisfaction just as it was entering its own 'mid-life crisis' from 1960 to 1975 in an increasingly secular society. The Conference was faced with three specific challenges in these years: how to remedy the unacceptable situation of the overchurched rural areas; how to realize its desire for more self-determination within an expanding and centralized bureaucracy; and how to diminish the scandal of a divided Protestantism in an ecumenical age. These challenges were met by three responses: realignment, regionalism, and reunion. Of these, the first two were reasonably successful, the third only partially so.

This, then, is an introduction to the history of the Bay of Quinte Conference from 1925 to 1975, from the time of

Church Union to the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of that union. This is the account of how the United Church in the region met the tests of those fifty years, how it changed and how it remained the same, and how, through it all, it went forth with God.

CHAPTER I

THE BAY OF QUINTE CONFERENCE: AN OVERVIEW

This chapter will offer an overview of the Bay of Quinte Conference to 1925, the year of Church Union. It will consider the pioneers of the region -- those people who laid the foundations for the future of this part of the province of Ontario, who shaped the land and were shaped by it, and who gave substance and colour to its economic, political, social and religious life. It will supply a 'taste' of the area, rather than a detailed account of any of the topics, and will provide the context for the study of the Bay of Quinte Conference that follows.

1. The Geographic Background

To appreciate the history of any area it is first necessary to be aware of its geography. In the nature of things geography precedes history and, in fact, provides the stage upon which the drama of history is acted out.

The opening words of the Bible are both a theological and a geographical statement: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" (Gen. 1:1). It was in this world that God placed man, his creature 'par excellence', to live; and it was to this world, "when the time had fully come"

(Gal. 4:4), that God sent his Son to call men to live life in its fulness and to respond to his missionary challenge. The Jesus of history is also the Jesus of geography; and while the geographical setting is not of the utmost importance, it is, nevertheless, significant, for while he transcends both time and space it was in a certain time and in a certain place that Jesus lived. Thus history, geography and man all have their roles affirmed in the Bible.

It is not surprising, then, that man finds a fascination with that in which he has his roots, and a curiosity about his own country. Because geography has been such a prominent factor in the history of the Bay of Quinte region, it is both appropriate and essential to give some attention to the geography of that part of the province that is the physical setting of this thesis.

The Bay of Quinte Conference is one of twelve regional districts of the United Church of Canada. It is that part of eastern and central Ontario that includes the thirteen counties of Renfrew, Lanark, Leeds, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington, Hastings, Prince Edward, Northumberland, Durham, Ontario, Victoria, Peterborough and Haliburton, as well as several townships in York and Nipissing. This area of about 20,000 square miles (the size of Nova Scotia), stretches from five miles east of Toronto on its western boundary to twenty miles west of Ottawa on its eastern boundary, and from the

Lake Ontario and St. Lawrence River shore on the south to Algonquin Park on the north.

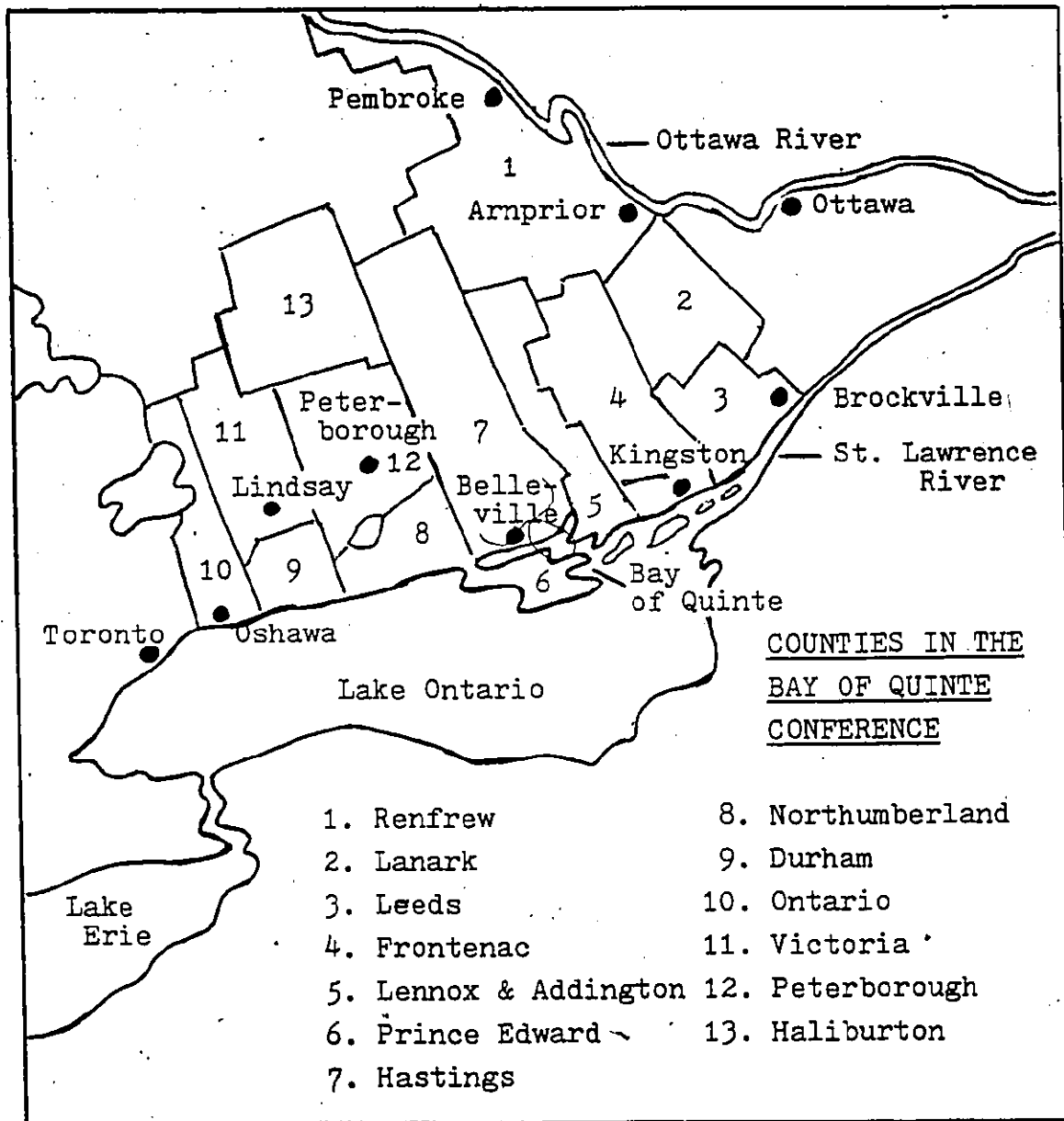


Figure 1 -- Map of Counties and Cities in the Bay of Quinte Conference.^a

a. Province of Ontario, Department of Lands and Forests, Map 21, 1964

Geographically, the Bay of Quinte Conference takes its name from the body of water that separates the counties of Hastings and Lennox and Addington from Prince Edward. Linguistically, the name 'Quinte' is derived from 'Kente', a seventeenth century Iroquois settlement in what is now Prince Edward county, and the site of a Sulpician mission.¹ Historically, 'Bay of Quinte' was the name given to the first, and the largest, circuit of the Canada District of the New York Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1791.² It has been in use ever since, as the name of a circuit, a district, or a conference.

This area of Ontario includes parts of three major geographic regions -- the Canadian Shield, the Great Lakes, and the St. Lawrence Valley. The Canadian Shield,³ a huge, saucer-shaped semi-circle of Precambrian granite (the oldest in the world, 2½ billion years), stretches from the Atlantic to the Arctic, covering half of Canada and all but the southwestern wedge of the Ontario peninsula. The 'Grenville Province' (the youngest of the Precambrian granite, 950 million

1. James A. Eadie, Historical Glimpses of Lennox and Addington County, Napanee, Lennox and Addington County Council, 1964, p. 8.

2. George F. Playter, The History of Methodism in Canada, Toronto, Anson Green, 1862, p. 21.

3. Barbara Moon, The Canadian Shield, Toronto, McClelland, 1970, pp. 18-32.

years) is the geologic designation for that part of the Shield that covers half of the Bay of Quinte Conference. Lake Ontario, the smallest and most easterly of the Great Lakes, together with the St. Lawrence River forms the southern boundary of the Conference.

The present topographical features of the region,⁴ with its wide variety of landforms, are mainly the result of glacial action of some 10,000 years ago. Some of the finest agricultural land in the province, the deep clay plains, is found along the shore of Lake Ontario from Pickering to Belleville, in much of central Hastings, and in Renfrew county along the Ottawa River. Some of the poorest and most unproductive land, the shallow limestone plains, covers more than 2,500 square miles of eastern Ontario including much of Prince Edward and the southern townships of Frontenac, Lennox and Addington, and Lanark. To the north, at the edge of the Shield, the rolling farmland of the counties of Northumberland, Durham, Victoria and Peterborough gives way to the granite outcroppings of Haliburton and western Renfrew, and the northern townships of Lanark, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington, Hastings and Peterborough. Apart from a few pockets

4. Donald F. Putnam and Donald P. Kerr, A Regional Geography of Canada, Toronto, Dent, 1956, pp. 185-200; and L. G. Reeds, 'The Environment', in L. Gentilcore, ed., Studies in Canadian Geography: Ontario, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1972, pp. 1-4

of good soil there is little natural encouragement for agriculture in this area. Still further north the Great Lakes and Ottawa Valley drainage basins meet in Algonquin Park, the northern boundary of the Conference. This is a vastly different land from the cultivated and settled region to the south.

The climate of the southern section is temperate, with no great extremes of weather, and an adequate and fairly evenly distributed rainfall. A relatively long and usually dependable growing season, together with some excellent farmland and easy access from the south and the east, made the area attractive to settlement.

2. The Demographic Roots

Landform and climate played important roles in determining the demographic shape of the Conference. Apart from the Shield, which was a barrier to settlement, Eastern Ontario presented an attractive prospect to those who, two centuries ago, were seeking a fresh start. "A new land," noted T. R. Glover, "is not always ready or comfortable; and as you cannot at once fit the land to yourself, you have to fit yourself to the land."⁵ In thus fitting themselves, the early settlers both shaped, and were shaped by, their new land.

5. Terrot Reaveley Glover, The Ancient World, London, Penguin Books, 1944, p. 10

Long before the white settlers came, and from as early as 5,000 B.C., Ontario had been inhabited by Indians.⁶ These were the nomadic Laurentians who were followed by the agricultural Woodland tribes, the first to establish primitive settlements. By 1,000 A.D. there was record of the Iroquois, the Algonquin, and the Huron, but their descendents now number less than one percent of the population.

The first Europeans to see eastern and central Ontario were the French explorers, fur traders, and a few Jesuit missionaries. However, apart from the Jesuit mission at Ste. Marie among the Hurons, no attempt was made to organize permanent settlements west of Montreal. The only community of any significance was Fort Frontenac (now Kingston), settled in 1673 as a military base and trading post. Apart from this, settlement during the French regime was negligible. There was no immediate increase following the Conquest in the 1770s, and in fact there was little more than a replacement of French troops by British in the garrison town of Kingston.

The first real colonization of the area began after the American Revolution, with the arrival of some 10,000 Loyalists from New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania in 1784. These were soon followed by other Americans who were looking

6. Victor A. Konrad, 'Prehistoric Settlements in Ontario', in J. David Wood, ed., Perspectives on Landscape and Settlement in Nineteenth Century Ontario, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1975, p. 9

for cheap land. Kingston, already an established community, was one of the main ports of entry. The British military policy dictated the process and pattern of settlement, for its first concern was "to establish a colony able to meet the threat of an independent, expanding United States."⁷

In 1791 the separate province of Upper Canada was created. It had a population of 25,000, of whom most were United Empire Loyalists.⁸ Other settlers continued to come from the United States, including many of German background, and the first immigrants from Britain began to arrive. Townships along the St. Lawrence and the lakeshore were surveyed and settled, and to the north military settlements were founded by disbanded British soldiers who, by design rather than by chance, formed a ready-made militia in the event of an attack from the United States. Another aspect of government policy was to settle the newcomers in townships according to religious and ethnic composition.

The most distinctive feature of the province's population was its overwhelming British-American foundation, mainly Loyalist in background, with a determination to be a people different from those of the United States. However,

7. Louis Gentilcore, 'Settlement', in L. Gentilcore, ed., Studies in Canadian Geography: Ontario, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1972; p. 23

8. Arthur R. M. Lower, Canadians in the Making, Toronto, Longmans, 1958, pp. 174-176

the Loyalist element was soon overtaken by other Americans who came to the new province in larger numbers. By 1810, the population of Upper Canada was 75,000. Of these, 15,000 were English, Scottish, and German, and the other 60,000 were American (of whom only 15,000 were Loyalists). In only twenty years, from 1790 to 1810, the population had tripled from 25,000 to 75,000.

The war with the United States, which broke out in 1812, brought the American immigration to a temporary halt, while the need to defend their country from American aggression strengthened the allegiance of the new settlers to their adopted land. In 1814, after the war, "there was no doubt that Ontario was something different from the United States, a divergence to be strengthened by subsequent immigration from the British Isles."⁹ A new wave of immigrants from Ireland, forced from their homeland by the terrible potato famine of the 1820s, came to Ontario and settled in the counties of Lanark and Peterborough.

In 1825, Kingston was Ontario's largest community with a population of 3,000. Its good harbour, and its strategic location at the junction of the St. Lawrence and Cataraqui rivers and Lake Ontario, as well as its situation midway between York (Toronto) and Montreal at a time when the

9. Louis Gentilcore, Op. Cit., p. 28

province's business, trade and financial operations were in the hands of the Montreal merchants, made Kingston the province's undisputed commercial centre."¹⁰ For three years, from 1841 to 1843, Kingston enjoyed the prestige of being the provincial capital.

Settlers from Britain and the United States found it easy to reach their new home in Ontario. However, this easy access made possible an equally easy exodus:

A study of the demographic history suggests that many wealthier, better educated immigrants, especially those from industrial and south-eastern England, moved on at once, or within a few years, through Upper Canada to the American midwest. The residual, largely agricultural or labouring groups of immigrants, tended to be from the poorer more marginal areas of the United Kingdom, especially Scotland, and from Ireland. The strong effects of the resulting preponderance of colonial American, Scottish and Ulster traditions in Upper Canada's population is still evident in Ontario, in accent, in religious prejudice and preference, and in many other ways.¹¹

Those who remained in the province began to acquire the distinctive attributes of a new people, a combination of American and British traits, that is still in evidence. At the time of Confederation in 1867, Ontario, despite the influence of heavy British and American immigration, had developed its own institutions and identity that were neither British nor American. Gentilcore describes the Ontario of Confederation:

10. Louis Gentilcore, Op. Cit., p. 26

11. Andrew H. Clark, and Donald Q. Innis, in John Warkentin, ed., Canada: A Geographical Interpretation, Toronto, Methuen, 1968, p. 40

"Less radical than the United States, less conservative than Britain, it had become a community old enough to have its own character."¹²

While Canada and Ontario have both shown a steady growth since Confederation, the Bay of Quinte region has declined in population since 1891, as Table I, below, shows:

Table I -- Population Changes in Canada, Ontario, and Bay of Quinte from 1871 to 1921.^a

	<u>Canada</u>	<u>Ontario</u>	<u>Quinte</u>
1871	3,485,761	1,620,851	410,342
1881	4,324,810	1,923,228	450,162
1891	4,833,239	2,114,321	477,223
1901	5,371,315	2,182,947	462,823
1911	7,206,643	2,523,274	436,998
1921	8,788,483	2,933,662	435,400

a. Census of Canada: 1871, 1881, 1891, 1901, 1911, 1921, Ottawa, Queen's/King's Printer, passim

Two reasons may be suggested for this decline: first, while there was an increase in immigration in the late 1890s and early 1900s, the Bay of Quinte region was bypassed for other parts of Ontario and the newly opened Canadian West; and, second, many people from the Quinte area, especially from the poorer agricultural sections, joined this move to the West

¹² Louis Gentilcore, Op. Cit., p. 35

with the result that there was a decline of 41,823 in the population from 1891 to 1921. It was not until 1931 that the population of the Bay of Quinte region showed an increase over the previous census (453,118), and it was 1941 before the total (477,903) surpassed the previous high (477,223) of 1891.¹³

The Bay of Quinte region in 1921, much more so than either Ontario or Canada, was predominantly British in racial origin, as Table II, below, indicates:

Table II -- Racial Origins in Canada, Ontario, and Bay of Quinte in Census Year 1921; and Ratio to the Population (in brackets).^a

	Canada	Ontario	Quinte
British ^b	4,826,950 (55%)	2,267,553 (77%)	377,664 (87%)
French	2,452,751 (28%)	248,275 (09%)	18,065 (04%)
German	294,636 (03%)	130,545 (04%)	13,275 (03%)
Dutch	117,506 (01%)	50,512 (02%)	8,843 (02%)
Other	1,096,640 (13%)	236,777 (08%)	17,553 (04%)
Total	8,788,483 (100)	2,933,662 (100)	435,400 (100)

a. Census of Canada: 1921, Ottawa, King's Printer

b. British includes English, Irish, and Scotch

The Bay of Quinte region was also predominantly rural, with approximately 60% classed as rural, 20% as town, and 20% as

13. Census of Canada: 1931, 1941, Ottawa, King's Printer, passim

city. By the 1920s this area, first settled by resourceful and energetic pioneers, had become home for many people who lived at or below a marginal subsistence level. The shallow and unproductive land created an economic disparity,¹⁴ and gave the region the reputation of 'the poor man of Ontario'.

3. The Economic Environment

The resources of the Canadian Shield have contributed significantly to the economy of the region, first the furs, then the timber and minerals, later the hydro-electric power, and finally the 'scenery' which has fostered the tourist and recreation industry and may eventually prove to be the most substantial of all the area's assets. The Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River, together with the Shield, have been influential in the development of the area's economy. These have shaped the patterns of exploration and settlement, of transportation and development, and have had a lasting effect on the people who have chosen to live in the region.

The rudimentary foundations of the region's economy, as noted by Professor H. A. Innis,¹⁵ were laid by the French fur traders of the seventeenth century. In the 1660s Dutch

14. R. C. Langman, Poverty Pockets, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1975, pp. 9, 53

15. H. A. Innis, 'An Introduction to the Economic History of Ontario', in Morris Zaslow, ed., Profiles of a Province: Studies in the History of Ontario, Toronto, Ontario Historical Society, 1967, pp. 145-150

and British competition with the French for the furs in the north-shore area of Lake Ontario started the struggle between New York and Montreal for control of the fur trade that dominated the early economic history of Ontario. In 1758 Fort Frontenac, built to check the British economic intrusion from New York, was captured, and British traders pushed into the new territory. By the 1770s the American Revolution forced the British to use Montreal rather than New York as the port from which to ship their furs to England. This led to a further development of the Ottawa-St. Lawrence river system, and helped prepare the way for the western expansion of settlement into the province.

After the War of 1812 settlement continued, and the new immigrants from Britain cleared the land and planted the crops, and with these basics began the timber and wheat export trade, the staple of the young province's economy for the next century. With the depletion of the great stands of white pine in the Ottawa Valley by indiscriminate cutting the source of 'square timber' vanished, but a new market opened up with the demand for sawn lumber in the building trade. This fostered the growth of mill towns along the rivers, and led to the building of railways as an all-season means of getting the lumber to market. The railways also served as an incentive to develop the mines of the area, and to provide spurts of growth and moments of hope for many communities who

looked to them as their 'making or breaking' -- if they were on the main line they prospered, if the railway passed them by they faded into second-class villages.

In addition to agriculture, lumbering and mining, there were many thriving local industries. Every town had its saw mill and grist mill, and small manufacturing plants, tanneries, knitting mills, distilleries and breweries were common. And the omnipresent cheese factory and the general store were familiar sights in every village.

The government committed two serious inter-related blunders in the 1850s that had a long-lasting effect on the province's economy. The first was to open up the unsuitable lands of the Shield for settlement, and the second was its inept management of what must have appeared to be inexhaustible forests. The settler soon discovered how inhospitable the Shield was to farming, so he turned to the woods and the lumber camps for his livelihood. Florence Murray comments on this sorry situation:

The timber on the Ottawa-Huron tract was almost priceless in value and should have provided an enduring asset for future generations, but almost nothing was done to preserve it. Forests were ruthlessly destroyed by lumberman and settler alike. ... When the timber had been cleared the settler lost his market and his winter job at the same time, and often had to abandon his clearing and follow the lumberman, or remain and starve on his worn-out farm.¹⁶

16. Florence B. Murray, 'Agricultural Settlement on the Canadian Shield', in Morris Zaslow, Op. Cit., p. 182

Throughout much of this area is the pathetic evidence of broken dreams, witnessed in abandoned farms, rural depopulation, dispirited people, and the pockets of poverty that are the legacy of greedy timber barons and incompetent and shortsighted politicians.

4. The Political Tradition

The Constitutional Act of 1791 divided the old province of Quebec into the two new provinces of Upper Canada (Ontario) and Lower Canada (Quebec), and created a political division that emphasized the differences in race, religion, and language. The Act made Upper Canada home to 25,000 persons, many of them United Empire Loyalists. Among the few things the Loyalists brought with them from the United States was a strong tradition of local democratic government.

Soon after they arrived they sought a more liberal form of government apart from that of Quebec, a government in which there would be British law, local courts, freehold land tenure, some local power in judicial and administrative matters, and financial help for building roads, schools, and churches. This amounted to a 'separatist movement' on the part of the province of Upper Canada from the 'mother colony' of Quebec.

The Act served to strengthen a growing conservatism in the province in both politics and society; and while it

did grant a measure of representative government through an elected assembly, it was not responsible government since the effective power remained in the hands of a British governor and his appointed executive. The position of the Church of England in Canada, as the self-styled 'established church', was also strengthened by setting aside one-seventh of all future land grants as 'reserves' for the support of a Protestant clergy. This became an area of gross abuse and misinterpretation by the Anglican governors of Upper Canada who tended to grant these reserves exclusively to their own Church, while ignoring the rights of the other rapidly increasing Protestant denominations in the province.

In 1812, on the eve of the war with the United States, the population of Upper Canada was 75,000; of whom 60,000 were of American origin, but only 15,000 of these were 'Loyalists'. This American majority, individualistic and independent and many holding republican sympathies, was cause for concern at this time of crisis. However, somewhat to the government's surprise, these American Upper Canadians proved loyal to their adopted country during the war, and the war affirmed the allegiance of the new settlers to their new country. The War of 1812, like the coming of the Loyalists, left an indelible mark on Ontario. Along the shores of Lake Ontario and the St. Lawrence River are many reminders of the time that Ontario was actually attacked by the United States.

The Americans gained little from this ill-conceived and badly bungled war, but Ontario gained much in the realization of a new sense of maturity, identity and purpose, and in a determined resolve not to become 'American'.

The aftermath of the War of 1812 saw the emergence of a strong anti-American sentiment. This was manifested in several ways; among them the appearance of the 'Tories', a very pro-British and conservative political party, and the 'Family Compact', so called because of political preference given to friends and relatives. The Family Compact gained control of political appointments, crown land grants, business and education, while at the same time failing completely to grasp the concept of democracy as held by the vast majority of the people. It was such things as the Family Compact, with its attendant abuses and arrogance, that led to demands for a more democratic form of government.

The years 1820-1849 mark the struggle of the Reformers for responsible government. In 1828 the Reformers gained a majority in the elected Assembly, and in 1830 their fiery leader, William Lyon Mackenzie, led a none-too-successful rebellion. One positive result of the rebellion, however, was Lord Durham's investigation into the causes of discontent in both Upper and Lower Canada. His famous 'Report' recommended changes in government, and laid the foundation for responsible government by making the Legislative Council accountable

to the elected Assembly rather than to the appointed governor. Durham also recommended the reunion of the two Canadas.

The Act of Union of 1841 created the united province of Canada, with Lower Canada becoming Canada East (Quebec), and Upper Canada becoming Canada West (Ontario). The new province had a governor (appointed by Britain), a Legislative Council and an Executive Council (appointed by the governor), and a Legislative Assembly of eighty-four elected members, forty-two from each of the Canadas. The Canada West reformers greeted Lord Durham's proposals with enthusiasm, and supported the union; but Canada East, with its considerably larger population, was dissatisfied with the equal representation. In June, 1841, the government met in Kingston, the new capital. By 1848, under the pressure of reformers from both Canadas, self-government was granted to the united province in all domestic affairs. The Rebellion Losses Bill of 1849 acknowledged the principle of responsible government, and provided for administrative, judicial, and financial reforms. Yet the Bill failed to resolve the racial, religious, and regional divisions within the united province.

In 1867, under the terms of the British North America Act, the four provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Canada East, and Canada West were united into one country, Canada. The province of Ontario, with its new name, came into being in 1867, as did Quebec. The Act, among other things, created

two levels of government (provincial and federal) beyond the municipal level, and gave the provinces jurisdiction over social, cultural, educational, and other strictly provincial matters.¹⁷

Ontario's political issues have often had a regional, racial, and religious content, and the voting patterns of the province have reflected the relationship among these factors.

R. J. Drummond makes this observation:

Between 1867 and 1872 the Liberals had allied themselves with the mainly Methodist and Presbyterian farmers of the rural south-west; but in the 1872-1896 period (the Mowat era) they had added the support of a large segment of the Catholic population -- increasingly French -- in eastern and northern Ontario. They lost some Protestant support to the Conservatives, who were at first more closely identified with the Anglican and Roman Catholic 'establishments'.¹⁸

Since the turn of the century the Conservatives have, with the exception of the post-war phenomenon of the United Farmers Party from 1919 to 1923 (and the Hepburn years, 1934-1943), gradually increased their power base in all regions of the province, especially in the rural central and eastern counties in which the Bay of Quinte Conference is situated. Their strength is also spread among a broad spectrum of the

17. The material in pages 16-20 is drawn from two sources: W. Stewart Wallace, A History of the Canadian People, Toronto, Copp Clark, 1930, pp. 199-244; and J. A. Lower, Canada: An Outline History, Toronto, Ryerson, 1966, pp. 83-99

18. R. J. Drummond, 'The Blueing of Ontario', in Donald C. MacDonald, ed., Government and Politics in Ontario, Toronto, Macmillan, 1975, p. 298

religious and socio-economic sector.

A study by Professor John Meisal of Queen's University reveals the same relationship between racial and religious factors and voting patterns as the earlier survey by Drummond. Meisal shows that the Liberals are strongest among Roman Catholics and Jews, and among people of French and Italian background; while the Conservatives find their main support among the major Protestant denominations, and among those of British and German origin.¹⁹

Despite changes in the province's economy, and in the religious and racial composition of its people, Ontario has shown a remarkable political stability. Only once since Confederation has a party other than the Liberals or the Conservatives formed the government. That was in the post-war period of social and political unrest, a time of inflation and unemployment during the transition to a peace-time economy, when a new party, the United Farmers of Ontario, won the provincial election of 1919, and remained in power until 1923 when 'things returned to normal' under the Conservatives.

5. The Social Milieu

The natural settlement, as has been noted, followed the waterway of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario, the

19. C. F. J. Whebell, 'The Political-Territorial Structure', in Louis Gentilcore, ed., Op. Cit., pp. 83-84

area known as 'The Front'. This was early Ontario and it took its colour from the people who first settled it, the Loyalists from the United States. These settlers inherited an empty land, a land that was theirs to make of it what they would. The noted Canadian historian, A. R. M. Lower, says:

In Upper Canada, the Loyalists had a clear field. There was no one to push aside, neither English nor French -- just the trees. Since most of the arrivals had come from the edges of settlement, they just went on with the task of pioneering.²⁰

And this task of pioneering left little time for any social life. Such social life as there was tended to be in connection with the daily work. The land-clearing, the wood-cutting, the barn-raising, the threshing, the work 'bee' brought the men together, while the women 'visited' as they prepared a hearty meal to be enjoyed by all at the end of a long, hard day. Then might follow an evening of 'home-made' entertainment, often folk dancing to the music of a fiddle.

After Confederation, the content of Ontario's social life was enriched by the immigrants from Britain and Europe. These newcomers brought with them a diversity of cultural and religious traditions, and a colourful variety of talent, experience, manners, and morals that were woven into the fabric of their adopted land. Some townships were settled by people of one racial or religious group, and these developed their

20. A. R. M. Lower, Op. Cit., p. 156

own distinct 'sub-cultures', remnants of which are still in evidence.

One of the first desires of the people, following the initial stages of settlement, was for schools and education. There were educational opportunities for the children of the 'well-to-do', but few such opportunities for the children of the 'common man'. This was changed under the reforms of Egerton Ryerson, a Methodist minister of United Empire Loyalist background, who was the founder and, for thirty-two years (1844-1876), the able and energetic administrator of Ontario's school system. It was a practical and non-sectarian system, with courses in English, mathematics, geography, history, and religious knowledge. Under the School Act of 1843 the Roman Catholic Church was granted the right to operate separate schools, and were given a measure of provincial financial support.

Since Confederation, Ontario has advanced education from the privilege of the few to the right of the many. However, relatively few children in the mid-nineteenth century were able to continue beyond public (primary) school, but by 1900, as job requirements became more demanding, there was an appreciable increase in high school (secondary) education. In the field of higher education there are three examples of interest and importance for the Bay of Quinte Conference: these are, Albert College, established by the Methodists in

1857 at Belleville; Victoria University, founded in 1836 by the Methodists at Cobourg as Upper Canada Academy (and later transferred to Toronto); and Queen's University, established by the Presbyterians in 1840 at Kingston.

Ontario's progress was the kind that North Americans could understand and appreciate. It consisted in such measurables as growth, development, and increase in wealth and possessions, and left little time for, and offered little encouragement to, some of life's gentler and more creative aspects. The province's early cultural development came mainly from Britain. For many years British trained schoolmasters guided the minds of impressionable young Canadians and, together with clergymen from 'the old country', exercised considerable influence in the acquiring of 'good taste' in cultural matters.

Preferential trade agreements gave British publishers an exceptional opportunity to dominate the Canadian market. This they did until the 1880s when the Methodist-owned Ryerson Press began to promote Canadian literature and to encourage Canadian authors, many of whom owed their start to this church-sponsored support of literature. The local church often served as the village library, making available the books that expanded the people's limited cultural horizons. The local church was also the sponsor of lectures, concerts, and choral societies, and thus fulfilled its historic role as

the 'mother of the arts'. For many people, however, 'culture' was to be found in the saloon, the hockey rink, or at the fall fair.

The social life of any people is shaped by the needs, problems, interests, and work which fill their days. Schools, churches, business, and government also shape the life of the people. So does war. Ontario was still predominantly British when World War I broke out in 1914. The response to the German threat was immediate, widespread, and positive. More than 250,000 Ontarians enlisted in the service of 'king and country', and many of these 'made the supreme sacrifice'. Despite a large diversion of her manpower during the war, Ontario continued to grow and prosper and at war's end in 1918 there was a general feeling of relief and of satisfaction in a job well done in 'the war to end wars'. Disillusionment would come soon enough, but meanwhile the people of the province enjoyed their peace and prosperity. This was reflected in the clothes and customs of the 1920s, and in the generally high standard of living. The automobile and the radio made their original impact on the province in these years, an impact that would revolutionize both transportation and communication, and change the social life of the people.

By the time of Confederation, Ontario was becoming an urbanized province. Most of the agricultural land was under cultivation, the frontier had been 'tamed', and the towns and

cities were attracting the young men and women of the rural areas with opportunities for employment. They also offered young people a chance to break away from family and community traditions and expectations, and to seek their own goals.

Every town was primarily a market town serving the surrounding countryside, and alive with activity on Saturday night when people came to shop and to socialize. The shopkeepers were generally solid, respectable middle-class citizens, generous benefactors of church and community, who held a strict and stern code of conduct. As small businessmen in close contact with the country people they were, in their own time, influential in preserving and propagating the Protestant work ethic.

In 1925 there were only four communities in the Bay of Quinte region with a population of more than 10,000; these were Belleville (13,790), Peterborough (22,327), Kingston (23,439), and Oshawa (23,439).²¹ This part of Ontario was, and still is, predominantly rural and has maintained a life of its own. This life, admittedly, has been influenced by urban standards, but it has not been dominated by them. The small towns and villages have retained much of their earlier character and have upheld a tradition of friendliness and community that is a welcome and healthy holdover from former

21. Census of Canada: 1931, Vol. II, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1936, Table 43, pp. 698-705

times. Of this life, G. P. de T. Glazebrook, the respected Canadian statesman and historian, says:

The community has more meaning in the small town or village than it can have in a large city, and it has continued as a real social factor in spite of the ease of travel and the spread of city shops and city people.²²

This sense of community is especially relevant to the Bay of Quinte Conference with its rural background, and it would, on occasion, manifest itself in the future life of the United Church in the region.²³

The Bay of Quinte area has shared in the social and cultural milieu of the whole province, but it has its own distinctive character. It is less affluent and more conservative than Western Ontario, retaining a strong attachment to its Loyalist roots, taking a real pride in being the home of Ontario's first permanent settlers, and remembering that its hand had rocked the cradle of religion in the province.

6. The Religious Heritage

The churches played more than a mere supporting role in the early social and political life of Ontario, and in the making and moulding of the province; and of all the churches

22. G. P. de T. Glazebrook, Life in Ontario: A Social History, Aylesbury, University of Toronto Press, 1968, p. 263

23. The material in this section, pages 21-27, is drawn from two sources: A. R. M. Lower, Op. Cit., pp. 259-271, 312-344; and G. P. de T. Glazebrook, Op. Cit., pp. 223-278

it was the Methodist, the most indigenous church in the province, that left the most indelible mark. The relative sizes of major denominations is seen in Table III, below:

Table III -- Religious Denominations in Canada, Ontario, and Bay of Quinte in Census Years 1911, 1921, 1931; and Ratio to the Population (in brackets).^a

	<u>Canada</u>	<u>Ontario</u>	<u>Quinte</u>
<u>United Church</u> ^b			
1911	2,229,270 (31%)	1,211,022 (48%)	249,166 (57%)
1921	2,599,595 (30%)	1,311,257 (45%)	243,741 (56%)
1931	2,887,653 (28%)	1,424,432 (42%)	239,525 (53%)
<u>Anglican</u>			
1911	1,043,017 (15%)	489,704 (20%)	76,337 (18%)
1921	1,407,994 (16%)	648,883 (22%)	81,072 (19%)
1931	1,635,615 (16%)	764,130 (22%)	91,098 (20%)
<u>Roman Catholic</u>			
1911	2,833,041 (39%)	484,997 (19%)	78,092 (18%)
1921	3,389,636 (38%)	576,178 (20%)	76,611 (17%)
1931	4,285,388 (41%)	744,740 (22%)	80,498 (18%)
<u>Other</u>			
1911	1,101,315 (15%)	337,551 (13%)	33,403 (07%)
1921	1,391,258 (16%)	397,344 (13%)	33,976 (08%)
1931	1,568,130 (15%)	498,381 (14%)	41,997 (09%)
<u>Total</u>			
1911	7,206,643 (100)	2,523,274 (100)	436,998 (100)
1921	8,788,483 (100)	2,933,662 (100)	435,400 (100)
1931	10,376,786 (100)	3,431,683 (100)	453,118 (100)

a. Census of Canada: 1911, 1921, 1931, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1913, 1924, 1936, passim

b. United Church statistics includes Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational (see Table IV for details)

The three denominations that united in 1925 to become the United Church of Canada will be considered later in this section, but there were others that made important contributions to the religious heritage of the province.

Many of the Loyalists who left the United States to settle in the Bay of Quinte area were members of the Anglican Church (then very much 'The Church of England), who took it for granted that the church of old England would be the church of the new province. While the Anglican Church was not legally the 'established church', it assumed and enjoyed the privileges of such a position. All important government posts were held by Anglicans, and this, together with the system of patronage practiced by 'The Family Compact' and the unwarranted Anglican claim to exclusive benefits of the Clergy Reserves, was the main cause of both political and religious discontent in the first years of the province.

It was a contest between English aristocracy and North American democracy, between Anglicanism and the plain puritanism of frontier religion. "Geography," said Governor General Vincent Massey, "perhaps more than the influence of the churches, has made us puritans."²⁴ In England the doors of opportunity were mainly closed to those who were not of the established church, but this situation would not find

acceptance for long in a province where a new class structure was emerging, a structure reinforced by the second wave of immigrants from the United States. This immigration, unlike the first, was motivated by the promise of cheap land and freedom, rather than loyalty to 'the crown'. These new people had little affection for either English aristocracy or 'established' Anglicanism, but measured things by their practicality in their new land.

These practical men found their religious expression in what the Anglicans dismissed as 'dissenting' groups. The principal 'dissenters' were Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, Baptists, and Quakers. Most of these people had a strong and stubborn sense of their rights, and this was reflected in their long struggle with the Anglicans over the basic issue of whether or not the Church of England could make good its claim to be the established church in Ontario.

Citing the well-known feud between John Strachan and Egerton Ryerson over the Clergy Reserves (with Ryerson and democracy the clear winners) as an example of Anglican arrogance that alienated itself from the common man, Lower says:

No body of men could have conducted themselves in a way more calculated to defeat their own ends than did the Anglicans, more especially the Anglican clergy. ... The wonder is that the Anglican Church, as a rural church, survived at all.²⁵

²⁵ A. R. M. Lower, Op. Cit., pp. 161-162

The pioneers were plain people who asked for plain religion. This, despite the valiant efforts of the 'low church' clergy, the Anglican Church generally failed to provide, with the result that it made only a limited impact on rural Eastern Ontario in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

When an earnest attempt was made to recover this lost ground it was too late. In a region that was overwhelmingly British (87%) and Protestant (83%), the Anglicans, in the Census of 1921, were able to claim only 19% of the population in the Bay of Quinte area. This left them well behind the Methodists (38%), and just barely ahead of the Presbyterians (18%), and the Roman Catholics (17%).²⁶

In spite of its reliance on England for clergy during most of the nineteenth century, and its lack of a solvent and self-supporting financial base to make up revenues that were lost when the Clergy Reserves were 'secularized' in 1854, the Anglican Church overcame these problems and has shown a slow but steady growth in the twentieth century. Much of its support has come from those who are spiritually strengthened by its familiar patterns of liturgy and tradition.

The Roman Catholic Church has a substantial, but unequally distributed, strength in the Bay of Quinte area. It is strongest in Renfrew County where, with 41% of the total

26. See Tables II, III, and IV, pp. 12, 28, and 34

population, it is in first place. It comprises 21% of the population in both Frontenac and Peterborough counties; but only 4% in Prince Edward county, and 2% in Durham county.²⁷ Relationships between the Roman Catholic Church and the major Protestant denominations have dramatically improved since the 1920s; but prior to that they were, at best, cool and reserved, and, at worst, openly hostile. The religious tensions between Protestants and Roman Catholics were compounded by racial, regional, and political factors, and in a less tolerant era many people did not make the effort to distinguish among these elements.

Early in the nineteenth century there were Baptist congregations in the counties of Leeds, Prince Edward, and Renfrew counties. Their numbers, never very great, were concentrated in the towns, where their strength was divided between the the Federation Baptists and the Fundamental Baptists. The Lutherans established settlements in Prince Edward county, and in Renfrew county (where there was a large German population), but apart from these two areas they have not been strong in the Bay of Quinte region. The Quakers were among the earliest of the denominations to arrive after the American Revolution, and they settled in Prince Edward county. Their cause, however, has not shown any significant increase

27. Census of Canada: 1921, Vol. I, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1924, pp. 588-595

over the years. The Evangelical United Brethren (now part of the United Church) had some pockets of strength in the German-speaking areas of the Ottawa Valley. The Mormons began work in Canada in Lennox and Addington county in 1832, but until recent years they have been relatively weak in numbers. There are many other 'minor' denominations in the area, including a thriving Free Methodist cause, but the tendency to schism in the fundamentalist churches and their proselytizing among discontented segments of the major denominations have been negative elements uncondusive to the spiritual health of the community. Taken together, these 'other' denominations comprise less than 10% of the population of the Bay of Quinte area.²⁸

Three other denominations remain to be considered in some detail; the two largest churches in Ontario and the Bay of Quinte region, the Methodists and the Presbyterians, and one of the smallest, the Congregationalists. These were the three denominations that were united in 1925 to become The United Church of Canada. The events leading up to Church Union, and the Union itself, will be carefully examined in Chapter II. The comparative sizes of these three uniting denominations is shown in Table IV, on the following page:

28. The material in this section, pages 27-33, is drawn from two sources: H. H. Walsh, The Christian Church in Canada, Toronto, Ryerson, 1956, pp. 134-150, 168-185, 308-315; and Douglas J. Wilson, The Church Grows in Canada, Toronto, Canadian Council of Churches, 1966, pp. 63-80

Table IV -- Methodist, Presbyterian, Congregational and United Church Population in Canada, Ontario, and Bay of Quinte in Census Years 1911, 1921, 1931; and Ratio to the Population (in brackets).^a

	<u>Canada</u>	<u>Ontario</u>	<u>Quinte</u>
<u>Methodist</u>			
1911	1,079,892 (15%)	671,727 (27%)	166,532 (38%)
1921	1,159,458 (13%)	685,463 (23%)	163,556 (38%)
1931 ^b	--	--	--
<u>Presbyterian</u>			
1911	1,115,324 (16%)	524,603 (21%)	80,632 (19%)
1921	1,409,407 (16%)	613,532 (21%)	78,715 (18%)
1931 ^c	870,278 (08%)	450,664 (13%)	47,830 (11%)
<u>Congregational</u>			
1911	34,054 (.5%)	14,692 (.6%)	2,002 (.5%)
1921	30,730 (.4%)	12,262 (.4%)	1,470 (.3%)
1931 ^b	--	--	--
<u>United Church</u>			
1911 ^d	2,229,270 (31%)	1,211,022 (48%)	249,166 (57%)
1921 ^d	2,599,595 (30%)	1,311,257 (45%)	243,741 (56%)
1931 ^d	2,887,653 (28%)	1,424,432 (42%)	239,525 (53%)
1931 ^e	2,017,375 (20%)	973,768 (29%)	191,695 (42%)

a. Census of Canada: 1911, 1921, 1931, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1913, 1924, 1936, passim

b. Methodists and Congregationalists had entered the United Church in 1925, hence no statistics for 1931

c. These statistics for 1931 represent the Non-concurring Presbyterians who did not enter the Union in 1925

d. These statistics include Methodist, Congregational and all Presbyterian (Unionist and Non-concurring)

e. These statistics include Methodist and Congregational, but not Non-concurring Presbyterians, and thus represent the actual United Church population for 1931

In the census years 1911 and 1921 the Presbyterians ranked as the largest Protestant Church in Canada in terms of population, but the Methodists were numerically stronger in both Ontario and the Bay of Quinte region. In terms of membership, however, the Methodists were the largest in Canada, in Ontario, and in the Bay of Quinte region.²⁹ To illustrate the relatively few Congregationalists in the Bay of Quinte area (596 members in 1925), it can be noted that there were sixteen Methodist churches and one Presbyterian church in the Bay of Quinte area that exceeded the total number of Congregationalists.³⁰

a) The Congregationalists³¹ -- The first members of the Congregational Church in Ontario came from New England early in the nineteenth century. Because of their American background, and their suspected American sympathies, they were regarded with some disfavour and distrust during the War of 1812, and the first years following the war. It was not

29. See Tables VI and VII, pp. 42 and 48

30. U.C.A., Congregational Year Book, Toronto, Congregational Union of Canada, 1925, pp. 124-127; and U.C.A., Methodist Year Book, Toronto, Methodist Publishing House, 1925, pp. 142-187

31. The material in this section, pages 35-39, is drawn from two sources: Robert J. Hutcheon, 'Congregationalism', in Shortt and Doughty, eds., Canada and its Provinces, Vol. XI, Toronto, Brock, 1914, pp. 379-383; and H. H. Walsh, Op. Cit., pp. 220-221

until 1819 that Congregationalism was officially established in the province, at Frome in Western Ontario; and the first Congregational church in the Bay of Quinte region was built in the town of Bowmanville in 1820.

The Congregationalists were never numerically significant in Ontario, as Table V, below, indicates:

Table V -- Congregational Population and Membership in Canada, Ontario, and Bay of Quinte in Census Years 1901, 1911, 1921; and Ratio to the Population (in brackets).^a

	<u>Population</u>	<u>Congregational</u>	<u>Membership</u>
<u>Canada</u>			
1901	5,371,315	28,504 (.5%)	-- ^b
1911	7,206,643	34,054 (.5%)	11,296
1921	8,788,483	30,730 (.4%)	12,660
<u>Ontario</u>			
1901	2,182,947	15,289 (.7%)	-- ^b
1911	2,523,274	14,692 (.6%)	5,271
1921	2,933,662	12,262 (.4%)	6,491
<u>Quinte</u>			
1901	462,823	2,285 (.5%)	789
1911	436,998	2,002 (.5%)	754
1921	435,400	1,470 (.3%)	729

a. Census of Canada: 1901, 1911, 1921, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1902, 1913, 1924, passim; and Congregational Year Book: 1901, 1911, 1921, Toronto; Congregational Union of Canada, 1901, 1911, 1921, passim

b. Membership statistics not available for Canada or Ontario in 1901

At no time did the Congregationalists comprise more than .5% of the population in the Bay of Quinte area and, as Table V shows, their numbers were in decline from the beginning of the twentieth century.

However, size alone is not the only criterion of a church's value, and the Congregationalists made a contribution to both church and community life that was out of all proportion to their small numbers. Their history, spiritual heritage, and form of church government were distinctive, and these, with their spirit of independence and their freedom of scriptural interpretation, were gifts they shared with the Methodists and the Presbyterians in the Union of 1925.

The Congregationalists, as the Methodists and the Presbyterians, had a history of church unions in Canada, culminating in 1906 when all the Congregationalists in Canada were united in one Union. In 1911 the Ontario Conference of the United Brethren in Christ Church, a small denomination of German Methodist background isolated from the parent body in the United States and numbering 1,400 members, united with the Congregationalists.

From the first invitation by the Methodists and the Presbyterians to enter into union negotiations, to the successful conclusion of the negotiations in 1925, the Congregationalists were solidly in support of the venture. In view of the coming union, Rev. Hugh Pedley (who was a native of

the Bay of Quinte area, born at Coldsprings in Northumberland County), Chairman of the Congregational Church Union Committee, said that two frames of mind should characterize the Congregational Church at that time in its history:

That of being thoroughly alive to the immense significance of the event ... [and] that we be resolved to have all our organizations in the best possible condition for the day of actual union, and ensure that the finances of the church are absolutely and abundantly solvent.³²

The Congregational Church did, in fact, enter the union in the excellent condition requested by its chairman, and with a lively spirit of adventure.

The Congregational Church never realized its potential in Ontario or in the Bay of Quinte region, but this did not make it bitter or resentful, rather it enabled the Church to practice its typical catholic spirit in a new situation where the opportunities would be greater and where it would share in a larger fellowship.

The history of the Congregational Church in Ontario, spanning 106 years, came to an end on June 10th, 1925. It would, however, be more realistic to say of the Congregationalists, as of the Methodists and the Presbyterians, that it was not the end but a new beginning. This Church showed that Jesus' words, "Whoever would save his life will lose it; and whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save

32. U.C.A., The Canadian Congregationalist, March 21, 1923, p. 4

it" (Mark 8:35), could apply to an institution as well as to an individual. The Congregational Church gave up its life as a small, struggling denomination, only to rediscover it and exercise it in new strength and in a new form within The United Church of Canada.

b) The Presbyterians³³ -- Among the Loyalists who came to Ontario after the American Revolution were many Presbyterians. These were without their own minister, so they appealed to the United States for help. In response, the American Dutch Reformed Church sent Rev. John Broeffle to the German-speaking settlers in the counties of Stormont and Dundas in 1795, and Rev. Robert McDowall to the English-speaking settlers along 'The Front' in 1798. McDowall's parish was two hundred miles in length, extending from Elizabethtown (Brockville) to York (Toronto). He was an able and an energetic minister, having gathered 420 persons into a number of congregations, but eventually settled down in the Bay of Quinte area where he ministered to congregations in Adolphustown and Fredericksburgh.³⁴

33. The material in this section, pages 39-44, is drawn from two sources: John T. McNeill, The Presbyterian Church in Canada: 1875-1925, Toronto, Presbyterian Church, 1925, pp. 225-235; and Charles W. Gordon, 'The Presbyterian Church and its Missions', in Shortt and Doughty, eds., Op. Cit., pp. 249-300

34. A. L. Farris, A Short History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, Toronto, Presbyterian Publications, 1965, p. 35

In 1818, Rev. William Bell of Perth, together with Rev. William Smart of Brockville and two other ministers, formed a united Presbytery. This modest experience of union in the Presbyterian Church was to prove helpful in preparing for future unions, but these did not come without a struggle.

The Presbyterians, as much as the Methodists, were angered at the high-handed manner in which the Anglicans had gained control over revenues from the Clergy Reserves. This enabled the Anglicans to build churches, rectories, and King's College in Toronto, and to supplement minister's salaries out of the public purse. This especially angered the ministers of the Church of Scotland in Canada, who had become used to government support in Scotland. The question of equal rights to revenues from the Clergy Reserves was but one part of the more fundamental question of representative government for Ontario. Continued abuses of their assumed privileges by the Anglicans against the wishes of a majority in the Assembly of Upper Canada did much to precipitate the Rebellion of 1837. The leader of the Rebellion, William Lyon MacKenzie, was a reform liberal from a secessionist Presbyterian background. While the Rebellion failed, it succeeded in demonstrating the justice of the dissenters' demands for equal religious rights and for representative government.

The Presbyterians, having been denied rights to attend King's College, sought and were granted a charter to

establish their own college. This they did, with the generous support of the Presbyterians in Upper Canada, and in 1841 Queen's College in Kingston was founded.

There was a strong mood in favour of union among the Presbyterians in Canada in the early 1840s, but this suffered a severe setback by 'the Great Disruption' in the Scottish Church in 1843 and a similar disruption in Canada. The Presbyterians were dismayed at the scandal of a divided church (especially as most of the reasons for division were 'imported' from Scotland, and not applicable to Canada), and steps were taken to begin the long journey towards union. In 1875, after a series of unions, all the Presbyterians in Canada were united in one church.

It was from the Secession and Free churches of Scotland, rather than from 'The Auld Kirk', that Canadian Presbyterianism received most of its original support. Being used to self-support rather than state-support these people made a ready adaptation to Canadian conditions, and with more success than their brothers in the Church of Scotland. It was from the Free and Secessionist strand of Presbyterianism that support for Church Union in 1925 was most consistent.

The most distinctive feature of Presbyterianism was its constitution rather than its creed, a system of representative church government by the presbyters. This polity is the logical result of the Presbyterian doctrine of the Church as

the fellowship of believers rather than a federation of officials. Yet the solid, scripturally-based doctrine of the Presbyterian Church was to be a valued contribution to the Union of 1925.

The Presbyterian Church was at its strongest in the province of Ontario, and its relative size is shown in Table VI, below:

Table VI -- Presbyterian Population and Membership in Canada, Ontario, and Bay of Quinte in Census Years 1901, 1911, 1921; and Ratio to the Population (in brackets).^a

	<u>Population</u>	<u>Presbyterian</u>	<u>Membership</u>
<u>Canada</u>			
1901	5,371,315	842,635 (16%)	219,570
1911	7,206,643	1,115,324 (16%)	295,935
1921	8,788,483	1,409,407 (16%)	357,211
<u>Ontario</u>			
1901	2,182,947	477,386 (22%)	141,335
1911	2,523,274	524,603 (21%)	174,709
1921	2,933,662	613,532 (21%)	201,841
<u>Quinte</u>			
1901	462,823	87,998 (19%)	24,695
1911	436,998	80,862 (19%)	27,153
1921	435,400	78,715 (18%)	27,369

a. Census of Canada: 1901, 1911, 1921, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1902, 1913, 1924, passim; and Minutes of Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1901, 1911, 1921, Toronto, Presbyterian Church, 1901, 1911, 1921, passim

It will be noted that in the Bay of Quinte region, the Presbyterian population and ratio to the total population was in decline since 1901. Yet the membership showed an increase in those years.

It was in Ontario that the Presbyterian Church demonstrated its strongest and most organized opposition to the Union of 1925, for it was in Ontario that it had the most to lose (or to gain) by Union. John McNeill, the noted Presbyterian historian, comments on the Ontario situation:

The Church in the older parts of Ontario is being weakened, as nowhere else, by secession on the Union question, and a great deal of local animosity has been engendered. It seems incredible, however, that the present antagonisms will long prevail.³⁵

Dr. McNeill's optimism in this matter proved to be unjustified, for there were very strong feelings that erupted in the Presbyterian Church during the Union negotiations in Ontario. Indeed, these feelings remained long after 1925. In the ten years prior to Union the Presbyterian Church was torn by a dispute that eventually resulted in yet another of its many disruptions when one-third of its membership remained out of the Union. Families and congregations were divided over the issue of Union, and the opposing sides marshalled their ranks to fight the battle. This culminated in the most bitter controversy in the history of the Canadian church.

35. John T. McNeill, Op. Cit., p. 234

The number of Presbyterians choosing not to enter the United Church was sufficient to ensure that there would be a viable continuing Presbyterian Church. However, for the purposes of this thesis it will be considered that 1925 ended a long and noble chapter in the history of the Presbyterian Church, while at the same time it opened a new door into a great and challenging future as the Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Methodists joined together to become The United Church of Canada.

c) The Methodists³⁶ -- It was in the Bay of Quinte region that Methodism had its start in Ontario, and it was in Ontario that Methodism made its greatest impact in Canada. Of all the Protestant churches it was the most influential in shaping the social and political life of the people. The early work of Methodism in the province was begun by lay people, the Hecks, the Dulmages, and the Emburys. They formed a class in Augusta township (east of Brockville) in 1785. Three years later, and fifty miles further west, two

36. The material in this section, pages 44-49, is drawn from the following sources: Goldwin French, 'The People Called Methodists in Canada', in John W. Grant, ed., The Churches and the Canadian Experience, Toronto, Ryerson, 1963, pp. 73-77; Hugh Johnson, 'The Wesleyan Methodist Church in Upper and Lower Canada', in Centennial of Canadian Methodism, Toronto, Briggs, 1897, pp. 55-93; J. William Lamb, Ontario's Pioneer Methodist Missionary, Toronto, Trustees of Old Hay Bay Church, 1974, pp. 1-20; George F. Playter, The History of Methodism in Canada, Vol. I, Toronto, Wesleyan Conference Office, 1862, pp. 15-43, 274-297, 320-323

laymen, Lyons and M'Carty, began work in the Kingston area. Two years later, in 1790, the first ordained Methodist minister came to Ontario. He was Rev. William Losee, sent from New York state to Kingston and Adolphustown. In 1791, the same year Upper Canada became a province, Losee established the first official Methodist society in Ontario at Hay Bay on February 20th, 1791, the second at Ernestown on February 27th, 1791, and the third at Fredericksburgh on March 2nd, 1791, the very day on which John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, died in England. In 1792 the first Methodist church was built in Ontario at Hay Bay. This church is still in use, and is the fifth oldest building in the province.

Methodist preachers were encouraged to keep detailed journals, in the manner of John Wesley, and Methodist courts were expected to keep complete and accurate records of their proceedings. Thus there is a very substantial amount of Methodist historical material available for study. It is the judgment of a respected Presbyterian historian, John Moir,

... that the Methodist historians of the nineteenth century were the best in Canada, and their denominational histories provide the most reliable sources for today's students of Canadian church history.³⁷

Within ten years, the Methodists had grown from zero to a membership of over a thousand. In 1812, on the eve of the war with the United States, there were thirteen Methodist

37. John S. Moir, in an address to the Canadian Methodist Historical Society, Toronto, June 24th, 1975

ministers and 2,250 members in Ontario. The war caused a serious setback to the Methodist cause in Ontario as most of the ministers returned to their native United States. The membership was reduced to under a thousand, and those who remained loyal to Methodism were often (and usually unjustly) considered disloyal to Ontario and Canada because of the strong American influence in early Ontario Methodism. Following the war the work was resumed in earnest, a considerable number of Ontario-born ministers were recruited and trained, and the Methodist Episcopal Church in Ontario began to prosper.

It was the genius of Methodism that it was able to accommodate itself to the conditions of the frontier and to the needs of the frontier people, yet without compromising its unique mission or message. Both the Anglicans and the Presbyterians tended to avoid the discomforts of the 'bush country', and seldom worked far from the towns. In contrast, the Methodist circuit-riders let nothing deter them from their rounds, and they went where few others would go, bringing the gospel to the settlers and winning the affection and loyalty of much of the province.

In 1824 there were enough Canadian preachers, and a large enough membership, to form the first Canadian Conference at Hallowell (Picton). In 1828 a complete separation from the American parent church was amicably effected at the

Ernestown Conference (near Kingston), and thus came into being the first autonomous Canadian church, the Canadian Methodist Episcopal Church. Despite active persecution by the Anglicans the Methodists flourished, and soon they outnumbered not only the Anglicans but every other denomination in the province. In 1828 they had a membership of over 10,000, including 350 Indians.

The Wesleyan Methodists began work in Ontario in 1828, and were soon followed by three other Methodist groups; the New Connexion Methodists, the Primitive Methodists, and the Bible Christians. There was a series of unions, splits, and reunions, finally resulting in the unification of all the Methodists in Canada. The General Conference of the Methodist churches met in Belleville in September, 1883 to approve the plan of union, to adopt the constitution, to enact the new discipline, and to make preparations for July 1st, 1884 when the united church, simply called 'The Methodist Church', came into being. This was the Church that entered the Union of 1925 with the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists to form The United Church of Canada.

The Methodists, as has been noted, were the most indigenous of the Protestant churches, and were deeply rooted in the old Loyalist settlements. They were ardently, aggressively, and unashamedly Canadian. Their great printing and publishing plant in Toronto had considerable success in its-

promotion of Canadian literature and its production of Canadian religious material. They were the first church in Canada to be free of foreign control. And they were by far the strongest denomination in Ontario and in the Bay of Quinte region, as Table VII indicates:

Table VII -- Methodist Population and Membership in Canada, Ontario, and Bay of Quinte in Census Years 1901, 1911, 1921; and Ratio to the Population (in brackets).^a

	<u>Population</u>	<u>Methodist</u>	<u>Membership</u>
<u>Canada</u>			
1901	5,371,315	924,750 (17%)	289,162
1911	7,206,643	1,079,892 (15%)	345,088
1921	8,788,483	1,159,458 (13%)	400,789
<u>Ontario</u>			
1901	2,182,947	666,388 (31%)	206,379
1911	2,523,274	671,727 (27%)	230,064
1921	2,933,662	685,463 (23%)	261,531
<u>Quinte</u>			
1901	462,823	182,902 (40%)	53,164
1911	436,998	166,532 (38%)	55,219
1921	435,400	163,556 (38%)	59,782

a. Census of Canada: 1901, 1911, 1921, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1902, 1913, 1924, passim; and The Methodist Year Book: 1901, 1911, 1921, Toronto, Methodist Publishing House, 1901, 1911, 1921, passim

The Methodists were very strong in their own Bay of Quinte homeland, with a larger population than that of any other

two churches combined.³⁸ They had consistently maintained this strength since Confederation, from the census of 1871, when they comprised 36% of the population,³⁹ to their final enumeration as 'Methodists' in 1921 with 38% of the population of the Bay of Quinte area. This steady strength they brought undiminished into the Union of 1925.

It was not surprising that Methodism was intimately identified with Ontario society, for it had developed an almost instinctive way of dealing with problems in what was considered to be a very Canadian way. In addition, through its practical concern for, and its involvement in, Canadian affairs it did much to foster Canadian unity, an end to which it was wholeheartedly committed.

The Methodists were equally committed to the concept of church union. They were a Canadian church and a union-minded church and, like their Wesleyan ancestors who had relinquished their cherished name half a century earlier for the sake of a wider and more representative expression of Protestant Christianity in Canada, they willingly gave up their name and unanimously joined with the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists in 1925 to become The United Church of Canada, in a union they hoped and believed would result

38. See Tables III, IV, pp. 28, 34

39. Census of Canada: 1871, Ottawa, Taylor, 1873, pp. 114-145

in a truly national and uniquely Canadian church.

In this overview we have been introduced to the land and the people of the Bay of Quinte area. The first settlers in the region were the United Empire Loyalists who left their homes in the United States after the American Revolution and moved to the virgin country north of the St. Lawrence River and Lake Ontario in the 1780s. They brought little with them except a strong loyalty to Britain and a pioneering spirit. The challenge of the frontier tested their pioneering spirit, and the War of 1812 tested their loyalty. That experience of defending their adopted land reinforced their determination to be something other than 'American', and sparked their desire to be something more than 'British'.

After the war, these original settlers were joined by a new wave of immigrants from England, Ireland, Scotland, and later from the United States. Each of these contributed something of themselves to their chosen country, and through a combination of British and American attributes the essential traits of the Ontario and Quinte character were being developed. This character was a mixture of loyalty to British customs and tradition, and an affinity for American democracy and ingenuity. These were the 'Quinte people' -- racially British-American, politically conservative, economically thrifty, culturally imitative, rural and hard-working.

proud of their Loyalist past and of turning back the American invader, and pleased that theirs was the homeland of the first settlers and the cradle of religion in the province.

These pioneers, the ancestors of the present-day people of the Bay of Quinte region, helped give the region its individuality. They prepared the foundations on which the province was built, and gave substance and colour to the region's economic, political, social and religious life.

In the region's formative years the churches, especially the Methodist (the most indigenous and the first to be independent in the province), played a significant role.

They were part of the political and social development of the people, and there was no stronger force in shaping the character of the community. The churches were present and active from the beginning, to instruct and inspire, to support and sustain, to reform and restrain, as the situation required.

For three of the churches in the Bay of Quinte region, the recollection of their ancestors leaving the settled and the familiar for the unknown and the unexplored, and their discovery of the benefits of a blended British-American heritage, combined with their own experience of each being a united church, were factors in preparing their people for another experiment in joining together in the union of the Congregational, the Presbyterian, and the Methodist churches in 1925 to form The United Church of Canada.

CHAPTER II

THE UNION YEARS: 1925-1929

The United Church of Canada came into being on June 10th, 1925, culminating twenty-three years of negotiations, co-operation, work, and prayer. The union brought together in one new church, all the Methodists, most of the Congregationalists, and two-thirds of the Presbyterians in Canada.

The Bay of Quinte Conference, the subject of this thesis, was one of eleven Conferences established by the First General Council.¹ There were many reports to be given, many formalities to be observed, many church leaders to be heard, and many items of essential business to be attended to in the opening days of this Council. Thus, it was not until the seventh day, and the sixteenth session, that the report of the Committee on the Conferences was presented by Professor John Matheson of Queen's University, Kingston.

The arrival of ten of the Conferences, each one a 'child' of the Council, was without incident. Only Bay of Quinte, the fourth born, was accompanied by 'birth pangs' in the form of parliamentary procedure -- an amendment, then an amendment to the amendment! Both were defeated. One would

1. A twelfth Conference, Manitou in Northern Ontario, was added in 1975.

have added the counties of Carleton and Russell to Bay of Quinte; the other would have removed the counties of Renfrew, Lanark, and Leeds from Bay of Quinte. As it was, the original recommendation of the Committee was upheld and the Bay of Quinte Conference, "named and bounded", was born, comprised of the counties of Renfrew, Lanark, Leeds, Frontenac, Lennox and Addington, Hastings, Prince Edward, Northumberland, Durham, Ontario, Victoria, Peterborough, and Haliburton, all in the province of Ontario.²

This chapter will review the steps leading up to the Union of 1925, and will consider the original organization and the later consolidation of the Conference. The doctrine and polity of the Church will be outlined, indicating the contributions of the uniting churches. Some of the ways in which the Conference was determined to make Church Union a success will be noted, and this observation will provide some insight into the Bay of Quinte Conference as a distinct and unique region within the United Church.

1. A 'Made-in-Canada' Church

The movement which resulted in the union of the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches in Canada was not an isolated event, but was another step towards that

2. U.C.A., U.C. Record of Proceedings: 1925, Toronto, U.C. Publishing House, 1925, pp. 46, 215

more inclusive union envisioned in Jesus' prayer "that all may be one ... that the world may believe" (John 17:21), and was the logical consequence of a series of intradenominational unions of the late nineteenth century. Each of the three uniting churches was itself a united church: the Presbyterian Church was the end result of nine separate unions from 1817 to 1875; the Methodist Church was the product of eight different unions from 1820 to 1884; and the two streams of Canadian Congregationalism were united in 1906. Together, there were nineteen unions of more than forty different churches that preceded and prepared the way for the Union of 1925.

From the beginning, the foundations of the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches were laid upon the bedrock of church union. The spiritual and social needs of widely separated settlements, the intermingling of members of different churches in these settlements, and the absence in the new country of the divisions that flourished in the old, were factors that made co-operation and union attractive necessities. The Protestant Dissenters' Chapel, established in Halifax in 1749, was the first Nonconformist church in what is now Canada. It was a united church, in which New England Congregationalists and Scottish Presbyterians worshipped together. The first Presbytery in Ontario was a union Presbytery in which three ministers of the Associate Secession Church of Scotland and one minister of the London Missionary

Society formed the United Presbytery in 1818, for which they adopted the doctrine, principles, and polity of the Church of Scotland, to which not one of them belonged.³

Rev. William T. Gunn, General Secretary of the Congregational Union of Canada and later the third Moderator of the United Church (whose family lived in the Almonte area), said: "We in Canada have the habit of church union."⁴ The 'church fathers' were practical idealists, putting their beliefs in church union into action, leaving behind them their beloved names and historic traditions in pursuit of the unity of the church in worship, work, and witness. Each of the three uniting churches was a 'made-in-Canada' church, and each was years ahead of its old-country parents in realizing church union; yet each had the blessing of its mother church in the Union of 1925.

The ideal of union, political and religious, found a congenial reception in the minds of Canadian leaders. The Confederation of 1867 must surely have suggested church union as a desirable and attainable goal to the more imaginative and adventurous of church officials. The completion of the inter-continental railway in 1886 must surely have complemented the vision of a church united from sea to sea, and

3. William T. Gunn, Uniting Three Churches, Toronto, Joint Church Union Committee, 1923, pp. 3-7

4. Ibid., p. 7

reinforced the resolve of church leaders to seek this unity.

Rev. Samuel Dwight Chown, General Superintendent of the Methodist Church (and a native of Kingston), suggested three motives for the church union movement: spiritual, patriotic, and economic. He believed, as did the other church union leaders, that it was God's will that the churches should unite, and that the contemplated union was a sincere effort "to answer the prayer of Christ that all who believe in him may be one, in order that the world may believe."⁵

Chown was convinced that the prayer of Jesus was a petition for more than a nebulous spiritual unity, that it was indeed a prayer for organic union that must give tangible evidence of its reality. Chown spoke for many church unionists when he said of this prayer:

The prayer of Jesus for unity remains unfulfilled so long as two churches carry on where only one might equally or better supply the spiritual need of a locality. It is not fulfilled wherever the spirit of competition is manifested. It is not fulfilled when members of ostensibly the same family refuse to eat at the same sacramental table, and pass each other on the street as though they were only very distant relations. It is not fulfilled where any of the resources of the church, either of men or money, are expended in local efforts which are not necessary to spread the Kingdom of God upon earth.⁶

5. S. D. Chown, Church Union: A New Year's Message, Toronto, Methodist Publishing House, 1924, p. 4

6. S. D. Chown, The Story of Church Union in Canada, Toronto, Ryerson, 1930, pp. 6-7

In this most intense and the longest recorded prayer of the Church's Lord, the unionists recognized and accepted an obligation to earnestly seek and promote Christian unity.

In addition to the spiritual motive, Chown stated:

Union is in the interest of Christian patriotism in Canada as helping to hold the various Provinces of the Dominion in the spirit of unity and in the bonds of peace and prosperity.⁷

With geographic, racial, political, and economic factors often threatening to divide the country, Chown saw church union as a patriotic duty to strengthen the unity of Canada. Of the three uniting churches, the Methodists were the most representative and they alone had a strong nation-wide organization. Political leaders respected the statements of the Methodist Church, for they knew that the General Superintendent had the authority to speak for the whole membership.

In the proposed union, religion and patriotism could combine for the country's good. A further appeal to patriotism arose out of the challenge of Western Canada, then in the full flood-tide of immigration, where a divided Christian witness would have been unconvincing to people of different ideals and traditions.

The churches that entered the union did not consider the saving of money as the primary motive, but at the same time they recognized the need for responsible stewardship of

7. S. D. Chown, A New Year's Message, Op. Cit., p. 8

their resources and realized that they did not have

... a commission to waste the Lord's men and the Lord's money in unnecessary duplication. Millions of dollars have been spent in little better than unseemly rivalry. Millions saved may now be used for larger and more effective service. Union must take place to justify the organization of the Church to men of common sense.⁸

Such common sense was demonstrated by a shrewd farmer when he declared a principle of lay wisdom, saying "the differences between denominations were not worth paying for."⁹

Another factor favouring union was the experience of co-operation in missionary work in Western Canada. Both the Presbyterians and Methodists had been aggressively active in the West, but they soon discovered that the strain on personnel and finances in supporting parallel work was an increasingly intolerable burden on their resources. They saw that co-operation was much to be preferred to the competition that had been characteristic of their efforts in Ontario.

Spiritual insights, patriotic motives, and practical necessities, but not necessarily in that order, combined with what the unionists believed was their obedience to the will of God, made church union almost inevitable. Together with the motivations noted above, and the recent experiences of successful intradenominational unions, was the buoyant spirit

8. S. D. Chown, A New Year's Message, Op. Cit., p. 7

9. S. D. Chown, The Story of Church Union in Canada, Op. Cit., p. 16.

of optimism that prevailed prior to World War I. Thus it was, with this motivation and in this mood, that the church union movement in Canada was launched.

The formal negotiations leading to Church Union took place between 1902 and 1925.¹⁰ Principal William Patrick, of Manitoba College, brought fraternal greetings from the Presbyterian Church to the Methodist General Conference which was meeting in Winnipeg in 1902. In his greetings he reviewed the many things the two churches held in common, and spoke of the co-operative ventures undertaken with some success, then he made his dramatic but unofficial proposal for the union of the Presbyterians and the Methodists. This met with the immediate support of the Methodists who, at their General Conference in 1884, had affirmed their commitment to the cause of church union. The fraternal delegates from the Congregational Church expressed their desire to be included in any negotiations for church union.

The Methodists promptly appointed a Church Union Committee to begin talks with the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists, and with any other evangelical church that was

10. The material in this section, pages 59-64, is drawn from three sources: John Webster Grant, The Canadian Experience of Church Union, London, Lutterworth, 1967, pp. 19-56; Claris Edwin Silcox, Church Union in Canada, New York, Institute of Social and Religious Research, 1933, pp. 125-213; and H. H. Walsh, The Christian Church in Canada, Toronto, Ryerson, 1956, pp. 288-307

interested in the same goal. The Presbyterians and the Congregationalists responded to the Methodists' overture, and the union committees appointed by the three churches met in Toronto in April, 1904. This meeting reported that its members were "of one mind that organic union is both desirable and practicable."¹¹ The next meeting of the Joint Committee on Church Union, in December, 1904, began the preparation of a Basis of Union. This document was completed in 1908 and, with a few minor revisions, was submitted to the churches to be considered at the meetings of their highest courts. The Basis of Union was adopted by the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists in 1909, and by the Methodists in 1910.

The Congregationalists, in a vote taken in their churches in 1910, voted 79% to enter Union on the terms of the Basis of Union. The Methodists, in a similar vote in 1912, voted 86% in favour of entering Union.¹² These were the only votes taken by the Congregationalists and the Methodists during the course of the union negotiations, each considering that their people had clearly and overwhelmingly expressed their minds in favour of Union.

The Presbyterians were confronted with quite a different situation, in which a sizeable and determined minority created the necessity of proceeding with caution in an

11. U.C.A., U.C.C., Record of Proceedings: 1925, p. 58

12. Ibid., p. 59

agonizing and unsuccessful attempt to avoid a disruption.

- In 1916 the General Assembly voted 82% in favour of entering the Union, but agreed to postpone the consummation of union until after the war. This delay, while understandable under wartime circumstances, allowed both unionists and opponents to union to organize their forces for the bitter controversy that followed. The Methodists and the Congregationalists waited patiently for the Presbyterians to reach a decision; meanwhile the two opposing factions in the Presbyterian Church had agreed to a 'truce' until 1921. In 1921 the General Assembly voted 80% in favour of honouring their pledge to the other two churches, and took the preliminary steps to consummate the union as expeditiously as possible. In 1923 the General Assembly increased its support of union to 83%.¹³

Between 1921 and 1924 the governing bodies of the three churches passed the enabling legislation. The required bills were approved in the federal and provincial parliaments, but only after a bitter dispute which only served to emphasize the division within the Presbyterian Church. The Acts gave congregations the right to vote on whether or not they would enter the union, and established commissions to hear disputes and to provide for a fair adjustment of property in the case of non-concurring congregations. In 1925 the voting

13. U.C.A., U.C.C., Record of Proceedings: 1925, pp. 60-62

in the Presbyterian Church took place. In a vote by congregations, 85% were in favour of union; but a vote by members (of whom 69% voted) was much less decisive, with 57% voting for union and 43% opposing union. In Ontario, where the opposition to union was strongest and most organized, the vote by congregations favouring union was 72% and those opposed was 28%.¹⁴ This opposition was stronger still in the Bay of Quinte area, with only 54% voting for union and 46% opposed.¹⁵

The federal United Church of Canada Act declared that the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches of Canada "by the free and independent action of the said churches through their governing bodies and in accordance with their respective constitutions"¹⁶ had the right to unite, without loss of their identity, under the name of The United Church of Canada. The Dominion and Provincial legislation related to Church Union came into effect on June 10th, 1925. Prior to that, the uniting churches had appointed their commissioners to the First General Council, and had held their final meetings as separate denominations to transact the concluding business and to authorize their representatives to sign the

14. Pamphlet, 'Analysis of Votes on Church Union', 1925, p. 2; U.C.A., 'Church Union', Box 31, File 128

15. U.C.A., Document, 'Church Union', Box 6, Files 53-58

16. The United Church of Canada Act, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1924, 14-15 George V; Ch. 100, Sec. 28a, p. 20

union documents at the Service of Inauguration.

On Wednesday morning, June 10th, 1925, the Inaugural Service of The United Church of Canada was held in Toronto's Mutual Street Arena, with more than 7,000 church members and invited guests, together with a large and curious press gallery, joining the 350 commissioners to celebrate the consummation of Church Union that brought twenty-three years of negotiations to a dramatic climax. At the appointed hour of 10.30 a.m., the official delegates from the three uniting churches entered the arena in three separate 'streams', then mingled in the one great procession, singing the hymn, 'The Church's One Foundation'. The service consisted of praise, scripture, prayer, and preaching; the hallowing of the Union, in which the purpose of the Church and the contribution of the uniting churches was indicated; the declaration of the Union, with the signing of the covenant and the recognition of the appropriate authority of the church and civil courts; and the celebration of Holy Communion. It was an impressive service.¹⁷

Thus, in this solemn yet joyful service, The United Church of Canada came into being. The indefatigable champion of Church Union, Rev. Dr. Samuel Dwight Chown, General Superintendent of the Methodist Church, was honoured by being

17. The New Outlook, June 10th, 1925, pp. 5-6

chosen to make the 'birth announcement':

I hereby declare that the Presbyterian Church in Canada, the Congregational Churches of Canada, and the Methodist Church, along with the General Council of Local Union Churches, are now united and constituted as one Church to be designated and known as The United Church of Canada.¹⁸

On the same day, and at the same hour, appropriate services of celebration and worship were held in hundreds of 'new' United Churches across Canada.

2. Inaugural Services in Bay of Quinte Conference

Most commentators on the consummation of Church Union have concentrated their attention on the inaugural service in Toronto. While none would question the significance of that day, or belittle its importance, it was but the first of many services of consummation held throughout the United Church. There were other services which, to the members of the new United Church in the Pastoral Charge, the Presbytery, and the Conference, were at least equal in significance if not in size. These services have been generally ignored by the church historian.

a) The Pastoral Charge -- In mid-May, 1925, the Joint Committee on Church Union sent a letter to all ministers of those churches coming together in Union. The message read

18. The New Outlook, June 10th, 1925, p. 6

in part:

It would seem that an occasion of such far-reaching significance should be marked by special services in every congregation which becomes part of the United Church of Canada. To commemorate this unprecedented event in church history, and to impress upon your people and your community the epoch-marking character of the Union, it is suggested by the Joint Committee on Church Union that appropriate services be held by every congregation entering the United Church of Canada.

We enclose a suggested Order of Service and earnestly urge you to give such thought and effort to it as will make the consummation of this Union the most impressive event in the memory of your congregation and the life of your community.¹⁹

There was a very positive response to this letter, and many inaugural services were held throughout the Bay of Quinte Conference.

The purpose of such services, to be held either on Wednesday, June 10th, or Sunday, June 14th, was "to celebrate the consummation of Church Union in every local congregation throughout Canada."²⁰ The service included hymns from each of the three uniting churches, the celebration of the Lord's Supper in the form determined by the local officials, a statement declaring the fact of Church Union, and words of welcome where unionist minorities from non-concurring congregations were uniting with other congregations.

19. G. Pidgeon and T. A. Moore, Letter, 'To the Ministers', May 14, 1925; U.C.A., 'Church Union', Box 2, File 58

20. Pamphlet, 'Inaugural Services', June 14th, 1925; U.C.A., 'Church Union', Box 2, File 58

It is of interest to note how one unionist minister of a non-concurring Presbyterian Church was welcomed by the United Church. Rev. F. H. MacIntosh, minister of the non-concurring St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church in Lindsay (the vote was 178 for union, 362 against union),²¹ a strong supporter of church union, led the unionist minority of St. Andrew's up the street to First United Church (formerly Methodist) on Sunday morning, June 14th, 1925, where he and his people were warmly welcomed into the membership and fellowship of their new congregation. For several years MacIntosh served as the associate minister at First United Church, and was elected the first chairman of Lindsay Presbytery.²² This is one illustration of the way in which a predominantly Methodist Conference demonstrated sensitivity, political awareness, and Christian concern, in its determination to make Church Union a recognizable reality.

One minister chose an interesting and imaginative text for his sermon celebrating the consummation of Church Union: "Two are better than one ... and a threefold cord is not quickly broken" (Eccl. 4:9, 12). It was fitting that the impact of the Union was acknowledged and celebrated by local

21. Document, 'Presbyterian Vote: 1925'; U.C.A. 'Church Union', Box 6, File 57

22. U.C.A., Lindsay Presbytery: Minutes, Vol. 1, 1925-1929, Sept. 8, 1925, p. 5

congregations during the first week in the life of the new United Church.

b) The Presbytery -- The First General Council gave explicit instructions regarding the inaugural services of its 109 Presbyteries. The five original Presbyteries in the Bay of Quinte Conference (divided, and increased to seven in 1927) had been named, and their boundaries established. The Committee on Conference Boundaries had designated one person from each Presbytery "to be responsible for convening and constituting the first meeting of the Presbytery,"²³ and recommended that this meeting be held before September 30th.

The inaugural meetings were held as requested, and while they varied slightly from one Presbytery to another the format of Belleville Presbytery was typical. The meeting opened with a statement of authority:

On Tuesday, September 15th, 1925, the ministers of the United Church of Canada, within the bounds of the counties of Lennox and Addington, Hastings, and Prince Edward, and representative laymen duly appointed, met pursuant to a notice sent out by the Rev. A. J. Wilson, of Napanee, under the authority delegated to him by the First General Council of the United Church of Canada to be known as The Belleville Presbytery.²⁴

Following the statement by the convenor, setting forth his authority and the purpose of the meeting, there was a time of

23. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1925, p. 216

24. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Vol. 1, 1925-1942, Sept. 15, 1925, p. 1

worship. This ranged from a short and simple service in Belleville, consisting of scripture, prayers and hymns, to a longer and more elaborate service in Kingston, where it was recorded that "an inspiring hour was spent in devotional exercises."²⁵

The membership rolls of the former Methodist Districts, Presbyterian Presbyteries, and Congregational Associations were presented, carefully checked, and accepted as the 'charter roll' of the Presbyteries. When the membership rolls had been accepted, the convenor formally constituted the court:

In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the only King and Head of the Church, and in virtue of the power vested in me as Convenor by the First General Council of the United Church of Canada, I hereby declare the Belleville Presbytery of the United Church of Canada duly constituted for the transaction of business.²⁶

This declaration, in essentially the same form (with obvious adaptations), is still used to formally 'constitute the court' in meetings of Presbytery and Conference.

One of the first items of business was the election of officers: chairman, secretary, and treasurer. It is interesting and important to note how carefully the balance between Methodists and Presbyterians was maintained (there were

25. U.C.A., Kingston Presbytery: Minutes, Vol. 1, 1925-1935, Sept. 8, 1925, p. 1

26. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery, Op. Cit., p. 3

only three active Congregational ministers in the Conference). In Renfrew, where the former Presbyterian Church was strong, a Presbyterian nominated a Methodist for chairman, while a Methodist in turn nominated a Presbyterian for secretary-treasurer, and both were elected.²⁷ It was as though they had St. Paul's injunction in mind: "Outdo one another in showing honour" (Romans 12:10). In Belleville, where the former Methodist Church was overwhelmingly predominant, a Presbyterian was elected chairman, with Methodists being elected secretary and treasurer (the latter, Mr. Harold Martin, served without interruption as treasurer for forty-seven years, 1925-1972).²⁸ In Cobourg, where there were two former Congregational churches, a Congregationalist was elected as treasurer of the Presbytery.²⁹

Of the fifteen officers in the five Presbyteries, thirteen were ministers and two were laymen. In denominational background, seven were Methodist, seven were Presbyterian, and one was a Congregationalist. This careful balance was evident for the first few 'delicate' years, with the Methodists being especially careful not to exert their majority. In time, denominational backgrounds were overlooked as

27. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, Vol. 1, 1925-1943, Sept. 8, 1925, pp. 5-6

28. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery, Op. Cit., pp. 3-4

29. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Vol. 1, 1925-1938, Sept. 24, 1925, p. 5

factors, and the elections were based on merit or seniority.

At the inaugural meetings the Presbyteries wasted no time in coming to grips with the necessary business: appointing committees, establishing policies to govern the frequency of meetings, financing the work, and emphasizing the proper keeping of records. The practical approach of the new courts is illustrated by noting several of their concerns: the review of boundaries, the re-arrangement of pastoral charges (especially in those small 'over-churched' communities where Methodists and Presbyterians had competed), the sale of some 'surplus' properties, the gathering and preservation of items of an historical value, the transfer of records from the uniting churches to the archives in Queen's or Victoria theological colleges, and the immediate future of the twenty-six Presbyterian ministers who entered Union from non-concurring congregations and were temporarily unemployed.

There were matters of wider importance brought to the attention of the Presbyteries by leaders from the Church's offices in Toronto: the challenge of home and foreign missions, the need for an adequate and systematic funding of the Church's enterprises, and words of spiritual encouragement. A careful reading of the minutes of the inaugural meetings of the five Presbyteries reveals how they sensed the greatness of the opportunity presented by Union, their oneness with others across the country, and their dependence upon a source

of strength beyond themselves.

The attendance at the inaugural meetings was not as good as might have been expected for such occasions. Of a total membership of 679, only 467 were present; or 69%, which has remained an average attendance at regular meetings of Presbytery. There were more ministers present (260 of 357, or 73%) than lay members (207 of 322, or 64%); and of the latter, six were women. One of the lay members was George Paudash, Chief of the Ojibway Band at Hiawatha.³⁰

The Presbyteries adjourned, to meet in Peterborough on October 13th, 1925, for the inaugural meeting of the Bay of Quinte Conference.

c) The Conference -- The First General Council was no less explicit in its instructions to the Conference than to the Presbyteries. The boundaries of the Bay of Quinte Conference had been established, as had been the names and boundaries of its five Presbyteries. The General Council appointed a committee of three, Rev. J. T. Daley (Congregational), Rev. D. W. Best (Presbyterian), and Rev. C. W. Barrett (Methodist), to be responsible for calling and convening the inaugural meeting not later than October 31st, 1925.³¹

³⁰. U.C.A., Presbytery Minutes, Sept., 1925, passim

³¹. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1925, pp. 216-218, 221

This meeting was held on Tuesday, October 13th, 1925, at 8.00 p.m. in George Street United Church, Peterborough, with Rev. J. T. Daley presiding. The service of worship opened with the hymn, 'The Church's One Foundation', and following the reading of Scripture and the singing of two more hymns, the presiding minister offered a prayer for the Conference, a portion of which invoked the blessing of God on the Union:

As we do solemnly with prayer and thanksgiving, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ the only Head of the Church, now constitute the Bay of Quinte Conference of the United Church of Canada, let Thy Holy Spirit seal this act and sanctify this court of Thy Church. O Blessed and Abiding Spirit, endue this Conference and all its members and all the congregation of the Lord with heavenly wisdom; enlighten them with true knowledge of Thy Word; inspire them with pure zeal for Thy glory; rule their hearts in all things; and so order all their doings that unity and peace shall prevail, that truth and righteousness shall flow from them, and that by their endeavours all Thy ministers and churches shall be refreshed and established, Thy Gospel everywhere purely preached and truly followed, Thy kingdom among men extended and strengthened, and the whole body of Thy people grow up into Him who is head over all things to the Church, Jesus Christ.³²

The Conference was then declared to be 'duly constituted', and the members joined in the celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion, and were dismissed with the blessing.

The first business meeting was held on Wednesday morning, October 14th, when the membership rolls of the five Presbyteries were accepted as the roll of Conference. The

³² B.Q.A., Pamphlet, 'The Inaugural Service of the Bay of Quinte Conference', October 13th, 1925, pp. 5-6

mayor of the city and the chairman of the Peterborough Ministerial Association brought greetings. Rev. C. W. Barrett (Methodist) of Stirling was elected President of Conference, and Rev. M. C. MacKinnon (Presbyterian) of Peterborough was elected Secretary.

The Maintenance and Extension Committee presented its report, and the Conference accepted the General Council's call 'to prayer and consecration' and commended it to all the pastoral charges. The Maintenance and Extension Fund was to provide the money for the missionary, social, educational, and benevolent work of the United Church, and was set as a national budget which was then apportioned to the Conferences who in turn apportioned it to the Presbyteries and the pastoral charges. Of a national budget of \$4,000,000, Bay of Quinte accepted its allocation of \$360,000.

A matter of great importance and urgency, especially to the ministers, was the report of the Settlement Committee (the committee responsible for the placement of ministers). The Committee's task was both difficult and delicate in the first year of union: difficult, because of the twenty-six Presbyterian ministers from non-concurring congregations who were left without a pastoral charge at the time of Union; and delicate, because of the need to place them in pastoral charges as associate ministers without doing violence to the finances of the charges or to the dignity of the ministers.

Of the twenty-six ministers in this situation, the Settlement Committee had been able to place twenty-three; and of the others, one accepted a call from another Conference, one was left 'without appointment' at his own request, and the third returned to his congregation that had voted non-concurrence. Of this situation, the Committee said:

We commend the spirit of the men who were voted out, and also their brethren in all the churches who have given assistance to those who were called to suffer.³³

An example of how this situation was resolved is that of Rev. F. H. MacIntosh of Lindsay (see p. 66).

The Moderator of the United Church, Rev. Dr. George Pidgeon, addressed the Conference in a special evening session on the theme of man's relationship with God and with his fellow man. The Conference recorded its appreciation:

We express our pride in the ability and spiritual power of our chief officer, and pray that he may be followed and supported continually with the Presence of the Divine Master, who has entrusted him with high responsibility and opportunity.³⁴

Three other national officers, representing the three uniting churches, also addressed the Conference on the life and work of the United Church. In this way the national Church was able to keep the regional Church informed and inspired.

33. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book; 1925, p. 9

34. Ibid., p. 10

Of special interest to the church historian is the report of the Conference archivist, who encouraged the collection and safe-keeping of church records and also noted some results of his own successful search for Methodist papers and artifacts. Included in the latter were the President's gavel and the staff of office "with its many inscribed circles of silver and gold".³⁵ His report was made

... in order that it may be on record where certain valuable historical property is to be found if required for reference [and to secure archival material which] if left undone at this time would mean the loss of documents very necessary for historical purposes.³⁶

The Conference has been well-served by its secretaries who recorded the minutes of meetings and conducted the correspondence, and by its archivists who gathered this material so that it would be available for historical research.

The Conference, in concluding its business, appointed committees to carry on the work through the year, attended to some property matters, and elected its commissioners to the next meeting of the General Council. Then the President dismissed the members with the benediction, and the inaugural meeting of the Bay of Quinte Conference stood adjourned.³⁷

35. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1925, p. 13

36. Ibid., pp. 12-13

37. The material in this section, pages 71-75, is drawn from B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1925, pp. 3-21

3. Consolidation of the Union

With the inspiration and the enthusiasm of the inaugural services behind them, the Pastoral Charges, the Presbyteries, and the Conference settled down to the practical task of making the new Church work. Few there were who believed that the events of June 10th or October 13th were sufficient in themselves to ensure the success of the Union. Yet it would be wrong to assume that the work of consolidation began only at the date of Union.

a) Local Unions Prior to 1925 -- There were ministers and congregations who, through a combination of vision, necessity and opportunity, had brought about effective unions in the Bay of Quinte region before 1925. Prior to 1917 there were many and varied local union churches in Ontario, but these were not officially part of the Church Union movement.³⁸ Such union churches became an integral part of either the Presbyterian or Methodist churches, but after 1917 these cooperation churches could anticipate union by adopting the Basis of Union, as Local Union churches had done in Western Canada, and by being responsible to either the Presbyterian or Methodist Church as assigned by the Home Mission Boards of the two churches.

38. Census of Canada: 1901, Ottawa, King's Printer, 1906, Vol. 4, pp. 371-384

This arrangement was known as 'Single Affiliation', but later, when some members resisted such an arbitrary assignment, provision was made for 'Double Affiliation', or even 'Triple Affiliation' where the Congregationalists were involved. These co-operative arrangements worked rather well, but could be confusing from a statistical standpoint. Members were usually carefully listed on the roll by their former denomination, but sometimes they were claimed by both churches while at other times they were claimed by neither church.

In 1924 there were eighty-two congregations in thirty-nine pastoral charges in the Bay of Quinte region that were in some form of co-operation, and were, for all practical purposes, united congregations. The Presbyterians were involved in all thirty-nine pastoral charges, the Methodists in thirty-six, and the Congregationalists in five. Methodist ministers were in charge of twenty-three of these co-operative charges, Presbyterian ministers were in charge of fifteen, and one was served by a Congregational minister.³⁹ Six examples are worth noting, as they illustrate situations that differed somewhat from the normal pattern of co-operative ventures.

a) The first example was not a success, the only failure of the thirty-nine co-operative unions. On Amherst Island,

39. U.C.A., The Congregational Year Book: 1925, pp. 124-127; Acts and Proceedings of the Fifty-First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in Canada: 1925, pp. 316-329; The Methodist Year Book: 1925, pp. 142-160, 181-199.

fifteen miles south-west of Kingston, the Presbyterians and the Methodists each had a small congregation. This situation seemed ideally suited for a local union, and the two congregations agreed to enter upon a plan of co-operation in anticipation of Church Union. The Presbyterians had a beautiful stone church, centrally located on the island, but its tower had never been completed. The Methodists, in a typically generous gesture, sold their parsonage, which was not in use as the Presbyterian minister was in charge of both congregations, and used the money to finish building the Presbyterian tower. Shortly thereafter, the Presbyterians, with the tower firmly attached and completely paid for, decided they no longer wished to continue the experiment in co-operation. The Methodists were left with a church, but no parsonage and the need for a grant to build a new parsonage.⁴⁰ The Presbyterian withdrawal served as a warning to the Methodists who, in 1923, appointed a commission to ensure

... that the Methodist equity is secured and properly safeguarded in all cases where Methodist property is to be placed in the hands of the Presbyterian Church for the use of Co-operative or Union charges.⁴¹

b) An interesting situation was at Delora, a mining community near Marmora, where the Methodists and the Anglicans

40. U.C.A., Documents, 'Law and Legislation', Box 33, File 145; and Belleville Presbytery, Op. Cit., Feb. 2, 1926, p. 27, Dec. 7, 1926, p. 85

41. U.C.A., The Methodist Year Book: 1923, p. 15

shared a church building and were served by the Methodist minister. This congregation came into the United Church in 1925. Since then there have been several instances, mostly in the northern part of the Conference, where the Anglicans and the United Church have shared facilities and ministers.

c) In 1922 the First Congregational Church of Kingston federated with Chalmers Presbyterian Church. This was a true union, with the members of the Congregational church received into Chalmers membership. The terms of agreement were approved by the Congregational Missionary Society, and permission was given to sell the church property.⁴² First Congregational Church was the successor to a Union Church built in 1831, in which Congregationalists, Baptists, Presbyterians, Methodists, and others holding independent and evangelical views worshipped together. The Congregationalists fell heir to the building when the Presbyterians built St. Andrew's Church and the Methodists built Sydenham Street Church.

d) In 1920 the members of Zion Congregational Church in Lanark united with St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church, and were later joined by the Methodists, making Lanark unique in the Conference as the only 'Triple Affiliation' congregation, and the only United Church in the Bay of Quinte Conference to be made up of members of all three uniting churches. The unused

42. U.C.A., Congregational Missionary Society: Minutes, Executive Committee, Feb. 24, 1921, pp. 39-41

Methodist church was sold, and proceeds went toward the building of a parsonage on the neighbouring rural charge.⁴³

e) 'One year prior to Union, the Presbyterians and the Congregationalists in the townships of Lanark and Darling in Lanark county were successfully united. The Canadian Congregationalist gives the following account:

As an indication of the constant trend towards Union we note that our Middleville, Hopetown and Rosetta Congregational churches have united with the Presbyterian churches of Middleville, Hopetown and Darling (Tatlock) under a plan of co-operation for twelve months, or until the consummation of the United Church of Canada. The plan, which was voted upon by both bodies and practically unanimous, provides that the present pastor of the Congregational Church, the Rev. James A. Plant, be the pastor of the united churches and that the services be held in both Presbyterian and Congregational buildings in Middleville and Hopetown on alternate Sundays. The first united service was held on Sunday, June 15th, 1924.⁴⁴

It is interesting to note that the Congregational Church in Middleville was started in 1848 as the result of a 'split' in the Presbyterian Church. One group, being unable to get a minister from the Free Church of Scotland and unwilling to be served by a minister of the 'Auld Kirk', took a traditionally independent course and became Congregationalists. A further point of interest is that Rev. James Plant, the minister of the United Church at Middleville, was ordained in

43. U.C.A., The New Outlook, March 23, 1927, p. 18

44. U.C.A., The Canadian Congregationalist, August 6th, 1924, p. 12

the United Brethren in Christ Church in Western Ontario, a small denomination that united with the Congregationalists in 1911.⁴⁵ Middleville is an excellent example of a variety of traditions coming together in a successful union.

f) The sixth illustration is that of Kendal United Church, near Oshawa, to which belongs the distinction of being the first official local union congregation in Ontario to be organized under the plan of co-operation. In 1917, the Presbyterians of Kendal united with the Methodists, using the Methodist Church as the place of worship.⁴⁶

Of the eighty-two congregations that were 'united' prior to Church Union, all, except First Congregational and Chalmers in Kingston, were rural or village congregations where common sense and practical necessity brought about the resolution of situations that, in most cases, should never have arisen. The great scandal of rural Ontario was the 'over-churched' community, a scandal that resulted from an aggressive and competitive denominationalism in which the Methodists and the Presbyterians were the main, but not the only, offenders.

b) Pastoral Charge Amalgamations -- Following Church Union there was an immediate response to the challenge of the

45. Historical Note, Middleville Museum

46. Pamphlet, Kendal United Church, 1974, p. 2

over-churched community scandal. Within the Conference in the first three years there were twenty-two amalgamations, and in every case this was bringing two congregations (usually a Methodist and a Presbyterian) in one community together in a single congregation. These actions resulted in transforming several 'aid-receiving' congregations into strong, self-supporting congregations, and strengthening the religious life of those communities.

In addition to these amalgamations there were twenty-six realignments of pastoral charges. In most cases these were rural congregations that found a geographical rearrangement to their mutual benefit. In the case of realignments, a number of surplus churches and manses were sold with the proceeds going to a variety of needs in the 'new' pastoral charge: mortgages discharged or reduced, Sunday Schools or church halls built or improved, new organs installed, decorating and renovations to the property.

In Renfrew Presbytery there were amalgamations in the large towns of Arnprior, Carleton Place, Perth and Renfrew. An interesting amalgamation took place in Oshawa, where the Presbyterians and Methodists combined their work in the City Mission and Extension Board, including a ministry to the Ukrainians, establishing Sunday Schools in two new districts, and planning for a new church as the core of the mission.⁴⁷

47. U.C.A., The New Outlook, April 20, 1927, p. 25

The United Church made good its claim to be a 'uniting' church by entering into negotiations with the Ontario Conference of the Christian Church. Under the authority of the agreement between the two denominations, the Christian Church in Oshawa (by a vote of 73 to 2) elected to become a congregation of the United Church. Oshawa Presbytery accepted the new congregation, to be known as Centre Street United Church, and also their minister, Rev. Dr. W. P. Fletcher.⁴⁸

However, because of the regulation requiring a minister of another denomination to serve a 'probationary' year before being formally received into the United Church, Dr. Fletcher had to serve as a 'supply minister', but he was accorded the full privileges of membership in the Presbytery. It is interesting to note that by waiting the required year, Dr. Fletcher was received into the United Church at the same meeting as his son, Rev. William Fletcher, also a minister of the Christian Church who had been engaged in post-graduate study in New York.⁴⁹ Dr. Fletcher was elected President of Conference in 1941, and his son held several responsible offices in the Presbyteries he served. This is another illustration of the success of Union in the Conference.

In the matter of realignment of pastoral charges, there were several transfers from one Presbytery to another

p. 40 48. U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, Oct. 4, 1928,

49. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1929, p. 46

within Conference, as well as a number of transfers from Bay of Quinte to Toronto and to Montreal and Ottawa Conferences. These actions presented no problems except in Lindsay Presbytery where six pastoral charges, with a total of fourteen congregations, were transferred to Toronto Conference. Accordingly, the Bay of Quinte Conference forwarded a protest from Lindsay Presbytery to the General Council on the grounds that "such transfers were made without the recommendation or approval of the Bay of Quinte Conference, the Lindsay Presbytery, and at least some of the charges concerned."⁵⁰

The six pastoral charges in question comprised 18% of Lindsay Presbytery, and this fact strengthened the protest that the transfers had seriously affected the work of the Presbytery. On the other side, it was understandable that these pastoral charges would desire such a transfer because they were all part of the former Methodist District of Uxbridge which had been assigned to the Toronto Conference in 1925, and felt uprooted by being placed in Bay of Quinte Conference. In regard to Lindsay's protest, the General Council of 1928 simply recommended "that no action be taken".⁵¹

It was not surprising that there would be an awkwardness of procedure in some of these matters in the early years of the Union as the Church sought the practical application

50. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1927, p. 31

51. U.C.A., U.C.A. Year Book: 1928, p. 88

of blending two styles of church polity. As a sequel to the Lindsay protest, it is worth observing that in 1940 two of the six pastoral charges were transferred back to Lindsay Presbytery and Bay of Quinte Conference at their own request.

c) Presbytery Realignment -- The First General Council established the number and size of the five original Presbyteries in the Bay of Quinte Conference. The Presbytery boundaries were arranged according to county boundaries, and included eighteen Methodist Districts in three Conferences (Montreal, Bay of Quinte, and Toronto), six Presbyterian Presbyteries in two Synods (Montreal and Ottawa, and Toronto and Kingston), and two Congregational District Associations.⁵²

To establish boundaries by counties rather than by former denominational boundaries was the only practical way, and was generally well accepted. In the first three years there were some minor boundary adjustments that involved a few realignments of pastoral charges and some transfers between Presbyteries to establish, or re-establish, natural groupings of congregations. Belleville, Kingston, and Renfrew Presbyteries were relatively unaffected, but in Cobourg and Lindsay some dramatic changes were made that resulted in dividing these two Presbyteries into four.

⁵². U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1925, pp. 217-218

Cobourg and Lindsay Presbyteries soon realized that they were too large to be effective, and they began to investigate the possibility of dividing into smaller and more workable units. At its inaugural meeting, Cobourg defeated a motion asking Conference "to review the boundaries of the Presbyteries to the end that there be not more than thirty-five charges within the bounds of Presbytery."⁵³ The introduction of this motion, though defeated at the time, turned out to be prophetic of the future. Lindsay Presbytery, in October, 1925, asked the Conference to appoint a Boundaries Committee to consider changes in Presbytery boundaries.⁵⁴

Lindsay suggested that the two Presbyteries be divided into three, but many pastoral charges in Cobourg Presbytery objected to this proposal. Cobourg countered with a proposal to divide the two Presbyteries into four. These discussions took place during the winter of 1926-27.⁵⁵

At the annual meeting of the Conference in June, 1927, the two Presbyteries met and agreed to a division of the two into four. The Conference concurred in the decision of the Presbyteries, and the two Presbyteries were divided

53. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 24, 1925, p. 8

54. U.C.A., Lindsay Presbytery: Minutes, Oct. 13, 1925, p. 23

55. U.C.A., Lindsay Presbytery: Minutes, Dec. 14, 1926, p. 110; and Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Apr. 21, 1927, p. 61

as follows: Cobourg was divided into Cobourg Presbytery (25 pastoral charges) and Oshawa Presbytery (27 pastoral charges); and Lindsay was divided into Lindsay Presbytery (28 pastoral charges) and Peterborough Presbytery (25 pastoral charges). The size of the other Presbyteries in 1927 was: Belleville (61 pastoral charges), Kingston (41 pastoral charges), and Renfrew (39 pastoral charges); a total of 246 pastoral charges in the Conference, with 639 congregations or preaching points.⁵⁶

The boundaries have remained essentially the same in the seven Presbyteries since 1927, although there has been a reduction in the number of pastoral charges and congregations by further amalgamations and realignments through the years.⁵⁷

d) Conference Boundaries -- In its first year the Bay of Quinte Conference faced a threat of serious changes in its boundaries. It has been noted (page 84) that ten pastoral charges were transferred from Bay of Quinte to the Toronto Conference and to the Montreal and Ottawa Conference. Four of these pastoral charges were amicably transferred, but not so with the other six. The protests of Lindsay Presbytery and the Bay of Quinte Conference to the General Council were

⁵⁶. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1927, pp. 13, 30-31; and U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1927, pp. 576-582

⁵⁷. See Chapter VI, pp. 285-287.

in vain, and the Conference found itself eight pastoral charges and twenty-one congregations smaller than when it was organized. But a still greater threat was to come.

A number of suggestions for changes in Conference boundaries were made to the Second General Council in 1926. These suggestions were referred to a special commission for study and a subsequent report to the 1928 Council. The proposed changes, had they been approved, would have affected Bay of Quinte in relation to the Montreal and Ottawa Conference. A memorial from Ottawa Presbytery that the pastoral charges in the counties of Leeds, Lanark, and Renfrew be transferred from Bay of Quinte to Montreal and Ottawa Conference was rejected by the Council.⁵⁸ This request was not as brazen as might first appear, as the pastoral charges in question had belonged either to the Montreal Conference of the Methodist Church, or to the Montreal and Ottawa Synod of the Presbyterian Church prior to Church Union. From the Montreal and Ottawa Conference point of view, it could be argued that this move would simply have been a 'return home'. However, Bay of Quinte did not see the suggestion in such a 'homecoming' light.

The memorial might also have been produced in a spirit of retaliation against an earlier memorial from Belleville

58. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1928, pp. 30, 361

Presbytery that Bay of Quinte would accede to the transfer of the pastoral charges from Lindsay Presbytery to Toronto Conference "only on condition that the Bay of Quinte Conference be enlarged to a like extent on the East".⁵⁹ The 1926 General Council rejected Belleville's memorial asking for the enlargement of Bay of Quinte Conference by adding to it the Ottawa Presbytery.⁶⁰

The first of these suggestions would have reduced Bay of Quinte by transferring fifty-six pastoral charges and 146 congregations from the counties of Leeds, Lanark, and Renfrew to the Montreal and Ottawa Conference; while the second suggestion would have enlarged Bay of Quinte by transferring to it sixty-four pastoral charges and 146 congregations from the Ottawa Presbytery. Had these memorials received favourable consideration from the General Council the actual size of the Conference would have remained essentially the same, although it would have gained a metropolitan centre in Ottawa.

As it turned out, the General Council rejected both of these memorials, and Bay of Quinte remained much as it was at the time of Church Union except for the loss of the ten pastoral charges previously noted. The concern with possible

59. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, April 29, 1926, p. 44

60. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1926, p. 91

changes in boundaries may appear pedestrian, but for Bay of Quinte it was, in fact, a matter of survival as a distinct and separate Conference within the United Church.

e) Results of Realignment and Amalgamation -- As has been noted (page 82), the twenty-two amalgamations of pastoral charges were all community amalgamations; that is the joining of two congregations, usually one Methodist and one Presbyterian, in a community into a single congregation. The typical result was one strong, self-supporting congregation rather than two or three small, struggling aid-receiving congregations in a community. The people were better served and the religious life of the community was strengthened, as indeed was the community life itself with the old denominational rivalries replaced by a united effort.

The results of realignment were of a similar nature, with natural boundaries being established or re-established. The positive results were a releasing of financial resources to add to the strength of the newly realigned or amalgamated charges, and the availability of new finances realized from the sale of surplus churches and manses. A negative result was the temporary over-supply of ministers, and the consequent awkwardness of having two ministers employed by one pastoral charge with the danger of dividing loyalties. This also had a positive benefit, however, as it gave former Methodists and Presbyterians an opportunity to become acquainted

as they worked out the difficulties in these situations, and as they shared in the pastoral and preaching traditions of each others' churches.

The comment of Renfrew Presbytery, in reporting on the amalgamations, might well sum up the spirit of the union years in the Bay of Quinte Conference: "The United Church of Canada has already captured the loyalty of this whole Presbytery."⁶¹

4. Theology in The Basis of Union

An interdenominational union, such as that of the Congregational, Presbyterian and Methodist churches, requires an examination, however brief, of the theology of the uniting churches.⁶² This section will not provide a detailed discussion of United Church doctrine, but will simply offer a short survey of the distinctive theological emphases of the three churches, and of the way the doctrinal differences were resolved and reconciled in a statement setting forth "the substance of the Christian faith, as commonly held" by the three

61. U.C.A., The New Outlook, Oct. 14, 1925, p. 20

62. The material in this section (pages 91-10) is drawn from four sources: R. C. Chalmers, See The Christ Stand!, Toronto, Ryerson, 1945, pp. 44-47, 74-79, 96-137; John Dow, This Is Our Faith, Toronto, United Church of Canada, 1943, pp. 1-245; T. B. Kilpatrick, Our Common Faith, Toronto, Ryerson, pp. 57-76; and Alfred Gandier, The Doctrinal Basis of Union, Toronto, Ryerson, pp. 1-48

uniting churches.⁶³

a) Congregational Theology -- The theology of Canadian Congregationalism was basically Calvinist with 'a New England accent'. Its doctrine of the Church, simply stated, is, 'where Christ is, there is the Church', and is based on the words of Jesus: "Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). And the church was understood as a local manifestation of 'the communion of saints' which shared a bond of fellowship with other congregations through the common requirement of a personal religious experience for membership, and the voluntary covenant relationship of members with one another and with God.

Congregationalism had consistently held to the separation of church and state, yet it had been equally consistent in its concern to apply Christian principles to civic and community affairs. D. L. Ritchie, a distinguished Canadian Congregational scholar, sums up the historic Congregational attitude towards the relationship of church and state:

The way the churches can most powerfully influence the national life is by exuding a climate in which it will be easy for men to do good and difficult for them to do evil.⁶⁴

63. The Manual: The United Church of Canada, Toronto, United Church Publishing House, 1978, p. 11

64. D. L. Ritchie, 'The Church and Public Life', in The Canadian Journal of Religious Thought, May, 1926, p. 172

The Congregational ideal was a free church within a free state.

Congregationalism adhered to the basic Christian doctrines, but left the individual member freedom in the expression of his faith. The open-minded and tolerant spirit of Congregationalism regarding the creeds is captured in two well-known sayings of two seventeenth century Congregational ministers: "In things essential, unity; in things doubtful, liberty; in all things, charity." (Richard Baxter); and, "The Lord has more truth and light yet to break forth out of His Holy Word." (John Robinson). The official statement of faith of Canadian Congregationalism was The Commission Creed (1883), a New England creed that was broadly catholic and evangelical. To the Congregationalist, a creed was an expression of one's faith but not a standard by which to test one's orthodoxy.

b) Presbyterian Theology -- The theology of the Presbyterian Church was strongly influenced by St. Paul's concept of salvation by grace and faith alone, his views on reconciliation and justification, and his teaching concerning church, ministry, and sacraments; and St. Augustine's understanding of the sovereignty of God, predestination, and the authority of the church in both religious and civic life; especially as Paul and Augustine were interpreted by John Calvin.

Calvin developed a well-constructed and powerfully articulated theological system, The Institutes of the Christian Religion (1559), which was given creedal form in The Westminster Confession of Faith (1647). This, together with The Shorter Catechism (1648), described as a masterpiece of religious instruction and the working creed of the Scottish Church, has exerted a great and lasting influence on Presbyterianism.

The Presbyterian concept of the Church was a democratic hierarchy, with rule by the presbyters (elders) who were elected by the members, from the members, to represent the members and to govern the Church. Presbyterianism is the ecclesiastical counterpart of democratic representative government. Presbyterianism regarded the state as one of the 'orders' in God's creation, and as such it had a divine function. Only when the state's aims were opposed to the church's conscience was the state to be condemned; at other times it was the Christian's duty to exercise his citizenship in such a manner as to uphold the good and overthrow evil.

The Calvinist-Presbyterian tradition and ideals, with a stern morality and a transcendent view of God, have produced a people renowned for strong Christian character and firmness of resolve in public action and private conduct, a people informed in the Christian faith and involved in both church and community.

c) Methodist Theology -- The Methodists, as the Congregationalists and the Presbyterians, made the Bible the basis of their belief. The subordinate standards were John Wesley's Twenty-five Articles of Religion (1784), his Forty-four Sermons (1787), and his Notes on the New Testament (1754), together with the Wesleyan hymns. The latter, most of which were written by Charles Wesley, were of great importance in formulating Methodist theology in the minds and hearts of the people.

Wesley was brought up in the Arminianism of his day, a theological revolt against the harshness of Calvinism. The Arminian spirit of moderation and tolerance is reflected in Wesley's theology.

One of the main emphases in Methodism was universal redemption, based on an understanding of the unlimited love and mercy of God. All have sinned, but all can be saved through the perfect once-for-all sacrifice of Jesus. While salvation is God's free gift, it must be received and accepted in faith and thus the absolute will of God is 'conditioned' by the free will of man. Another major emphasis in Methodist theology was the doctrine of assurance; that a man could know his sins were forgiven, and that this experience of personal salvation was to be marked by a life of obedience. The witness of the Spirit attested to the validity of one's experience. The doctrine of assurance was the basic contribution

of Methodism to the life and thought of the Church. But the crown of Wesley's teaching was the doctrine of Christian perfection (also known as 'sanctification' or 'holiness' or 'the second blessing'), and the corollary to his appeal to Christian experience. The goal of the Christian is to fulfil the Great Commandment of Jesus (Mark 12:29-31), to love God with all the heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love one's neighbour as oneself.

Wesley's theology was related to those things most essential for the spiritual life, and was concentrated on the work of salvation and tested by experience.

Wesley always tested his doctrine by three things: scripture, reason and experience. The last test, experience, was adhered to at all times. While Wesley's doctrine cannot be styled a religious pragmatism in any absolute sense, yet he believed in a negative pragmatism, for whatever would not work was not true.⁶⁵

Wesley asked one basic question of all candidates for membership in his Methodist societies: "Is a man a believer in Jesus Christ; and is his life suitable to his belief?"

Wesley's practical attitude to church authority and ordinances was somewhat pragmatic, and when he no longer had support from the Church of England he was forced to take matters into his own hands and ordain ministers for the ever-expanding mission in both Britain and America. Thus came his break with the Church of England in 1784 over the question of

65. R. C. Chalmers, Op. Cit., p. 93

church orders.

From the beginning, Methodism stressed the importance of religious education for the young, and the establishment of Sunday Schools. A factor in this emphasis was undoubtedly Wesley's recollection of the value of his own religious training by his mother, Susanna. The Methodist Church has always been catholic and ecumenical in outlook, and one of Wesley's favourite texts was: "If your heart be right with my heart, give me your hand" (2 Kings 10:15). Methodism has always been willing to recognize "the Christians of other churches, and the churches of other Christians."⁶⁶

In summary, Methodist theology was evangelical, ethical, experiential, educational, and ecumenical. It was both simple and practical, and held a special appeal for the common man. It was, in Wesley's words, "plain truth for plain people", and this plain and practical theology, with its accompanying social concern, was admirably suited to the needs of the Canadian frontier.

d) Towards a Statement of Faith -- In 1902 the Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists decided that the time was opportune to pursue the goal of church union. Each church appointed a church union committee, and at the

66. Charles C. Selecman, The Methodist Primer, Nashville, Tidings, 1959, p. 36

first joint meeting of the three committees in 1904 it was unanimously agreed "that organic union is both desirable and practicable".⁶⁷

The Sub-committee on Doctrine, under the chairmanship of Chancellor Burwash of Victoria University (Methodist), recognized that agreement in matters of doctrine was necessary before differences in polity could be resolved. The great historic creeds of the Christian faith, together with the statements of faith of the three uniting churches, were used as the starting point in seeking a mutually acceptable doctrinal statement that would express the essential content of the Christian faith and be part of the proposed Basis of Union. There was no attempt on the part of any of the three churches to force its theology on the others, but rather to earnestly seek a common ground on which the new Church might base its beliefs. This common ground was the love and loyalty each felt for Jesus Christ, and within this framework the lesser loyalties to denominations found their secondary place.

The Sub-committee on Doctrine discovered that the reconciliation of doctrinal differences was less formidable than had at first been feared. The Calvinism in Presbyterianism and Congregationalism and the Arminianism in Methodism

67. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1925, p. 58

harmonized in the United Church's Articles of Faith. The differences between predestination and free grace were more psychological than actual, and the Calvinist stress on God's sovereignty and predestination can be seen as complementary rather than contradictory to the Arminian emphasis on the assurance of faith and free grace. These two theological positions were reconciled in the statement of faith, partly because they were rightly recognized as secondary differences that were carefully re-stated in non-controversial language, but mostly because they were considered almost irrelevant in the challenge then confronting the churches in Canada. It must also be recalled that there was a Canadian precedent for such a theological reconciliation in the union of 1911 between the Congregationalists, who were Calvinist by descent, and the United Brethren in Christ, who were Methodist and Arminian in background.

The task of the Sub-committee on Doctrine was not to prepare a new creed, but to present a summary of the faith of the uniting churches in such a way as would preserve the distinctive points in each and that would be acceptable to all as a doctrinal basis for union. The Articles of Faith do not contain a system of theology, nor were they intended to do so; but they do contain the essential truths of the Christian faith, as they were intended to do. They are deliberately non-controversial, a compromise in the best sense of the word,

and are admittedly conservative. There was no attempt to introduce anything new into the statement of faith. Indeed, and in what was a wise and conciliatory move, the members used the Brief Statement of the Reformed Faith of the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A. (1902), itself a mediating document, as an example of harmonizing doctrinal differences. Little attention was paid to suggestions from the professors in the theological colleges of the uniting churches. This disregard of 'new' theological input may be understood by the fact that the average age of the members of the Sub-committee was fifty-seven,⁶⁸ men whose theological thought was mature and who would be expected to be conservative and practical in their approach to producing a compromise document.

It was said that no recent graduate of any of the uniting churches' colleges, where liberal theological teaching was dominant, could have given wholehearted subscription to the Articles of Faith. Fortunately, for them, the Congregational insistence that only 'essential agreement' was required of ministers to the Articles saw to it that none of them had to. However, the Articles were generally well received by the laity, and by most of the ministers already ordained. It has been shown throughout the history of the Church that formal subscription to a creed does not guarantee

68. C. E. Silcox, Op. Cit., p. 127

orthodoxy, and responsibility was given to the Presbyteries and the Conferences to examine candidates prior to their ordination to decide whether or not they were in harmony with the basic faith of the Church.

In his detailed analysis of the Doctrinal Basis of Union, Professor R. C. Chalmers says:

There is no doubt that the Basis reflects the theological (or lack of) conditions in Canada at the turn of the century. The chief motive for Church Union was a practical one which meant that doctrinal matters were considered very secondary. ... The age was not a theological one. The Committee said that their intention was not to draft a new Creed but only to harmonize the existing Creeds of the three uniting churches with tactful omissions and compromises. ... What the Committee apparently overlooked was the fact that, regardless of their intentions, any statement on doctrine inserted in the Basis of Union, and thus given a note of authority, would automatically be regarded as the Creed of the United Church of Canada.⁶⁹

It was this 'creed', these Articles of Faith, short, simple, and scriptural, and interpreted out of the experience of persons of mainly Methodist and Presbyterian background, that formed the theological basis for the United Church in the Bay of Quinte Conference.

The Sub-committee on Doctrine was the first of five sub-committees of the Joint Committee on Union (the others dealt with matters of Ministry, Polity, Law, and Administration) to reach a consensus. It was able to do this by means

69. R. C. Chalmers, Op. Cit., p. 135

of compromise and conciliatory language in the document, no doubt made easier by the prevailing emphasis in the three churches on practical rather than doctrinal theology.

5. Contributions of the Uniting Churches

The Joint Committee on Church Union discovered the similarities of the three churches of polity and administration, as well as in doctrine. This growing consensus made the Committee's work easier, and a positive factor was finding some distinctive elements in each of the three churches that could be preserved and enhanced in the United Church. Rather than a 'melting pot', in which all differences would be blended, Church Union was "a mosaic to which all would contribute their distinctive gifts."⁷⁰ The three uniting churches brought their unique legacies of doctrine, polity, liturgy, and practice into the Union, and at the Inaugural Service on June 10th, 1925, the leaders of the three churches offered their special contributions to the United Church.

The Congregationalists offered "the liberty of prophesying, the love of spiritual freedom, and the enforcement of civic justice,"⁷¹ as well as a catholicity of spirit. Congregationalism takes its name from the most distinctive

70. John Webster Grant, Op. Cit., p. 37

71. U.C.A., The New Outlook, June 10, 1925, p. 6

feature of its polity, namely the independence and autonomy of the local congregation. It has insisted on the complete separation of church and state, with the Church being free of any assistance from or interference by the state. Democratic principles and procedures have been the trademark of Congregational meetings, with the entire membership taking part in the discussion and decision-making of matters of congregational concern. The local congregations were gathered into a District Association, and the District Associations met annually in a General Council.

The Presbyterians brought into the Union "the manifestation of the Spirit of vigilance for Christ's Kirk and Covenant, in care for the spread of education and devotion to sacred learning,"⁷² and also a consciousness of spiritual independence which had been secured in Scotland in defiance of both church and state. The most distinctive feature of the Presbyterian Church is its system of government which gives it its name where the rule rests with the presbyters. This system is representative and conciliar in form, and arose from the conviction that the Church must be a self-governing community with the right to elect officers of its own choosing and to speak freely on matters of faith and practice. Presbyterian polity is the logical result of Presbyterian


72. U.C.A., The New Outlook, June 10, 1925, p. 6

doctrine, with the Church as a fellowship of believers and not a federation of officials. Presbyterians have maintained that their polity is in accord with the teaching of the New Testament, some would even contend that it resembles more closely than any other the form of government of the early Christian Church.⁷³ The Presbyterian Church is governed by a series of church courts, the local Session, the Presbytery, the Synod, and the General Assembly, each one made up of a large element of elected representatives.

The Methodists gave the new Church their concern for "evangelical zeal and human redemption, the testimony of spiritual experience, and the ministry of sacred song."⁷⁴ They also brought a recognition of the rightful role of the laity in the Church, a burning concern for social righteousness, a history of effective political involvement, and the use of the press as a means of shaping public opinion. They supplemented this with a strong and well organized publishing industry, and a record of self-denial and generosity in voluntary church support. Wesley and the Methodists sought for themselves and others a new life born of Christian experience and an assurance of this through the witness of the Spirit. Out of this search came the distinctive elements of Methodist

73. C. W. Gordon, 'The Presbyterian Church' in Shortt and Doughty, eds., Canada and Its Provinces, Vol. XI, Toronto, Brook, 1914, p. 249

74. U.C.A., The New Outlook, June 10, 1925, p. 6



faith and polity, a simple, workable, efficient form of church government. In its early years in Ontario, Methodism adopted the American Methodist Episcopal polity, for until 1832 its preachers were commissioned by, and responsible to, American bishops. At the time of the Methodist union in 1884 the episcopacy was superseded by a superintendency and an annual presidency, with a government based on the English Wesleyan system. The Methodist courts were the Official Board of the local Circuit, the District Meeting, the Annual Conference, and the quadrennial General Conference, with each court having equal representation of clergy and laity.

Of the three forms of church government represented in the three uniting churches, Presbyterianism occupied the middle position between the authority of the bishop or superintendent in the Methodist system, and the authority of the local congregation in the Congregational system. The polity envisioned for the United Church would seek to provide a substantial local freedom, within a strong connexional system and a representative church government.

For some years prior to Church Union the three uniting churches had been moving closer together, and in no essential principle was there serious conflict. As Professor J. W. Falconer noted,⁷⁵ the Congregationalists and the Presbyterians

⁷⁵ J. W. Falconer, 'A Survey and a Comparison' in The New Outlook, June 10, 1925, p. 11

were approaching the doctrinal position of the Methodists; the Methodists and the Congregationalists were advancing towards the Presbyterian form of church government; and the Presbyterians and Methodists were recognizing the democracy and community spirit of the Congregationalists.

Each of the three churches shared its inheritance with the others, and in so doing each was enriched. Three strands of tradition were woven together, yet the essentials of each church's identity were preserved, leaving behind the old denominational labels, and freeing the United Church to seek its own identity and find its own way in the future.

The Bay of Quinte Conference, birthplace of two of the three leaders of the Church Union movement (S. D. Chown of the Methodists, and Hugh Pedley of the Congregationalists) and the cradle of both Methodism and Presbyterianism in Ontario, came into being with ten other Conferences on June 10, 1925. Old loyalties gave way to a new loyalty to the new United Church, a church which in its roots was indigenous to the province. The predominantly Methodist Conference was careful to make both Presbyterians and Congregationalists welcome in the Conference that bore an historic Methodist name. In many ways the graciousness and generosity of the Methodists, after union as before, was a major factor in the success of Church Union. The new Church was never seriously threatened by divisions along former denominational lines;

and never was a vote in Presbytery or Conference decided by former denominations voting in a bloc. The theology, essentially conservative, was readily accepted in a conservative Conference by all three uniting churches.

The energies of the Conference in the first years were, of necessity, directed mainly at the organization of the Conference and the consolidation of the Union. The numerous amalgamations and realignments strengthened the Conference and gave visible evidence that Church Union was both a reality and a success. Better fitted by this re-organization for its missionary, evangelical, educational, and social service work, the new Church demonstrated good stewardship in the wise use of its finances, property, and personnel.

The chief assets of the Church were not in property or finances, important as these were, but in people and in their deepened sense of fellowship, in their spiritual growth, and in their commitment to the mission of Christ's Church. The first three years of Union saw the emergence of a strong and viable United Church in the Conference, a Church whose strength would be tried to the utmost in the coming crisis of a continent-wide Depression.

CHAPTER III

THE DEPRESSION YEARS: 1929-1939

The years 1929-1939, the so-called 'dirty thirties', comprise a distinct period in Canadian history. They have clearly definable limits, from the collapse of the stock market on 'Black Thursday', October 24th, 1929, to the outbreak of World War II on Sunday, September 3rd, 1939. These years had the depression as the focal point of conversation, concern, and action. The importance attached to the depression is emphasized by giving it the adjective 'great' and capitalizing it as The Great Depression.

By world standards, Canada was incredibly wealthy in the 1920s, but this wealth led to a false sense of security. Thus Canadians were slow to realize the full extent of the calamity that had overtaken them in the financial 'crash' of 1929 and the ensuing economic depression that held North America and Europe in its relentless grasp. For many, the first year of The Great Depression was considered to be only a temporary interruption of the prosperity that most Canadians had come to take for granted.

This 'temporary interruption', however, lasted for a decade. The Depression hit Canada harder than most countries and lasted longer, with incomes declining by almost 50% from

1929 to 1933 and not recovering to the 1929 level until the year 1939.¹ The loss of export markets, low incomes, reduced purchasing power, unemployment, relief, and simply 'making ends meet' became the daily concern of most Canadians. Of all the provinces, Ontario suffered least from the Depression, but it was by no means untouched, and Eastern Ontario felt the force of the Depression to a much greater degree than the more industrialized parts of the province.

The Church, as every other institution and individual, was affected by The Great Depression. The United Church, only just consolidated after Union and beginning to reach out to explore its potential, was rudely jolted by the sudden and unexpected demands made upon its resources. That the Church survived these years cannot be explained simply in terms of the courage and sacrifice of its people. There was another factor, recognized and acknowledged in practically every report of every committee, and that factor was the Spirit of God. A reading of the minutes of the meetings in this period reveals that almost without exception they opened with prayer, seeking God's guidance and blessing on the work to be undertaken. The concern of the members for the welfare of both the church and the nation was evident in the actions

1. James Patterson, 'Federalism in Crisis', in Victor Hoar, ed., The Great Depression, Toronto, Copp Clark, 1969, p. 6

taken. Typical, is this excerpt from Belleville Presbytery with its consideration of how to apply the teaching of the Gospel to every aspect of life:

The present distress and confusion of the world springs from its failure to apply the principles of Jesus Christ to the personal and public conduct of affairs, and that prevailing standards and methods in government, industry, and commerce need deep and extensive revision if they are to be brought into conformity with the Spirit of our Lord.²

This ambitious ideal reflected the social consciousness of the Church during the 1930s, and its understanding that a lack of spirituality was at least partly responsible for the condition of the nation.

The United Church survived the Depression, and emerged from the experience with new strength and solidarity that convinced both itself and its skeptics that the experiment of Church Union was a success. It was a decade that tested the strength and tried the spirit of the young Church and was, in some respects, the Church's finest hour.

This chapter will consider the financial crisis within the United Church, and the way in which the Church, especially in the Bay of Quinte Conference, met the challenge of the Depression; how the Church responded to the urgent needs of the drought-stricken West; and the involvement of the Church with the provincial government over the issues of the

2. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, May 17, 1932, p. 576

Lord's Day and Temperance.

1. The Church and the Financial Crisis

The three uniting churches had three distinct methods of financing and stewardship that had to be harmonized into one new system in the United Church. This system was put to the test with the heavy and unusual demands that were made upon the young Church's financial resources, but the difficulties were overcome in the same spirit that had motivated and marked all the work of the Church in its first years. This testing began in the aftermath of Union, and was compounded by the economic crisis of the Depression.

a) Non-concurring Presbyterians -- In addition to the extra expenses incurred with the Union itself, there were legal fees and court costs involved in defending the property cases contested by the non-concurring Presbyterians. The expense of maintaining many of the church buildings of Presbyterian majorities that had entered Union, but with a loss of members in some instances as high as 45%,³ often outweighed other savings that had been effected through the amalgamation of former Methodist and Presbyterian congregations. The surplus properties that were sold after such amalgamations often

3. U.C.A., Document, 'Presbyterian Vote: 1925', 'Church Union', Box 6, File 53 (Arnprior, Renfrew, Perth)

brought only modest prices.

A large proportion of these post-Union costs were directly related to the fact of the split within the former Presbyterian Church. Table VIII, below, indicates the high percentage of aid-receiving congregations that entered the Union (72%), in comparison to self-sustaining congregations (54%). This constituted a considerable financial responsibility for the United Church, and one which had to be met with less than two-thirds (63%) of the former base of support.

Table VIII -- Self-sustaining and Aid-receiving Congregations of the Presbyterian Church in 1925 by Presbyteries within the present Bay of Quinte Conference;^a and Comparison of Unionist and Non-concurring Congregations.^b

	<u>Self-sustaining</u>		<u>Aid-receiving</u>		<u>Total</u>	
	<u>Union</u>	<u>Non-con</u>	<u>Union</u>	<u>Non-con</u>	<u>Union</u>	<u>Non-con</u>
Renfrew	27	9	29	5	56	14
Brockville	3	2	5	2	8	4
Kingston	7	12	30	12	37	24
Peterborough	13	14	5	8	18	22
Lindsay	6	15	13	3	19	18
Whitby	<u>9</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>10</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Total</u>	65	55	83	33	148	88

a. U.C.A., Presbyterian Church: Minutes of Assemblies, 1925, pp. 316-329.

b. U.C.A., Document, 'Presbyterian Vote: 1925', 'Church Union', Box 6, Files 53-58

The Presbyterians had a long tradition of service in Ontario where, in the Canadian Census of 1921, they comprised 21% of the population (compared with 23% for the Methodists), and in the Bay of Quinte region they comprised 18% of the population (compared with 38% for the Methodists).⁴ Many of the congregations in Ontario were well established and strongly supported, with the financial independence to remain out of the Union. The majority of aid-receiving congregations were in mission areas, and many of these were co-operation or local union churches (often served by a Methodist minister), and without the financial means to remain out of the Union.

There were 147 Presbyterian ministers in the Bay of Quinte region in 1925. Of these, 104 were serving on pastoral charges; four were overseas missionaries; six were professors at Queen's in Kingston; one was treasurer of the Presbyterian Church and, after Union, of the United Church; and eleven were retained on an 'appendix roll'. The other twenty-one ministers were retired. Of the 126 active ministers, ninety (71%) entered the United Church, and these included all the overseas missionaries and all the theological professors.⁵ Of the total of 147 ministers, ninety-seven (66%) entered the Union, compared with 82% of the total of 2,037 Presbyterian

4. See Table IV, p. 34

5. U.C.A., Document, 'Presbyterian Vote: 1925', 'Church Union', Box 6, Files 53-58

ministers across the country.⁶ These statistics reinforce the fact that it was in Ontario that opposition to Church Union was the strongest and most highly organized.

It is this writer's opinion that the reason more ministers than congregations entered the Union, thus causing a temporary surplus of ministers in the United Church, was because of their broader and more inter-denominational contact with church life in Canada. Many of them had served on mission fields in Western Canada where church union was a fact prior to 1925; while others were serving on co-operation charges in Ontario. The majority had graduated from theological college since 1890 when a more liberal approach to the study of theology and the Bible became predominant, and where denominationalism was not as apparent as in the community. The congregations, however, were much more bound by tradition and local sentiment to their Presbyterian heritage and their buildings, and thus more disposed to retain the status quo even at the cost of the disruption of their Church.

Another additional factor that tested the finances of the United Church in the early years of Union arose from the fact that twenty-two of the seventy-three pro-Union ministers on pastoral charges had left non-concurring Presbyterian congregations to enter the United Church. Their annual salaries

6. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1925, p. 75

amounted to \$39,600,⁷ and this had to be absorbed by those congregations that engaged them as associate ministers until such time as they were settled in a congregation of their own.

b) The Missionary and Maintenance Fund -- Prior to the Union of 1925 each of the three uniting churches had some form of a unified plan of finance. Each had discarded the practice of independent financial appeals from separate departments and boards which secured uneven and uncertain support for the work of the Church, and also engendered the resistance of the congregations to too many special appeals from the national offices.

From its beginning in 1925 the United Church has had a unified plan of finance. The revenue was collected and administered through the Missionary and Maintenance Fund, whose budget was approved by the General Council and then allocated to each Conference which in turn allocated shares to the Presbyteries and the pastoral charges. The Missionary and Maintenance committees of the pastoral charges were responsible for advocating an active and supportive interest in the work of the Church by encouraging stewardship and promoting approved methods of financing, educating the people to the needs and making regular remittances of all missionary

7. U.C.A., Presbyterian Church: Minutes of General Assembly: 1925, pp. 316-329

monies to the national treasurer of the Church.

The first year after Union saw an extraordinary response to a special 'thank-offering' which was to provide a solid financial base for the Church. While the objective of \$4,000,000 was not quite reached, the \$3,750,000 (94%) that was raised was

... a figure not to be equalled in 'actual' dollars until 1953, and in 'real' dollars until 1958 (75¢ would buy the same amount in 1925 and 1945 as \$1.00 in 1949, \$1.25 in 1958, and \$1.37 in 1964).⁸

The average annual financial givings from 1925-1928, omitting the first year which was in the nature of a 'special appeal', were 20% in advance of the givings of the three uniting churches prior to Union. However, these solid financial reserves were depleted due to the costs of consolidation and initial expansion, and the onset of The Great Depression. In 1929 the United Church showed a deficit of \$500,000, and in each succeeding year of the Depression the work of the Church was limited to those projects and programs that could be financed by an amount not greater than the preceding year's revenues.⁹ The 1930s were years of frustration, as one good work after another had to be drastically reduced or abandoned altogether, and new work had to be repeatedly postponed.

8. George M. Morrison, New Life at Forty!, Toronto, United Church Publishing House, 1965, p. viii

9. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1931, p. 29

The Bay of Quinte Conference was fortunate to have Mr. H. W. Ackerman as its chairman of the Missionary and Maintenance Committee from 1925-1940. He was an able and dedicated layman whose personal example of generosity and stewardship was an inspiration to the Conference throughout the difficult and discouraging years of the Depression. He was a practical man, yet he was aware of another aspect of church finances and kept a proper perspective of the work. In his 1928 report to Conference, he said:

We would also remind ourselves of the spiritual aspect of this whole enterprise, not forgetting that we are partners with Jesus Christ, and our share of the partnership, though a financial one, if participated in with the right motives is nonetheless a spiritual service.¹⁰

The note of 'spiritual service' is continued in the statement of Rev. Peter Bryce, secretary of the national Missionary and Maintenance Committee, whose report in 1930 was given in the context of the darkening shadows cast across the Church's financial hopes by current economic and industrial conditions. He said:

The achievements and struggles of the first five years are over. Many difficulties incidental to Church Union have been overcome, others are still with us. . . . Our greatest loss would be to have a task that is equal to our own strength; our greatest gain to have to pray to God for strength and capacity and courage and faith equal to a task that seems impossible.¹¹

10. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1928, pp. 19-20

11. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1930, p. 69

In addition to praying to God for these virtues, the Church tried many approaches to halt the financial decline, but the decline continued and the deficit increased.

Peterborough Presbytery noted that the drop in missionary support could not be blamed entirely on economic conditions, "but also on a lack of missionary enthusiasm which, in turn, is from a lack of missionary information."¹² There was a constant effort to make up this lack of enthusiasm and information; and in Bay of Quinte, Rev. George Williams, a returned missionary, made regular appeals to the Conference in his addresses which showed a vital missionary need beyond regional or national boundaries.

The 1935 annual meeting of Conference heard a 'call to advance':

We have retreated far enough. Let us begin the second decade of our history by a forward movement all along the line, in spiritual development, in missionary enthusiasm, in Christian stewardship, and in response to every challenge the Lord shall lay upon us.¹³

As part of this advance the Conference endorsed the Tenth Anniversary appeal for \$250,000, to be used towards the liquidation of the Church's deficit, and accepted \$25,000 as its share in the appeal. This was not to be considered part of the regular contributions to the Missionary and Maintenance

12. U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 27, 1934, p. 267

13. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1935, pp. 36-37

Fund, but an 'over-and-above' offering "in a spirit of gratitude for the blessings of ten years of enlarged Christian fellowship."¹⁴ Unfortunately, the 'spirit of gratitude' was not matched by a 'spirit of generosity', for the Conference raised only 21% of its goal, and the whole Church raised only 34% of its goal.¹⁵ This was a disappointing, but not an altogether unexpected, result. The nation was still struggling for its economic survival, and nowhere in Ontario was the struggle more difficult than in Bay of Quinte whose economy had been more adversely affected by the Depression than most of the other regions in the province.

Still there was cause for both gratitude and hope in the United Church, for it had fared better than the country as a whole, and better than all but two of the churches in North America. The national income of Canadians for the first four years of the Depression had decreased by 50%; yet the amount raised by the United Church for all purposes had decreased by only 32%.¹⁶ Further, the statistics released by the Stewardship Council of the United States and Canada indicated that the United Church stood third, among twenty-five North American churches, in per capita giving to missions and

14. U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, May 2, 1935, p. 297,

15. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1936, pp. 42-43, 174-175

16. Robert Laird, 'Ten Years of Church Finance', in Ten Years of Union, Toronto, United Church, 1935, p. 13

benevolences in both 1929 and 1934, and second in 1932.¹⁷

There was a further decrease in support for the Missionary and Maintenance Fund in 1935; but every pastoral charge in Cobourg Presbytery showed an increase, the only Presbytery in the entire United Church to do so. This was the result of a special 'balance-the-budget' appeal held by Cobourg Presbytery.¹⁸ Receipts and expenditures decreased again in 1936. More work had to be postponed and the day of advance delayed, yet for the first time in six years the Church's budget was balanced and a small payment was made towards the deficit.¹⁹ By 1937 there was some evidence that the economic cloud that had hung over the country like a pall was lifting, and hopes were high that the 'seven lean years' were finally over. The Bay of Quinte Conference showed a slight increase in givings over 1936; it amounted to only \$102, but it was an increase, and encouraged by this slight but hopeful sign, the Conference issued a new challenge:

To accept as normal the standard of these Depression years would have a devastating effect upon the life and work of the whole Church, both at home and abroad. With the upward turn in the economic tide, let us plan to work for a great advance in the service of the Church. Let us challenge our people with the clamant needs and unprecedented opportunities of the hour.²⁰

17. Robert Laird, Op. Cit., p. 13

18. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1936, p. 43

19. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1937, p. 12

20. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1937, pp. 38-39

Although 1937 began with a promising start, it turned out to be a disappointing year. A polio epidemic in the fall seriously affected attendance at church services and meetings, and consequently affected givings. The continuance of unemployment, the increase in taxation, and the rising cost of living all combined to reduce the margin of income set aside for church support. In addition, the weight of heavy burdens of church debt undertaken in more prosperous days weakened the response of many people to the missionary work of the Church; and the sense of economic uncertainty was further compounded by the ominous rumours of war.

c) Home Missions -- The Board of Home Missions, which received about one-third of the Missionary and Maintenance Fund budget and was responsible for the supervision and administration of all mission work in Canada, was an important factor in the financial considerations of the United Church during the Depression years.

Bay of Quinte, being a well established Conference, had a less extensive Home Missions ministry than most of the other Conferences. There was, however, some significant Home Missions work undertaken in the Conference. In the three years immediately following Union many realignments and amalgamations were made, and of these forty-eight²¹ adjustments

21. See Chapter II, pp. 81-85

in Bay of Quinte most were related to the work of Home Missions. Because of these changes a number of aid-receiving pastoral charges became self-sustaining, and this resulted in a considerable saving of both men and money. These savings were channelled into new areas of work as the young Church expanded its mission.

In 1929 there were 246 pastoral charges, with a total of 625 congregations, in the Conference. Of this number, seventy-three pastoral charges (30%) were in the category of 'aid-receiving', with grants amounting to \$30,620.²² It was the policy of the Conference that every mission field should become self-sustaining, or as nearly so as possible, and the earnest efforts of such pastoral charges were reflected in the Home Missions Committee report to Conference that noted

... with gratitude the splendid efforts of all the Presbyteries to bring aid-receiving charges to a larger measure of self-support, making possible a reduction in the Home Mission grant of \$10,736 during the year.²³

The Conference Home Missions Committee demonstrated its sense of responsibility towards the whole Church in this policy, and the savings effected released funds for needier parts of the Church and for new work.

The year 1931 was a difficult one for Bay of Quinte. The low price of farm produce, the standstill of the lumber

22. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1929, p. 34

23. Ibid., p. 34

and pulp industries, and the consequent unemployment made the Depression a harsh reality for many people. Rev. F. L. Brown, Home Missions Superintendent for Conference, commented on this situation in his annual report:

We are thankful for the splendid spirit that has been manifested both by our ministers and people. The appeal from the West has been responded to in a manner worthy of a great Church, which itself was facing a most difficult situation. Notwithstanding the economic conditions, and accompanying Depression, when most of the rural charges found they were unable to pay the minimum salary, our ministers have risen to the occasion and, in consultation with their boards, have signified their willingness to share the Depression along with their people, and as a result, these fields are not reporting deficits this year. Our farmers have plenty of everything but money, and so rural Ontario has had little real suffering.²⁴

While there was 'little real suffering' there was certainly some discomfort and distress, as the 1932 report of the Conference Home Missions Committee indicates:

We regret that the condition of our funds has made it necessary to make such drastic cuts in the support of our men, and appreciate the spirit of heroic sacrifice in which these reductions have been accepted.²⁵

Ministers' minimum salaries, which had been \$1,800 per annum prior to the Depression, had been successively reduced to \$1,500 and \$1,200, were hard to meet in some situations, and not all ministers received their full salaries even when they

24. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1932, p. 139

25. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1932, p. 46

voluntarily took further cuts.²⁶ When it is taken into consideration that a car was a necessity for rural ministers, and that the annual cost of car payments and operation came to an average of \$500, it is easy to realize how difficult many ministers found it to carry on.

The areas that were hardest hit by the Depression were those in which the Board of Home Missions was most active. The Board of Home Missions was limited in the aid it could give by the size of its annual appropriation from the Missionary and Maintenance Fund. That Fund, as has been noted, also felt the impact of the Depression and was unable to provide all the requested financial help for Home Missions work. The Church was faced with two alternatives in this situation: it could curtail its responsibilities in line with the reduction in revenues and resources, and live within its budget; or it could go into debt and draw upon its financial reserves in order to carry on as much of the work as possible, and trust the membership of the Church to clear up the deficit at some future date. The first alternative would have been good book-keeping, but it would not have been good Christianity, so the Church chose the second alternative and went into debt in order to maintain its services. In rural Ontario, when many other institutions of community life departed, the

26. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1933, pp. 140-142

church remained as a source of strength and encouragement. For many people (42%)²⁷ in the Bay of Quinte area the church was the United Church.

d) Pensions and the Emergency Fund -- The economic crisis of the 1930s created major financial difficulties in all areas of the Church's life and work. In addition to the 'high profile' problems of the Missionary and Maintenance Fund and the Board of Home Missions, the Depression had an inhibiting effect on the finances of the Conference, the Presbyteries, the pastoral charges, and individuals. Two examples will illustrate some of the problems in these less prominent areas.

While modest in comparison with government and industrial plans, the Pension Plan of the United Church is highly regarded by other churches. On January 1st, 1929 the several benevolent, provident, and superannuation funds of the three uniting churches were amalgamated into the Pension Fund of the United Church. The object of the Fund was to provide for retired or disabled ministers and missionaries, their wives and children through revenue derived from annual payments made by the ministers, the congregations, the Church, proceeds from certain investments, bequests and special donations. All ministers, as a condition of ordination or reception, were under

27. See Table IV, p. 34

obligation to become members of, and contributors to, the Pension Fund, and were expected to abide by its regulations.

From its inception the Pension Fund has been upgraded as financial conditions permitted, it has stayed solvent, and all claims upon it have been honoured. There were, however, some difficult times during the Depression. One of the first signs of these difficulties appeared in 1930 when Peterborough drew attention to the problem of arrears, and alerted delinquent ministers to the serious consequences of failing to pay their assessments. For minor infractions, a minister could lose several years of credits; and for serious cases, a minister could lose his standing in the United Church.²⁸

The Board of Pensions emphasized its concern, but stated its sympathy with those who found themselves in unfortunate economic circumstances and assured them of "as liberal interpretation of regulations as can be justified."²⁹

The difficulties the Fund encountered were due to several factors, including an increase in both the number of claimants and in the amount paid to claimants, lessened contributions from the Missionary and Maintenance Fund, and smaller assessments on the ministers because of lower salaries (assessments were based on a percentage of the salary).

28. U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 25, 1930, p. 95

29. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1933, p. 187

In 1935, total receipts for the Pension Fund were less than disbursements for the first time since Union. The Board, however, was determined to keep the Fund solvent and it was able to do this by drawing upon capital reserves, a measure that was repeated each year until 1939. The Church stated firmly that the situation of deficit financing could be tolerated only because of the crisis. Its hopes for a capital appeal were delayed year by year due to the economic conditions, and in 1940 were set aside until the end of the war when a successful drive for \$5,000,000 put the Pension Fund on an actuarially sound basis.³⁰

The Depression gave rise to a number of emergency funds, under several names, to provide for ministers suffering temporary financial difficulty, but none of these received more than lukewarm acceptance and support from the ministers. In 1931 the Bay of Quinte Conference established a Mutual Benefit Fund to provide grants to participating ministers towards medical or funeral expenses.³¹ This plan served a useful, but limited, purpose, and was discontinued in 1935 when participation dropped to 15%, with only 45 of 307 eligible ministers enrolled.³² A group insurance plan was considered,

30. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1936, pp. 160-162

31. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1932, p. 25

32. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1935, p. 25

but never implemented when it also failed to receive the necessary support.

The concept of the Emergency Fund arose in 1933 as a partial solution to the problem of supplementing the income of ministers receiving less than the suggested minimum annual salary of \$1,800. The Fund was to be financed by an assessment of 1% on the salaries of those ministers receiving the minimum or higher, and was voluntary rather than compulsory.³³ Under normal conditions ministers receiving less than the minimum salary would be the responsibility of the Board of Home Missions, but the Depression was not a 'normal' condition. This Fund received varying degrees of support from the ministers of the Conference.

The treasurer of Conference, in a letter to the seven Presbyteries, noted that the economic situation had forced a number of formerly self-supporting pastoral charges to fall below the minimum salary and seek financial aid. There were thirty such pastoral charges in the Conference paying less than \$1,200 in 1933, and the ministers on these charges were considered to be eligible claimants on the Fund.³⁴ Those pastoral charges paying less than the minimum salary were visited by a Presbytery committee in an attempt to raise the

33. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 14, 1933, p. 648

34. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, May 1, 1934, p. 469

minister's salary to a level where a claim on the Fund would not be necessary. The amounts paid out in claims were limited by the amounts received from the Presbyteries, and in no year was more than a total of \$1,000 paid out. The following report to the 1935 annual meeting of Conference is typical:

There were eighteen cases considered for special grants. We considered each case on its merits and tried to make a fair distribution of the funds available. We recommend that two ministers receive the sum of \$90.00 each; four ministers receive \$45.00 each; and twelve ministers receive \$20.00 each; and that the names of the recipients be not printed.³⁵

The fact that names of recipients were not printed reveals a sensitivity towards those whose economic condition forced them into a somewhat embarrassing situation.

Even with the voluntary financial support of some laymen the Fund was never strong enough to offer more than token relief. While Kingston, as did the other Presbyteries, supported the Fund, it noted that the problem which the Fund sought to meet could be better solved by greater loyalty to the Missionary and Maintenance Fund, and by a more careful supervision by Presbytery of its pastoral charges.³⁶

The Conference continued to give limited support to its own Fund until the General Council established a Central Emergency Fund in 1936. This Central Fund failed to attract

35. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1935, p. 30

36. U.C.A., Kingston Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 12, 1935, p. 461

any more support than did the Conference Fund,³⁷ and was replaced by a more acceptable scheme which supplemented the salaries of ministers receiving less than the Home Missions minimum salary. This plan, known as the Moderator's Fund, continued until the need for it ceased in 1945.

The years 1929-1939 were times of testing in which arrears in ministers' salaries and arrears in pension payments were serious problems. The decade was marked by many resolute efforts to maintain the work of the Church and to meet emergency needs of individuals and pastoral charges in spite of declining revenues and deepening economic distress.

The Depression, among other things, forced the United Church into a debt of critical proportions, one which would not be liquidated until after World War II. It was the war, however, that provided the opportunity for an ingenious way of paying off the deficit.³⁸ In 1940 the federal government approved the request of the United Church, whereby members could buy War Savings Certificates and make them payable to the United Church at maturity. The campaign slogan expressed its double purpose: "A service to my country and a gift to my church." Unlike the several emergency funds of the Depression years, this did kindle the imagination of the Church and

37. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1938, p. 99

38. See Chapter V, pp. 225-231

the people bought the certificates by the thousands in a display of patriotism combined with religion that would have gladdened the heart of Dr. Chown.³⁹ As a result of this very successful campaign the total debt of the United Church was finally and completely liquidated in 1950.

2. Relief to Western Canada

The Great Depression was a time of testing everywhere in Canada, but for the Prairie Provinces, and especially for Saskatchewan, it was deeply distressing. In these provinces, where income was almost totally dependent upon agriculture, the effect of the Depression was paralyzing, and it was on the wheat belt of Southern Saskatchewan that the blow fell with the greatest severity.

Canada's exports were at a ruinously low level, and the bottom fell out of the world wheat market in the early 1930s with the price per bushel tumbling from a 1929 high of \$1.60 to a 1932 low of 38¢.⁴⁰ The payment received for this staple crop often was insufficient to cover the cost of production. Farm taxes, depreciation on machinery, and interest on debt added to the crushing economic woes of the western wheat farmer. In Saskatchewan the Depression coincided with

39. See Chapter II, p. 57

40. J. A. Lower, Canada: An Outline History, Toronto, Ryerson, 1966, p. 177

the worst drought in living memory, giving to the decade the descriptive designation 'The Dirty Thirties'. Associated with the drought were four other destroyers: dust storms, Russian thistles, wheat rust, and grasshoppers. "Grasshoppers ate everything that grew, and even attacked clothing hung on the line to dry."⁴¹

Such a disaster was inevitably accompanied by widespread suffering and misery. Many homesteaders lost everything, and nearly 50,000 of them migrated to the northern parts of Saskatchewan to begin all over again. To this critical situation the United Church responded in a most creditable manner. Out of the adversity and affliction of these years emerged a Church that was stronger and more united.

a) The Saskatchewan Crisis -- In 1931 the General Council was alerted to the seriousness of the situation in the southern sections of Saskatchewan. The Church responded by establishing a National Emergency Relief Committee and launching a financial appeal called 'Challenge Extraordinary'. Plans were made "to promote such relief measures as may be found necessary, and as may appear to be the duty and responsibility of the United Church."⁴² These relief measures were, to a large degree, guided by the reports and recommendations

41. Max Braithwaite, The Western Plains, Toronto, McClelland, 1970, p. 23

42. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1932, p. 24

of Rev. George Dorey, the Home Missions Superintendent of Southern Saskatchewan, a man whose comprehensive knowledge of the area and the situation was also at the service of the provincial government. The severity of the situation, the suffering of the people, and the response of the Church may best be appreciated through the words of Dorey himself in his annual reports to the Board of Home Missions, 1931-1937.⁴³

The West, said Dorey, is a wonderful 'next year' country. The crop failure of 1929 did not deter the farmers from planting in 1930 with hopefulness, but this crop also failed as did a major part of every crop until 1938. Dorey noted the start of 'the dirty thirties' in 1931, which he called the year of the great dust and the long drought. In 1933 he quoted St. Paul: "On every side we are harried but not hemmed in, perplexed but not despairing, persecuted but not abandoned, struck down but not dismayed" (2 Cor. 4:8-9), and said that the words of the great apostle were an accurate portrayal of the situation, and of the courage of the great majority of the people to whom the United Church ministered in Saskatchewan.

Dorey told of the people's perseverance through trial by wind, dust, drought, rust, and grasshoppers. The plight

⁴³ U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Books: 1931, p. 137; 1932, p. 144; 1933, pp. 146-148; 1934, p. 145; 1937, p. 104

of many persons was rendered almost desperate by successive crop failures. Merchants apportioned goods and extended generous credit, ministers and their wives acted as agents of relief with the manse serving as a distribution depot, and those areas that were able to produce a vegetable crop were among the first to share their good fortune with other places still suffering from the drought and gladly released their share of relief from Ontario to be given to others. Dorey closed this particular report with another quote from Paul:

Amid a severe ordeal of trouble, their overflowing joy and their deep poverty together have poured out a flood of rich generosity; and I can testify that up to their means, aye, and beyond their means, they have given for the favour of sharing in the relief of the saints (2 Cor. 8:2-4).

Dorey, an accomplished New Testament scholar, used his own translation of these passages and applied them to the situation in southern Saskatchewan.

He tells of the value of the relief from Ontario in another year when, after a hopeful spring, the hot winds came, the crops withered, and the grasshoppers ate what was left. The donations of fruit, vegetables, and clothing not only helped meet the physical needs of the people but contributed in no small measure to the maintenance of the morale of sorely stricken individuals and communities. In his final report, Dorey stated that the East's response was a living manifestation of Jesus' words: "Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these, you did it to me."

b) The Bay of Quinte's Response -- The Bay of Quinte Conference endorsed the Moderator's appeal for Western relief, and responded to his 'Challenge Extraordinary', as did other Conferences in the East. The truly effective assistance, however, came from the congregations working in close co-operation with local and Presbytery committees. Oshawa Presbytery's organization was typical: the Western Relief Committee had a representative in every congregation who was responsible to arrange for the collection and shipment of goods to a central point in the Presbytery from which they would be sent to the West.⁴⁴ From 1931 to 1938 the minutes of the seven Presbyteries record the story of a steady stream of vegetables, fruit, bales of bedding and used clothing, and layettes for babies sent in relief shipments to Saskatchewan. The following extracts from these minutes indicate the practical expression of sympathy and support for fellow Canadians in distress.

Belleville was "deeply moved by the extraordinary conditions in Canada, which we never thought of as possible in this great country of ours,"⁴⁵ and collected and shipped five railroad cars of vegetables to the drought-stricken West.

⁴⁴ U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 27, 1934, p. 280

⁴⁵ U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 17, 1931, p. 13

Cobourg had arranged to ship a carload of fruit and vegetables, but after the Moderator had spoken to the Presbytery of the seriousness of the situation they added three more carloads.⁴⁶ In 1933 Belleville shipped three more carloads of fruit and vegetables and 700 pounds of clothing, but noted that it was "below last year's level of aid."⁴⁷ Renfrew gave some details of their relief shipments to towns in Saskatchewan: from Cobden, one carload of fifteen tons to Deslisle; from Beachburg, one carload of fifteen tons to Kisbey; and from Perth-Lanark, one carload of ten tons to Frys.⁴⁸ During these years the Presbyteries heard regular reports of the Western situation and "the continued drastic need for food, clothing, layettes and bedding."⁴⁹ Kingston heard from one of its ministers, recently returned from a visit to the West, who told of "the trying conditions under which the Church had to work."⁵⁰ In response to a plea from a Manitoba minister who spoke to the Presbytery on behalf of the Prairies, Lindsay took immediate steps "to ship another two carloads of

46. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Nov. 26, 1931, p. 210

47. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Nov. 14, 1933, p. 716

48. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 12, 1935, p. 497

49. U.C.A., Lindsay Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 21, 1933, p. 392

50. U.C.A., Kingston Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 8, 1932, p. 342

fruit and vegetables."⁵¹

Each year the Presbyteries arranged for an average of thirty-five carloads of fruit and vegetables, plus the bales of bedding and clothing. Over the seven year period of the Western Relief operation this amounted to one train of 245 carloads of foodstuffs, plus another fifteen carloads of bedding and clothing, sent from Bay of Quinte to the West. While the United Church did most of the organizational work, it had the good will and co-operation of other churches in the community. The laymen of Peterborough sought and secured the support of the municipality as well as several other denominations in the city. Cobourg noted:

One of the splendid features of the work has been the magnificent co-operation of all the churches in the area. This united effort is good for all our people.⁵²

Renfrew named the co-operating churches: Anglican, Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Roman Catholic, and United.⁵³ Many schools also shared in the work, and this proved to be good training in citizenship for the children.

The Presbyteries received letters of appreciation from the people of the West, and these letters indicated how

51. U.C.A., Lindsay Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 27, 1934, p. 427

52. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Nov. 30, 1937, p. 415

53. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, Oct. 12, 1937, p. 586

truly co-operative and inter-denominational the program was both in giving and in receiving. One of the most interesting letters was from a Roman Catholic priest, who wrote:

It is with grateful thanks that we acknowledge the arrival of the fruit and vegetables you so kindly provided us recently. At a time when our people are suffering so much as a result of the depression, when destitution and misery are their lot, and they must needs depend on the charity of others, it is, we assure you, a noble gesture on the part of you who are more fortunate, that you extend the helping hand of generous charity to us; and it is a real pleasure for us to feel that our fellow-Canadians in the east, conscious of our needs, are kind enough to help us. Acts like yours mean much in the strengthening of bonds which should join Canadians together, and the strongest and sweetest of these bonds is that of brotherly charity which you have thus exemplified to us. You have, dear sirs, with this grateful appreciation of your kindness, the assurance of our people's wishes for God's abundant blessings on yourselves and those dear to you.⁵⁴

The sharing of the produce of God's earth with God's people, with no reference to race or religion, was a practical demonstration of the great missionary hymn, 'In Christ there is no East or West'. All shared in the giving and in the receiving, and out of this fellowship of suffering and sharing came a spirit of unity in both church and nation that prosperous times had not produced. In this whole operation the Church had the sympathetic and practical co-operation of both the Canadian Pacific and the Canadian National railways in transporting without cost the carloads of relief, thus providing

⁵⁴. Board of Home Missions, One Great Fellowship, Toronto, United Church Publishing House, 1933, p. 45

the means of sending much larger quantities than would otherwise have been possible.

Food and clothing were the major items of relief, but the Presbytery minutes also record other practical responses. Oshawa, the home of General Motors, thanked Mr. J. D. Storey for "his generous action in building and equipping a motor car for Home Missions work in the Peace River country."⁵⁵ Cobourg responded to the 'Adoption Plan', whereby the hardest hit of the Western pastoral charges were 'adopted' by charges in the East, and divided itself into four sections with each section 'adopting' one Western pastoral charge.⁵⁶ Peterborough, which had its own share of economic problems, 'adopted' three pastoral charges and pledged \$2,000 towards their support.⁵⁷ At the beginning of the drought the ministers of Peterborough Presbytery voluntarily gave 10% of their salaries over a six month period (\$90.00 each) to Western ministers in greater need than themselves.⁵⁸ This practical expression of bearing one another's burdens was no small sacrifice in 1931, and preceded by six years the General Council's initiation of the Western Ministers' Relief Fund.

55. U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 12, 1931, p. 130.

56. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Nov. 26, 1931, p. 211

57. U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 10, 1932, p. 154

58. Ibid., Sept. 11, 1931, p. 140

By 1940 the need for relief was past. Saskatchewan had its best crop in ten years, and a measure of prosperity began its slow return to the province. In those desperate years of depression and drought the United Church gave both visible and tangible expression to its national character and proved itself worthy of the hopes of the fathers of Church Union. In a decade when many divisive forces were at work, the United Church did its full share in uniting both church and country, east and west. In giving leadership to a nation wide relief program it commended the practical aspect of the Christian religion to many who previously had little use for the Church.

3. Church and Government: Two Issues

Throughout much of the nineteenth century the churches' attention had been mainly directed at a personal level of morality, but this approach was discovered to be inadequate in dealing with the more complex problems of the increasingly industrialized, secularized, and pluralistic society of the twentieth century. The twenty years that preceded Church Union saw a great awakening of the churches' sense of social responsibility. This took two forms: an attempt to relate Christian living to the whole of society; and, more especially, an effort to influence the government to introduce legislation that would protect the under-privileged and oppressed

by effecting a greater measure of control over hours of work, recreation, public health, welfare and the people's drinking habits. While the churches purported to avoid direct political involvement and intervention, issues such as Temperance and the observance of the Lord's Day were regarded as such clear moral matters that they could not be silent about them. The United Church, nationally, provincially, and in the Bay of Quinte Conference, was actively involved in these issues.

a) "Remember the Sabbath ..." -- One of the primary purposes of the Church is to worship God, and, as a corollary to this, to provide both a place and a time for that worship. For the Christian, Sunday is, first of all, a day of worship; and second, though not unimportant, it is a day of rest. The day of rest is a benefit which those who enjoy freedom from work on Sunday have not always recognized as being a result of the churches' continuous struggle against those who would completely secularize the Lord's Day.

The United Church did not hesitate to accept what it understood to be its duty to call the community to consider carefully the social as well as the religious significance of the Lord's Day, and to be seriously concerned with anything that would detract from the worshipful and restful observance of Sunday.

The first laws on the subject of Sunday observance were enacted by the Roman Emperor Constantine who 'legalized'

Christianity and made it the official religion of the Empire in 321 A.D., and proclaimed Sunday as the day of worship and rest for the citizens.⁵⁹ Sixteen centuries later, laws influenced by these early beginnings were still in existence in Ontario. The Federal Lord's Day Act of 1906 was the 'Sunday Law' that was in force at the time of Church Union. It was

... the principal statute prohibiting certain activities on Sunday throughout Canada. There are two main categories of prohibitions, one dealing with business and employment activities and the other with commercial sport and entertainment. ... The exceptions to these two main categories of prohibitions are as important as the prohibitions themselves. The first group of exceptions are those provided in the provincial 'opt out' provision ... the other large group of exceptions are those coming within the broad term 'work of necessity or mercy'.⁶⁰

The Lord's Day Act was introduced after representations by labour organizations, business and industrial interests, and by the churches through the agency of the Lord's Day Alliance. The Act does not interfere with personal recreation, nor does it legislate regarding attendance at church worship on Sundays. It does control employment of labour, and forbids it except for reasons of 'necessity or mercy' on Sundays. Thus, by law, Sunday became the national

59. Board of Evangelism and Social Service, Sunday -- Today and Tomorrow, Toronto, United Church Publishing House, 1962, p. 5

60. Ontario Law Reform Commission, Report on Sunday Observance Legislation, Toronto, Department of Justice, 1970, pp. 18-19

weekly day of rest.

From the viewpoint of the United Church many factors conspired to undermine the Christian observance of Sunday.⁶¹ Among these factors were secularism, hedonism, the purposeless use of leisure with its 'lost week-ends', commercial interests, and an increasing use of Sunday for a variety of purposes which, while good in themselves, tended to debase its value as a day of rest and worship. It is in this context that the United Church's position on 'keeping the Sabbath' must be understood:

The matter of 'Sabbath observance', as it was called in the 1920s and 1930s, was a continuing concern of the Bay of Quinte Conference, as the following report indicates.

Too much emphasis cannot be placed upon the importance of the sanctity of the Lord's Day. Enshrined in the very heart of the Decalogue is the command: 'Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy'. We believe that the life and well-being of our nation, physical, moral and spiritual, is contingent upon the proper observance of the Lord's Day; and that its commerce, industry and progress are enhanced or deteriorated according to its attitude and response to the Fourth Commandment. We also realize that the spiritual welfare of the Church is greatly influenced by its proper or improper usage, and we deeply deplore the modern tendencies leading to the profanation of our Sunday, through the avenues of sport, pleasure-seeking, commercial greed, and personal selfishness.⁶²

61. Board of Evangelism and Social Service, Why Sunday?, Toronto, United Church Publishing House, 1948, pp. 18-

62. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1927, p. 23.

In this statement the Bay of Quinte Conference made its stand on the issue of Sunday very clear. It asked, and received, the support of the Presbyteries and pastoral charges in reporting violations of the Lord's Day Act to the proper provincial authorities, thus assisting in the enforcement of the law. The Conference listed abuses of the Act, such as "the trucking of merchandise, and transportation of new automobiles, and unnecessary garage work on Sunday," and took steps "to secure the limitation of gasoline service stations operating on Sunday."⁶³

In this concern the United Church was joined by other churches and by the Lord's Day Alliance, an organization with the purpose of promoting the observance of Sunday as a day of rest and worship. The Conference recognized the Alliance as a valuable partner, and commended it to the loyal support of the pastoral charges and Presbyteries. The commercializing of Sunday took simple but visible form in the number of fruit and vegetable stands along the highways in the summer months. Both Belleville and Cobourg were in the heart of the fruit and vegetable growing district, and each drew the government's attention to abuses of the Act and the need for enforcement.⁶⁴

63. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1928, p. 21

64. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, May 2, 1933, p. 669; and Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, May 2, 1933, p. 266

Oshawa expressed concern with "the increase of the commercial use of our highways on Sundays by trucking companies," as well as with the increase in the sale of merchandise on the Lord's Day in parks, stands along the highway, and places of business."⁶⁵ Oshawa realized some success with its protest, and then commended "the provincial government for the effective action taken in removing truck traffic from our highways on Sunday."⁶⁶

A practical concern for the Church was the growing custom of Sunday visiting and its direct affect on church attendance. The concern was expressed this way:

Having observed the considerably increased and prevalent habit of Sunday visiting, with its deplorable accompaniment of decreased church attendance, especially during the summer months, we would urge upon all our people a loyal regard for the ordinances of worship, refraining from such visitations as would prevent the attendance of themselves and others at their place of worship. We would urge visitors to attend worship with the family visited.⁶⁷

The increased use of the automobile as a means of social travel is revealed in the concern that such use would be detrimental to church attendance.

Another practical concern was the matter of Sunday funerals. In 1896 the Attorney General of Ontario was asked

65. U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, May 3, 1933, p. 226

66. Ibid., Feb. 13, 1936, p. 323

67. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1929, p. 35

by a delegation representing a citizens' committee

... to change the cemetery regulations so as to permit Sunday burials, which were then prohibited except in cases of contagious diseases and under a doctor's certificate. However, no action is reported to have taken place, nor is it reported at what point Sunday burials became legal under the cemetery regulations.⁶⁸

Such burials were obviously legal in the 1920s, and were presenting problems for those ministers who already had as many as three Sunday services, with the result that Lindsay urged that Sunday funerals be avoided as much as possible.⁶⁹ The stance of Cobourg was more adamant:

... believing that the holding of funerals on Sunday is detrimental to the moral good of our people, we request our churches to give the matter their earnest and prayerful consideration with a view to putting an end to the practice.⁷⁰

One reason that Sunday burials were reasonably common was the fact of a six-day work week for many people, with no compensation for time taken off work to attend funerals, thus leaving Sunday as the most convenient day for many people to bury their dead. It was not so convenient for the funeral director or the minister.

Commercialized sports presented another serious challenge to the Church during a period when Sunday afternoon

68. Ontario Law Reform Commission, Op. Cit., p. 33

69. U.C.A., Lindsay Presbytery: Minutes, May 7, 1929, p. 242

70. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 28, 1926, p. 54

entertainment was becoming accepted as the natural sequel to Sunday morning worship. The 1926 General Council supported the following resolution of Rev. T. E. Holling of Lindsay:

While expressing whole-hearted appreciation of the value of clean, healthful amusements and sports, the General Council views with grave concern the growing encroachment of these sports and amusements upon the purpose of the Lord's Day as a day of rest, and as a day essential to the protection of family life and the development of religious character in our country.⁷¹

When the province intimated that it would propose legislation widening the provisions of the Lord's Day Act, the Conference was quick to respond. Cobourg, Oshawa, and Renfrew expressed firm opposition in their resolutions

... to any legislation to amend the Lord's Day Act of 1906, making provision for a Sunday law which would open the doors of commercialized and professional sports, thereby destroying the benefits now enjoyed from the Sabbath Day as one of rest.⁷²

The Presbyteries and pastoral charges sent petitions and letters of protest to their members of parliament and to the Attorney General; and these were successful as indicated by the following commendation of the government:-

The Conference expresses its appreciation to the Government of Ontario for taking no action in the matter of amending the Lord's Day Act of 1906 respecting commercialized sports. It believes that the Government was influenced by the vigorous protests that were offered by the United Church and its

71. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1926, p. 81 .

72. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 14,
1939, p. 633

sister denominations -- an illustration of the good effects that can be obtained through an informed and aroused public opinion.⁷³

The United Church, in co-operation with other churches and the Lord's Day Alliance, was able to 'protect' Sunday from the inroads of commercialized sport until 1950 when Ontario passed its own Lord's Day Act.⁷⁴ Under the permissive clause in the provincial Act a municipality could pass a bylaw permitting sports, motion pictures, concerts, horse racing, and exhibitions after 1.30 p.m.

Radio was still a novelty during the Depression years, but the Church was involved with the issue of Sunday broadcasting from the beginning. Oshawa Presbytery requested The Bay of Quinte Conference "to enquire if secular concerts on Sunday broadcast by radio which interfere with the reception by radio of religious services might not be withdrawn in Canada."⁷⁵ Conference was not similarly convinced that this was a serious problem, and so took no action. Peterborough Presbytery was deeply concerned with "the indiscriminate use of Sunday papers and the misuse of the radio," and while recognizing the value of the radio to provide worship services for shut-ins it urged the "healthy folk to attend

73. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1939, p. 28.

74. Ontario Law Reform Commission, Op. Cit., p. 20.

75. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1928, p. 58.

church."⁷⁶ Both Oshawa and Peterborough expressed concern over Sunday advertising on the radio, and both requested the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation to eliminate such advertising from Canadian stations. Peterborough stated its views:

We regret very much that the Sunday programmes of the air are constantly bringing into our homes much advertising matter that is both unpleasant and disturbing, and that the character of these programmes is frequently unfit for our families who have been trained to regard some things as unbecoming to Sunday. We therefore appeal to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, Ottawa, and respectfully urge that the matter be taken up with the hope that something be done to relieve a most disagreeable situation.⁷⁷

In 1939 the Conference placed itself on record "as favouring the total elimination of commercial advertising in Sunday radio broadcasts."⁷⁸ These protests met with only limited success, and were no longer pressed when the Church's attention was turned elsewhere by the events of World War II. In passing, it is interesting to note that the declaration of war was made by Britain on Sunday, September 3rd, 1939, and by Canada on Sunday, September 10th, 1939.

In the 1930s the United Church departed somewhat from its earlier point of view of state support for the enforcement of Sunday as a day of worship in favour of a more

⁷⁶ U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 15, 1927, p. 9

⁷⁷ Ibid., Apr. 29, 1937, p. 430

⁷⁸ B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1939, p. 29

contemporary stance which, while not diminishing its historic position regarding the Lord's Day and worship, placed a new emphasis on the desirable benefits of a day of rest from all unnecessary work. This positive approach was seen in the Catechism of the United Church:

How should we spend the Lord's Day? We should spend the Lord's Day in public and private worship, in reading and meditation, in converse with family and friends, in deeds of kindness, and in grateful rest from all but necessary labour.⁷⁹

This recognition that Sunday was as much a day of rest as it was a day of worship reflected the Church's concern for the whole person as a worker as well as a worshipper.⁸⁰ There was, of course, a good Biblical precedent for a day's rest after a week's work (Genesis 2:2-3).

b) "Hostility to the Traffic" -- The Ontario temperance movement of the early nineteenth century escalated into a concerted push for prohibition by mid-century. The leaders of the prohibition movement were predominantly Methodist and Presbyterian, with support from several other churches. The movement was strongest in rural Ontario, and among much of the middle-class and middle-income people of the province.

79. Board of Evangelism and Social Service, Catechism, Toronto, United Church Publishing House, 1944, Question 60, p. 17

80. Board of Evangelism and Social Service, Sunday -- Today and Tomorrow, Toronto, United Church Publishing House, 1962, pp. 20-21, 24-29

A vigorous campaign led by the Ontario Branch for the Total Suppression of the Liquor Traffic, and a series of victorious local option votes under the provisions of the Canada Temperance Act of 1878, succeeded in making much of Ontario 'dry'. In 1916 Premier William Hearst's Conservative government passed the Ontario Temperance Act. While it was accepted as a wartime measure there was widespread discontent with this harsh prohibition following the war. The liquor interests were quick to capitalize on this discontent and to take questionable steps to have it changed.⁸¹ This was the situation in the province at the time of Church Union in 1925.

Each of the three uniting churches brought into the Union a long tradition of "uncompromising hostility to the traffic."⁸² The First General Council reaffirmed the historic attitude of the uniting churches: "prohibition of the transportation, importation, exportation, manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes" (Congregational); "entire suppression of the manufacture and sale of alcohol for beverage purposes" (Presbyterian); and "absolute prohibition of the manufacture, importation and sale of

81. Malcom Graeme Decarie, The Prohibition Movement in Ontario: 1894-1916, Kingston, Queen's University, Ph.D. Thesis (History), 1972, p. ii

82. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1938, p. 101

intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes" (Methodist).⁸³ The United Church has continued these traditions, but with an emphasis upon abstinence rather than prohibition, and by opposition to any expansion of 'the traffic'. The term 'traffic' was used in reference to the manufacture, processing, distribution, and sale of beverage alcohol for a profit, and 'the traffic' created many problems for both the Church and society. Confronted by these problems the United Church was neither indifferent nor inactive.

The United Church promoted a policy of personal discipline and total abstinence as the only acceptable attitude and practice for its members.⁸⁴ Lindsay, whose position in this matter was typical of the seven Bay of Quinte Presbyteries, reaffirmed "its belief in, and allegiance to, the recognized and well-defined United Church position."⁸⁵ Oshawa was even more adamant, by urging "total abstinence for the individual and prohibition for the nation"⁸⁶ as the best way to deal with 'the traffic'. The Bay of Quinte Conference recommended that "the social menace of alcohol to the home and society, and its effect of increasing crime, immorality,

83. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1925, p. 55

84. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1928, p. 271

85. U.C.A., Lindsay Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 10, 1929, p. 263

86. U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, May 1, 1930, p. 106

poverty and disgrace"⁸⁷ be made the subject of instruction in both the churches and the Sunday schools.

The mid 1920s were marked by a struggle between the supporters of the Ontario Temperance Act, which included the United Church, and the anti-prohibition forces organized under the euphemism of the Moderation League. In response to the League's insistent demands the government took a plebiscite on the question of government control of liquor, but the Temperance Act was sustained by a majority of 33,000. Yet within a year Premier Howard Ferguson, who had publicly stated that if the Act was sustained in the plebiscite his Conservative government would strengthen and enforce it, called a provincial election in which the only issue was 'government control'.⁸⁸

The temperance forces realized that their only hope was in the election of temperance or prohibition candidates to the Legislature. The General Council, wary of political involvement, cautioned that the Church should only actively enter an election campaign when the issue involved "a conflict of moral principle."⁸⁹ That such a moral principle was involved may be noted in the aggressive approach Kingston

87. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1927, p. 29

88. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1926, p. 265

89. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1927, p. 95

took to the election, and its opposition to the temperance issue being placed in the context of party politics. It contended that the question of 'government control'

... transcends all party interests, and in the face of the undoubted jeopardy to the moral welfare of the Province we recommend that our people rise completely above party considerations and achieve a decisive and final victory in this paramount issue. After mature consideration we recommend to the members and adherents of the United Church of Canada within this Presbytery that by their vote and influence they express their disapproval of the Premier's action by electing to the Ontario Legislature only such men as are openly and undoubtedly loyal to the Ontario Temperance Act.⁹⁰

However, the Church's involvement in the election was to little avail for Ferguson and the Conservatives won an overwhelming victory, although seven of the nineteen seats in the Bay of Quinte region were won by the opposition Liberals. And it is of some significance to note that these seats were in the four Presbyteries of Cobourg, Kingston, Lindsay, and Oshawa whose minutes recorded strong support for temperance candidates.⁹¹

While prohibition had ended in Ontario in 1927 with the advent of 'government control', the so-called 'long thirst' continued in the United States, and with their own legal supplies cut off by prohibition the thirsty Americans turned their eyes northward. This gave rise to a serious

90. U.C.A., Kingston Presbytery: Minutes, Oct. 28, 1926, pp. 112-113

91. U.C.A., The New Outlook, Dec. 8, 1926, p. 12

international situation of smuggling that threatened the good relations between the two countries. Much of the smuggling took place in the relatively secluded Thousand Island area between Ontario and New York, and this being a federal rather than a provincial matter the United Church turned its attention to Ottawa.

Oshawa and Cobourg Presbyteries were the most active in Bay of Quinte in opposing smuggling. Cobourg urged the government to "prohibit clearance of vessels or vehicles of all kinds carrying a cargo of liquor to the United States contrary to the laws of that country,"⁹² and Oshawa deplored "the evils incident to rum-running" and called on the government "to prohibit the exportation of intoxicating liquor to any country under a prohibitory law."⁹³ Both Presbyteries recorded satisfaction in the positive action of the government in introducing the necessary legislation to refuse customs clearance for liquor shipments to the United States, and both sent letters of appreciation to the government.⁹⁴ It is of interest to note the silence of Kingston Presbytery on this matter that was an issue in its own area. The problem of smuggling was resolved when prohibition was repealed in

92. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 27, 1929, p. 63

93. U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 17, 1929; p. 85

94. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 11, 1930, p. 121; Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, May 1, 1930, p. 106

the United States in 1933.

The Church was faced with a further encroachment on its policy of temperance when the Ontario government, at the request of the Moderation League, indicated that it was considering changes in the Liquor Control Act of 1927 to permit the sale of liquor by the glass with meals at hotels and restaurants. The Bay of Quinte Conference recorded its disapproval of any extension of facilities for the sale and consumption of liquor, and stated that such a move would be a retrograde step.⁹⁵ Oshawa Presbytery opposed any amendment to the Act that would re-introduce the element of private gain into the sale of liquor and re-establish "the bar-room in a new and more alluring form."⁹⁶

In spite of repeated protests the government introduced legislation providing for the freer sale of beer and wine, and as the restrictions were eased there was a corresponding increase in intemperance. This was apparent with the arrival of beverage rooms in the province in 1934. The revulsion of a significant segment of the public against the infamous 'beer parlour' is seen in Peterborough Presbytery's colourful description of one such 'school for drinking':

95. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1932, p. 41

96. U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 9, 1933, p. 220

The beverage room is in its infant days, but already it has proved itself one of the most iniquitous and disgusting ways of dispensing liquor ever introduced by a legislative body into this province. ... Drunken men are on the streets again to the annoyance of the public, and the traffic on the highways is greatly endangered by an increase of drunken drivers. Men and women may now drink openly and unafraid, and they appear to make a display of the new freedom now permitted to them. There is something disgusting and depressing in the sight of drinkers of both sex gathered around beer slopped tables and consuming all the beer they can hold.⁹⁷

As a possible solution to this problem, it was strongly suggested that the Church lead municipalities to demand the right under the local option clause in the Act "to vote ourselves free of this evil."⁹⁸ In its protest against the imposition of beer parlours on the province, the Conference noted "the increase in drinking especially among our youth of both sexes, and of fatalities on our highways."⁹⁹

The Church suffered many setbacks in the area of temperance legislation, but it maintained its steadfast opposition to 'the traffic' and continued its program of education. In the matter of youth and alcohol, the decade ended on a positive note with Oshawa's report: "We rejoice in the progress of the Youth Temperance Movement whereby we learn

97. U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 27, 1934, p. 272.

98. Ibid., p. 272

99. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1936, p. 31

that thousands of young people are enrolled as total abstainers."¹⁰⁰ Ten years earlier the same Presbytery had urged an all-out effort "to inform our youth of the dangers of alcoholism, and to enlist them as total abstainers."¹⁰¹

The economic factor of 'the traffic', which had been part of the situation from the beginning, was accentuated by the Depression. The liquor interests had regularly contributed to the funds of political parties, and were thereby able to influence the legislators and secure legislation that would serve their own ends, thereby giving credence to the charge that "government control of liquor had become liquor control of government."¹⁰²

Government control and sale of alcohol gave a type of respectability to 'the traffic' that it had not previously enjoyed,¹⁰³ and because of the financial condition of the province and the increasing degree of dependence of the government on liquor profits for an easy source of revenue this made the task of temperance workers much more difficult. In Oshawa, strong opposition was recorded to the wider sale of beer and wine especially "in a period of financial depression

100. U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 9, 1939, p. 432

101. Ibid., Sept. 17, 1929, p. 83

102. U.C.A., The New Outlook, Oct. 27, 1926, p. 18

103. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1934, p. 104

when so many of our fellow citizens are in dire need of the necessities of life."¹⁰⁴ The Bay of Quinte Conference also expressed an economic concern in this matter:

This traffic is a detriment to the commerce of our province. In this day of depression to worse than waste over sixty million dollars annually on beverage alcohol is the veriest economic folly.¹⁰⁵

The liquor interests were ceaseless in their demands for ever extended privileges from the government, and made such claims as the following:

The freer use of liquor will help out in a time of economic distress. The freer sale of beer will bring back prosperity. Let beer, wine and spirits balance the budget.¹⁰⁶

By 1938 the country was showing signs of recovering from the effects of a decade of economic depression. However, it was not revenue from the liquor traffic that tipped the economic scales, but income derived from a far greater evil. The cost of Canada's economic recovery was the outbreak of World War II. The Great Depression was over at last.

Even in retrospect it is difficult to fully appreciate the crisis that was The Great Depression. The United Church experienced the distress and the discouragement of

104. U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 8, 1934, p. 251

105. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1938, p. 32

106. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1933, p. 104

this decade with its people, and with the rest of the country. Together they faced the troubled and threatening 'thirties'. The challenge of the Depression served to strengthen the still young bonds of Church Union. Out of the testing of the Depression years the United Church, nationally and in the Bay of Quinte Conference, emerged more united in spirit and in purpose, and more deeply entrenched in the loyalty and affection of its people.

The United Church would need this unity of spirit and purpose, plus a strength beyond itself, to survive the six years of testing that began in September, 1939.

CHAPTER IV

THE WAR YEARS: 1939-1945

The United Church of Canada was born in the period of optimism that prevailed after World War I. The 'war to end war' had been won, and it seemed reasonable for people to look forward to an era of material prosperity and a time when military preparedness could be kept to a minimum. By the 1930s this mood of confidence was severely shaken and the attention of the United Church, as of all Canadians, was directed at the economic and social conditions that beset the whole nation. Meanwhile, as both church and country struggled through the decade known as 'The Great Depression', events in Asia and Europe were taking shape that would shatter the hopes for a world at peace and once again plunge the world into a state of war.

The United Church was peace-minded and, because of its long history of overseas missions, might well have been expected to have an international outlook. While this was true of many, especially the Church's leaders, for most of the membership the world situation aroused little real concern. Like most of his fellow Canadians the 'average' United Churchman remained secure in the mistaken belief that his life was safely insulated from the affairs of the world.

These illusions were summarily dispatched in September, 1939 by the outbreak of World War II.

This chapter will consider the United Church's attitude to the pacifists, the armament makers, and the League of Nations in the pre-war years; its response to the declaration of war in 1939; its involvement in the struggle in Europe and on the 'home front'; and its plans for the Church in the post-war world.

1. The Pre-war Years

The memory of World War I, in which more than 60,000 of the 600,000 enlisted Canadian servicemen were killed, was still fresh in the mind of the Church. The revulsion with war gave rise to a sizeable body of support for the peace movement, and a resolution on the part of many to take seriously Jesus' seventh beatitude: "Blessed are the peacemakers" (Matthew 5:9). Typical of this concern, as reflected in letters to, and editorials of, The New Outlook, is the following question from a Kingston minister:

Is it not time for our Church, the witness of the Prince and Kingdom of peace and brotherhood, to speak out on teaching men to save rather than to kill, before the horrors of 1914-1918 are forgotten?¹

Two of the peacemakers' favourite targets in these pre-war years were cadet training and armaments.

1. U.C.A., L. M. England, in The New Outlook, July 21, 1926, p. 17

a) Cadet Training -- The First General Council in 1925 stated its belief "that the training of our young men for war is contrary to the spirit of Christ," and resolved to disband all the Officers' Training Corps in United Church colleges, and to urge the Government to abolish cadet training in the high schools.² Only thirty of the 113 Presbyteries responded to the General Council's request for a study of the matter, and the responses were so varied that the matter was referred to a small commission to confer with military and educational authorities to determine any commendable features of such programs, as well as to discover any aspects which the United Church could not approve.³

The Commission recommended that the Church discriminate between the Cadet Corps and the Officers' Training Corps. The Cadet Corps, by definition, was an organization normally associated with a high school whose program included physical training, company drill, first aid, signalling and rifle shooting. The Commission found no evidence that there was any essential military character in the cadet program, unlike the Officers' Training Corps which had a definite military aspect and whose purpose was to provide the training in college specifically suited to produce officers for the armed

2. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1925, p. 33

3. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1928, pp.

forces. The Church was advised to disapprove of the Officers' Training Corps as being too militaristic and therefore not suited for inclusion in any United Church college program.

In the matter of the Cadet Corps, however, the Commission found many valuable features which could be highly recommended, such as the physical training, the character building, first aid, signalling, and target practice. Each of these had a strong disciplinary value, and the use of a uniform was approved as promoting esprit de corps. The annual inspection by a representative of the Department of Militia was seen as a means of maintaining both interest and efficiency, and as it was only one day a year it could not be construed as a significant military component in the program.

The Commission also discovered that there were no Officers' Training Corps in any of the eleven United Church colleges, but that there were such Corps in universities with which United Church colleges were affiliated; and that in only one of the Church's thirteen secondary schools was there a Cadet Corps. In its recommendation to the Church, the Commission stated its conviction

... that the evidence accumulated should allay the fear that the Cadet Corps fosters militarism in Canadian youth. ... Since the results of our study of the whole question fail to bring to light any feature of cadet training, as at present carried out in our provincial schools, against which the Christian conscience must protest, the Church is not called upon to demand [the movement's] abolition.⁴

4. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1928, p. 360

The Commission's careful work and reasonable findings brought the issue to a conclusion, and the matter of cadet training did not reappear as a subject of discussion in the courts of the Church or in the Church paper. The question of cadet training, however, did raise a more basic question: 'What should be the attitude of the United Church to war?' This question recurred regularly throughout the 1930s, and found its focus in three specific areas: pacifism, the ethics and economics of munitions and war materials, and the League of Nations.

b) The League of Nations⁵ -- The League was inaugurated in January, 1920 in the aftermath of World War I when most of the governments of the world agreed that in order to save the world from another war they must covenant together for the common good of all nations. The object of the League was to maintain international peace and security. The means for achieving this goal was through an International Court of Justice which would hear disputes and settle differences without recourse to war, and by member nations honouring all treaty obligations.

The League enjoyed considerable success and prestige in its first decade when more than thirty international disputes were peaceably settled. Then it suffered two critical

5. Pitman B. Potter, 'League of Nations', in The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th Ed., Chicago, 1958, Vol. 13, pp. 832-838

catastrophes when it failed to stop Japan's invasion of Manchuria (1931-1933), and Italy's conquest of Ethiopia (1935-1936). This so weakened the League's influence that it was ineffective in enforcing peace in Spain (1936-1939), or checking Japan's attack on China (1937-1945). The deathblow was struck in 1938 when Germany annexed Austria without fear of reprisal, and in 1939 with Germany's invasion of Czechoslovakia and Poland and the outbreak of World War II. So the noble experiment failed in its major role, that of keeping peace in the world; but its failure was not due to any flaw in its basic idea or ideals, rather to the indecision of its members in times of crisis and in their failure to live up to its principles. The League was dissolved in April, 1946 and was succeeded by the United Nations.

The United Church, at its First General Council in 1925, approved of the achievements of the League of Nations in preventing war, in establishing the International Court of Justice, in limiting the traffic in arms, in rehabilitating prisoners of war and refugees, and appealed to Church members to give support to the League.⁶ In a letter to The New Outlook, Dr. S. D. Chown, one of the 'fathers' of Church Union, noted the lack of preaching in support of the League, and said: "War will never cease until moral and spiritual force

6. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1925, p. 55

ends it. It is the function of the League of Nations to apply this."⁷ Another correspondent wrote in response:

The League of Nations, as Dr. Chown pointed out, provides a focal point of pulpit preaching -- it is now only a body, it needs a soul. I believe the Church of Christ can infuse in that wonderful organism the soul that will alone assure it of immortality.⁸

The Third General Council rejoiced "in the growing authority and influence of the League of Nations," and recorded its pride "that our Dominion has played an important part in the work of the Assembly of the League and now is honoured with a seat in the Council of the League."⁹ The Church recommended membership in the League of Nations' Society for its congregations, and suggested that its young people become familiar with the work of the League. Peterborough acknowledged the value of the League in the preventing of war, and boldly declared itself "ready to assist in the promotion of peace and goodwill in international affairs."¹⁰ Renfrew made a humbler but more realistic response to the Council's suggestion by urging its young people to become involved in the League of Nations' Society, to understand its principles, organization and practices, and to pray and work for peace

7. U.C.A., S. D. Chown, in The New Outlook, July 7, 1926, p. 21

8. U.C.A., J. R. Morden, Ibid., Aug. 18, 1926, p. 17

9. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1928, p. 134

10. U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, March 19, 1929, p. 58

in the world.¹¹

Throughout the 1930s the Church's attitude to the League of Nations was changing from one of enthusiastic optimism to grievous disappointment as it proved itself incapable of keeping peace in the world. This change may be noted in the following selection of statements. Belleville's World Peace Committee recognized the difficulties under which the League had operated in 1931, but reaffirmed its faith in the League's usefulness in settling international disputes. The Committee viewed "with apprehension and great sorrow the growing unrest in the East," and deplored Japan's resort to force in Manchuria "with the consequent destruction of life and property."¹² The Bay of Quinte Conference, in May, 1932, recognized the Japanese invasion of Manchuria as the most serious crisis which the League had yet encountered, but stated its conviction

... that the League has been the means of localizing the conflict which threatened to embroil the nations of the world in another world war, and as a mediator has justified the faith of its friends.¹³

The Conference reiterated its whole-hearted support not only for the League of Nations but for "every agency seeking the

11. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, October 9, 1929, p. 305

12. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Nov. 25, 1931, p. 559

13. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1932, p. 66

peaceful solution of national and international problems,"¹⁴ and again recommended membership in the League of Nations' Society for all the people of the Conference. On the occasion of Armistice Day, 1934, the Moderator, Rev. Richard Roberts, in an open letter to all United Church ministers, made an appeal for

... an intelligent interest and a strong, loyal support of the League of Nations. We are all well aware of the great peril of war that is now overshadowing the world, so that all efforts for disarmament and peace have been seriously hindered. In these circumstances, it is well to remind ourselves that the League of Nations is virtually our sole bulwark against international anarchy, and it is therefore urgent to rally all Christian opinion on its behalf.¹⁵

The General Council, the Conference, and the Presbyteries continued their resolutions of support for the work of the League, but a note of resignation of the inevitability of war appeared in official pronouncements after the League's failure to enforce sanctions on Italy for its attack on Ethiopia in 1935. Cobourg recorded itself as

... unreservedly in support of the Covenant of the League of Nations which provides for the disciplining of any member nation which undertakes to make war on any other nation.¹⁶

Kingston called all of its ministers and people "to earnest

14. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1932, p. 66

15. U.C.A., Richard Roberts, in The New Outlook, November 7, 1934, p. 975

16. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 17, 1935, p. 347

and unceasing prayer to Almighty God for a peaceful and just settlement of the present dispute between Italy and Ethiopia."17 In the same resolution, Kingston prayed for God's

... guidance and blessing on the League of Nations and especially on the counsels and efforts of the representatives of those nations which are determined to uphold the sacredness of solemn agreements in order to avoid the horrors of war.18

However, even as this prayer was being offered, Canada, together with other member nations, was rendering the collective security system of the League virtually meaningless by failing to invoke effective sanctions on Italy. Italy was publicly condemned, and an embargo of certain materials was placed on her by the League, but exempted were iron, coal and oil, all essential to Italy's war plans.19 The sorrow and disappointment of the Church with the League's apparent failure to accomplish its peaceful purposes was expressed by the Conference at its annual meeting in 1936:

The incursion into Manchuria; the invasion and conquest of Ethiopia; the repeated failure of disarmament conferences; the evasion and repudiation of the obligations of Versailles, with the consequent fear and the mad race in the production of instruments of war, has seized the most optimistic with a sense of apprehension and fear for the future safety of civilization. We believe that the failure to

17. U.C.A., Kingston Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 18, 1935, p. 8

18. Ibid., p. 8

19. J. A. Lower, Canada: An Outline History, Toronto, Ryerson, 1966, pp. 187-188

achieve an amicable settlement of international differences is the outcome of inordinate selfishness and greed, on the part of both individuals and nations.²⁰

At the heart of the Church's resolutions concerning the League of Nations was an optimistic hope and a Christian idealism. While such resolutions had some positive effect on Church members, quickening their consciences against war, it must be seriously questioned whether they had any effect upon the political decisions of the League. Still the Church was bound to pursue her goal of a world at peace, a world in which the spirit of Christ would prevail.

c) War Materials -- Until the mid 1930s the Church, as repeatedly stated in the pronouncements of Presbyteries, Conference, and General Council, retained faith in the League of Nations, the International Court of Justice, the Paris Peace Pact, and the Locarno Treaty as effective instruments for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. However, after the Japanese invasion of Manchuria and the Italian assault on Ethiopia, the Church's confidence in these 'instruments' to keep peace was shaken. As early as 1928 the General Council was aware of conditions that threatened peace:

The presence of immense standing armies, the development of great navies and the creation of mighty air-fleets cannot but be an occasion of unrest and

20. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1936, p. 39

constitute an ever present reminder that we have not yet passed from the menace of war.²¹

The Church turned its attention to current proposals for disarmament, and supported such proposals with prayers and resolutions to the government. In the hopeful optimism that preceded the Geneva Disarmament Conference in 1932 the Church reminded the government of the Versailles Treaty, in which the Allies, while compelling Germany to disarm, also pledged to reduce their own armaments. Since no appreciable reduction had taken place, and inasmuch as all the major powers had committed themselves to the renunciation of war as a means of settling their disputes, the General Council called upon Canada and the other nations to honour their treaty obligations by an immediate reduction by at least one-quarter of their present expenditure on armaments.²² In seeking to develop an enthusiasm for disarmament and support for the Geneva Conference, Belleville Presbytery pointed out that selfishness, avarice, and a struggle for racial and economic supremacy were contributing factors to the arms race:

The present extremity provides the minister with an unparalleled opportunity to expose the utter failure of the materialistic philosophy of life and to present the world's needs of the Jesus way of life.²³

21. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1928, p. 134.

22. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1932, p. 105

23. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 17, 1931, p. 12,

Notwithstanding the Church's prayers and resolutions, the Disarmament Conference failed to achieve any substantial agreement on arms reduction, and both Japan and Germany withdrew from the League of Nations.

While the Church rightly declared its unchanging conviction that war was contrary to the mind and spirit of Christ, it became reconciled to the fact that, despite its protests and pronouncements, the nations of the world were in the process of re-arming. Without changing its opposition to either armament or re-armament, the Church took a different approach and called attention to the dangers involved in the private manufacture of armaments. That the Church was aware of the economics of the production of war materials is evident in the following resolution of Cobourg Presbytery:

Whereas war is always a possibility when large supplies of munitions and large numbers of trained soldiers are on hand; and whereas the production of munitions of war by private concerns is one of the highest dividend-producing industries at the present time; and whereas the nations are at present arming at feverish haste and beyond all peaceful needs; be it therefore resolved that this Presbytery of Cobourg go on record as being opposed to the manufacture of munitions by private corporations and thoroughly in accord with actual disarmament to a point where only good police protection is afforded.²⁴

The Sixth General Council, meeting in Kingston in 1934, gave credit to the Canadian Government for its stand at Geneva in favour of complete state control of all armament manufacture.

and further requested the Government

... to prepare measures which will ensure that in the event of Canada being engaged in war adequate steps shall be taken which will prevent, during the war, the exploitation of the exigencies of the war to permit the unregulated accumulation of wealth in private hands.²⁵

The New Outlook, in an editorial on the twentieth anniversary of the outbreak of World War I, expressed the uneasiness of many people at the feverish preparation for war by many of those nations who were so outspoken in their avowals for peace. In calling attention to the munitions makers who were again readying the world for war, the Church paper asked for government control of armaments, thereby giving the people some chance to at least control the government whereas they had "no chance to control the merchants of death -- the private manufacturers of arms."²⁶ Cobourg expressed a similar concern:

We believe that the nationalization and government control of the manufacture of armaments would very materially lessen the causes leading to war, and we urge our people that they be not swayed by the vicious propaganda of the militarists and munition makers.²⁷

As the war clouds gathered and darkened, the Church turned its attention from the economics of armaments to the

25. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1934, p. 64

26. U.C.A., The New Outlook, Aug. 15, 1934, p. 672

27. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 28, 1934, pp. 315-316

ethics of engaging in the traffic of war materials. A letter from United Church missionaries in China illustrates the dilemma. A Chinese patient in a United Church mission hospital in West China asked a United Church missionary why Canada continued to ship large quantities of war materials to China's enemies, the Japanese. The missionary suggested the best answer would be for the Canadian government to invoke the amendment to the Customs Act by which shipments to Japan of all arms, ammunition, and goods capable of being converted into war materials would be prohibited. The missionaries' letter concluded with this statement:

We firmly believe that by renouncing this lucrative trade Canada might assume the moral leadership of the world. For by so doing our people will have dealt with this question as a great moral issue rather than on the grounds of self-interest.²⁸

An editorial in the same issue of The New Outlook elaborated on the predicament. In 1936 Japan spent four million dollars for Canadian aluminum, copper, and nickel, all essential for the manufacture of aircraft and armaments, and in a time of economic depression such a four million dollar sale was a welcome deposit in Canada's treasury. But because she had profited from Japanese aggression, Canada had to be considered a party to the war, and there was a growing feeling among many Canadians that such trade was morally wrong,

28. U.C.A., Letter from Missionaries, in The New Outlook, January 7, 1938, p. 19

and that in this matter the economic interest of the country was in conflict with its conscience.²⁹ In this conflict, economics won out over ethics and, despite the Church's protests, the Canadian Government continued to ship war supplies to any nation that wished to purchase them. The United Church Observer, the successor to The New Outlook, in an article published just two months prior to Canada's declaration of war, made a final comment on the situation:

This nation should learn afresh that a policy which places immediate trade gains over moral obligations cannot possibly have a basis in real religion or in sound economics.³⁰

The outbreak of World War II made the discussion academic.

d) Pacifism -- Pacifism, as a minority movement within major Christian churches, began in the years surrounding World War I. There were two general lines of approach in the pacifist movement, and these were sometimes confused by the outsider. One approach advocated pacifism and the complete renunciation of war as a policy for the nation; the other approach was a personal conviction of an individual that his conscience forbade him to take part in any act of war. Among pacifists there was a wide range of opinion about their attitude to their own country in time of war, extending from a

29. U.C.A., The New Outlook, Jan. 7, 1938, p. 4

30. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, July 15, 1939, p. 17

small minority that would refuse to do anything to help the nation's war effort to those prepared to offer any kind of service except actual fighting.³¹ Pacifism was a lively issue in the United Church in the mid 1930s, and again in 1939.

Belleville Presbytery sent a resolution to the General Council in 1934 asking that members of the United Church "when they desire it, be granted immunity from military service on conscientious grounds on the same basis as the Quakers."³² The Council was unable to concur in the resolution

... since the refusal of obedience to civil authority can be justified only when one's conscience so demands this course that he is ready to accept the civil consequences of disobedience; and the Church, recognizing the Christian obligation in general to render obedience to civil authority, cannot undertake to do anything which partakes of the organization of deliberate and concerted disobedience.³³

The Council, aware that not more than ten percent of United Church ministers or members held a thoroughgoing pacifist position, however, expressed its gratitude to those whose minority views were inspired by the highest Christian ideals.

Armistice Day, as it was called in the 1930s, invariably inspired a number of articles in The New Outlook. No exception was an editorial in 1934 on the peace campaign of

31. G. Cromwell Field, 'Pacifism' in The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 14th Ed., Chicago, 1958, Vol. 17, pp. 17-20

32. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 13, 1934, p. 728

33. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1934, p. 64

Rev. 'Dick' Sheppard, an Anglican clergyman and a chaplain in World War I, which sought as many persons as possible to sign a solemn pledge refusing to participate in any future war.³⁴ Rev. J. Lavell Smith, a Montreal minister and a leader of the pacifist movement in the United Church, who had served for three years in World War I, responded to the editorial and called on United Church ministers and members to join him in a thoroughgoing crusade against war. He declared himself to be "utterly and unalterably opposed to war," and offered the following pledge (identical with the pledge of Sheppard's campaign in Britain): "I renounce war and never again, directly or indirectly, will I support or sanction another war."³⁵

The letters to the editor were equally divided on the issue of pacifism, and the arguments for and against pacifism were paraded in the pages of the Church paper with varying degrees of intensity. Many writers who supported Smith's crusade, and signed the pledge, also asked questions: 'What happens if, and when, Canada is at war?'; 'What if Canada is invaded by an enemy power?'; 'What about a civil war?' Of interest was the letter from Rev. Stanley Knowles, a minister of the United Church and later a National Democratic Party

34. U.C.A., The New Outlook, Nov. 7, 1934, p. 977

35. U.C.A., J. Lavell Smith, in The New Outlook, Nov. 21, 1934, p. 1033

member of Canada's parliament. He said the government should be aware of the extent of pacifist sentiment in the nation, and then stated that he would seek to hinder the war effort, that he would try to organize strikes at the munitions plants, and that he would preach against war and accept the charge of sedition. In giving his unqualified support to the pacifist movement, he wrote:

Pacific idealism may have had its negative phase, with its emphasis on passive resistance and non-support, but today in the minds and hearts of many it is a positive thing and carries with it a readiness to pay any price that might be demanded.³⁶

Those who wrote in opposition to both the movement and the pledge were still very much for peace. One writer was concerned that such an extreme stand by good men would "divide and weaken the forces of those who are willing to work and, if need be, to die for peace!"³⁷ Another wrote:

* Many of us wish we could heartily subscribe to this easy statement, but it seems to me a matter for very serious consideration as to whether we can conscientiously ask our youth to so commit themselves, with an utter disregard for the circumstances which may beset our country and involve it in immediate danger.³⁸

The final letter in the series of exchanges on pacifism noted

36. U.C.A., Stanley Knowles, in The New Outlook, Dec. 12, 1934, p. 1128

37. U.C.A., B. C. Salter, in The New Outlook, Dec. 5, 1934, p. 1094

38. U.C.A., C. Parkin, in The New Outlook, Dec. 5, 1934, p. 1094

the ineffectiveness of the League of Nations in keeping peace and spoke of the futility of the pledge in preventing war:

Though all the ministers, priests and rabbis in Canada were to take the pledge 'Never Again', it would not have a feather's weight of influence in preventing another war. Wars are neither fomented nor initiated in Canada.³⁹

Smith reported to The New Outlook in May, 1935, that he had received nearly two thousand pledges, and that these had been sent on to the Canadian Government.⁴⁰ After this date the issue of pacifism disappeared from the Church paper until the spring of 1939 when it resurfaced with a note of urgency and reality as Canada's involvement in another world war appeared both inevitable and imminent.

In April, 1939, a group of students at the Church's Victoria College, stated their views on war and peace:

We renounce completely the policy of violence. We are willing to work and suffer for the establishment of peace. ... Peace on earth can be achieved by one method: the absolute renunciation of war by individuals, by the Church, and by the State. ... We believe that the cause of peace is the most urgent question facing Christians today. Therefore, we are convinced that it is the duty of the Church to lead in a stand for pacifism. We recommend that the Church formulate a definite policy whereby, in the event of the State regimenting national resources, including the conscription of youth, at any time, an alternative will be offered in which conscientious

39. U.C.A., J. W. Magwood, in The New Outlook, March 13, 1935, p. 265

40. U.C.A., J. Lavell Smith, in The New Outlook, May 22, 1935, p. 524

Christians can take a positive stand without compromising their Christian faith.⁴¹

A different point of view was expressed by four young ministers in a letter published three weeks before the outbreak of war in 1939. They spoke against any special consideration for ministers in the matter of exemption from military service as an unsatisfactory compromise:

It places the individual minister in an unhappy position. If he is a thoroughgoing pacifist and urges a young man to resist conscription he speaks without authority for he is not subject to conscription himself. If he is not a thoroughgoing pacifist, but believes that, in a given situation, war is the lesser of two evils, he is again in an unenviable position for how can he advise another to fight if he is exempted from fighting himself? We believe that if the minister's voice is to be a voice of authority in this matter he must be subject to the same conditions as those he seeks to advise. For this reason we advocate that the United Church of Canada request the Dominion Government that, in the event of conscription during a war, its ministers be subject to the same conditions as other citizens of the land.⁴²

It was this latter attitude that prevailed when war broke out in September, 1939.

There was a noticeable change in the 'tone' of the letters from May, 1939 onwards as war appeared to be a certainty. The note of thoroughgoing pacifism was being replaced by support for the concept of a defensive war, and the need

41. U.C.A., Letter from Victoria students, in The New Outlook, April 15, 1939, p. 21

42. U.C.A., Letter from four ministers, in The U.C. Observer, August 15, 1939, p. 19

to preserve justice and freedom. The laymen of the Church had little difficulty in harmonizing loyalty to God and loyalty to Canada, and one writer spoke his mind about the stance of some Church leaders and the Church press:

It seems we have a group of Church leaders who worship peace as blindly as some men worship war; and one after another our Church papers have been made organs for pacifist propaganda. ... The vast majority of our membership will continue to regard loyalty to king and country as second only to loyalty to God.⁴³

The United Church had more than one hundred and sixty missionaries in China in the 1930s for whom the question of war and peace was a practical issue. A letter in May, 1939, written from Chungking just after a Japanese air raid, when "the dead are still on the streets and the fires from the incendiary bombs are still burning,"⁴⁴ by a missionary teacher who was himself a pacifist after World War I, carried a note of reality that was missing from most letters written from the security of a Canadian home. He wrote:

Now I feel that a negative pacifism based on submission gives everything over to the militarist nations, which will even imprison people for praying for peace. The we will lose freedom and justice, as well as peace.⁴⁵

He continued in his letter that he did not see Jesus as the

43. U.C.A., George Clough, in The U.C. Observer, June 15, 1939, p. 21

44. U.C.A., S. Lautenschlager, in The U.C. Observer, August 1, 1939, p. 21

45. Ibid., p. 21

pacifists did, "a Saviour who advocated only submission to injustice," but as one who "attacked every wrong and injustice, and who challenged the evil forces of his day with all his power."⁴⁶ The writer then offered his explanation of Japan's war of aggression as an attempt to reduce China to a colony and gain the use of her raw materials for Japanese economic and military needs. The letter concluded:

This type of militarist will soon rule the world if Christians will advocate a negative, long-suffering submission to tyranny. Would you advocate that Canada hand over the control of her economic and political life to a foreign military power?⁴⁷

When war finally came the pacifist had to confront his predicament. Typical of the resolution of the dilemma was that of Rev. J. Lavell Smith, who had led a vigorous campaign for peace.⁴⁸ In a letter to The Observer, written on September 3rd, 1939 after the announcement of Britain's declaration of war on Germany, Smith said:

I have been known to some of your readers as a pacifist. A pacifist I remain. But the question now to be faced is, 'What sort of ministry may a pacifist exercise in time of war?' ... The hour that now has struck is one in which all who loathe war must seek to do some constructive thing for the healing of the nations.⁴⁹

46. U.C.A., S. Lautenschlager, in The U.C. Observer, August 1, 1939, p. 21

47. Ibid., p. 21

48. See pp. 178-180

49. U.C.A., J. Lavell Smith, in The U.C. Observer, Sept. 15, 1939, p. 18

One of the constructive things that the United Church did in the early days of the war was to recognize the variety of opinions held by its members. The Church called for real heart-searching among Christians as each sought to discover his duty to both Church and country, and to make decisions of a personal and practical nature. There was no condemnation of the pacifist, but rather an appreciation of his position and an awareness of his predicament. There was an acceptance of the principle that the individual Christian must be true to his conscience, while recognizing that others of the same Church family, true to their consciences, were led in a different direction.

The United Church also declared that it must seek to retain a fellowship of prayer with Christians of those countries with whom Canada was at war, and thus maintain the spirit of Christian brotherhood which would transcend all national boundaries and which, at war's end, might become the basis of a just and permanent peace in the world.⁵⁰

2. The Church in World War II

Throughout most of the 1930s Canada shared the North American policy of isolationism, and the naive belief that by avoiding involvement in international affairs participation

50. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, Sept. 1, 1939, p. 4; Sept. 15, 1939, p. 4

in any future war could be avoided. By the mid 1930s, however, the aims of Nazi Germany were clear and Canada could no longer pretend that European affairs were none of her concern. The last of the ill-fated disarmament conferences had failed, Germany had withdrawn from the League of Nations and had renounced the Versailles Treaty, and had begun mobilizing an army and making unmistakable preparations for war.

In 1935 Italy invaded and conquered Ethiopia, and a year later Franco began his rebellion in Spain with German and Italian support. In 1938 the Nazis occupied Austria and the Czechoslovakian frontier, but were able to convince both Britain and France at the Munich Conference that they would make no further territorial claims. Any remaining illusions of peace were shattered in 1939 when Hitler completed the occupation of Czechoslovakia, and Mussolini overpowered Albania. On September 1st, 1939, German troops invaded Poland in defiance of British and French warnings that they would defend Poland against aggression. World War II had begun.

a) The Attitude of the United Church to War -- The Second General Council in 1926 declared that war was one of the great tragedies of the world, and that the root causes of war were to be found in the spirit of national selfishness and greed. The Council pointed out the futility of war as a means of settling international disputes, and called on the Church, the school, and the home to give leadership in laying

the foundations for world peace.⁵¹ The Third General Council in 1928 called on the Canadian Government to "denounce war as an instrument of national policy," and on Church members to pray for peace.⁵²

In 1930 the annual meeting of the Bay of Quinte Conference passed the 'standard' anti-war resolutions, but with this significant addition:

In view of the fact that International Law recognizes the inherent right of nations to defend themselves against unjust and unprovoked attack, nothing in these resolutions shall be interpreted as taking away this right.⁵³

Throughout the mid 1930s the General Council, the Conference, and the Presbyteries were consistent in their stated opposition to war.⁵⁴ In 1938 the General Council, meeting during the Munich crisis, reviewed and reaffirmed the position taken by previous Councils relative to war, namely:

The United Church of Canada declares its unchanging conviction that war is contrary to the mind of Christ (1932). We believe armed warfare to be contrary to the spirit and teaching of Christ (1934). As Christians we positively reject war, because war rejects love, defies the will of Christ, and denies the worth of man (1936). We declare the basic Christian principle of the supreme worth of human

51. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1926, p. 111

52. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1928, p. 134

53. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1930, pp. 43, 66.

54. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 17, 1935, p. 841; Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 28, 1934, p. 315; U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1932, p. 105; 1934, p. 63; 1936, p. 107; B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1937, p. 73

personality, the economic interdependence of the peoples of the world, and the inherent oneness of mankind. War is the repudiation of these principles, and of love and reason.⁵⁵

The Council pledged to do all in its power to persuade Canada never to engage in a war of aggression against other nations.

Before the actual outbreak of war there were victims of Nazi aggression and persecution. These were the Jews of Germany and the refugees of central Europe, and the United Church spoke out strongly on their behalf. Belleville Presbytery was "deeply stirred by the recent brutal atrocities against our brethren the Jews,"⁵⁶ and asked the General Council to send a further protest to Germany; while Peterborough Presbytery sent a resolution to the Prime Minister emphasizing the plight of thousands of refugees of central Europe who were being persecuted because of political views or racial origin, and asking Canada to take a fair share of these refugees.⁵⁷ Cobourg Presbytery, while recognizing the obvious benefits to the nation from such an immigration and recalling Canada's tradition of hospitality to victims of tyranny, reminded the Church of its responsibility in any such action:

In asking the Government to admit our share of these homeless people, we realize that as Christian

55. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1938, p. 93

56. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Nov. 15, 1938, p. 1026

57. U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, Nov. 29, 1938, p. 523

citizens we must help to welcome them and establish them in our midst, and we call upon our Church people to accept the responsibility.⁵⁸

Cobourg accepted the responsibility it advocated, and this will illustrate the response of the United Church to the refugee situation. North of Trenton, in Cobourg Presbytery, is the village of Batawa founded in 1939 by Thomas Bata, a refugee from Czechoslovakia who came to Canada and established a shoe factory in which his fellow refugees found employment. Rev. H. C. Vaclavik was the United Church minister to the Czechoslovakian refugees in Ontario, and Batawa was part of his province-wide parish. Of his ministry among his fellow countrymen, he said:

The co-operation of Rev. F. J. Lane and the United Church people of Frankford has made the work a delight, and certainly has drawn forth the appreciation of the Czechoslovak people.⁵⁹

These Czechoslovakian refugees became Canadian citizens and, in June 1943, organized a United Church in Batawa with the help of the Presbytery and the Board of Home Missions.

b) The Declaration of War -- On September 10th, 1939, Canada declared war on Germany. The theorizing was over and the attitude of the Church to war was put to the test. Two days after the declaration of war, Kingston Presbytery met

58. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 23, 1939, p. 455

59. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, Oct. 1, 1941, p. 16

in regular session and commended the Canadian Government for joining forces with Great Britain, France and other nations "in resistance to lawless aggression and in defence of those principles of honour, justice, and liberty which alone make an ordered civilization possible."⁶⁰ The Presbytery stated:

While seeking to put far from us any spirit of malice or hatred towards those opposed to us in this struggle, as ministers and people we would pledge our loyalty and support to the government in all measures taken for the effective furtherance of these ends, and in particular would give ourselves unceasingly to prayer and to the fulfillment of the moral and spiritual ministries which the Christian Church is called to render to the State at such a time as this.⁶¹

Oshawa Presbytery, while recognizing the sincerity of the pacifist, and deploring war, said:

If there is to be any conscripted service, we would insist upon the principle of equality of sacrifice being observed on the part of all citizens according to their capacity for service or sacrifice.⁶²

The other Presbyteries approved similar resolutions, but with their own additions: Renfrew reminded its people of the false propaganda that was common in wartime and seldom confined to only one side, and requested the ministers to refrain from using their pulpits for recruiting purposes; Peterborough and

60. U.C.A., Kingston Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 12, 1939, p. 8

61. Ibid., p. 8.

62. U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 14, 1939, p. 449

Oshawa joined Renfrew in commending the government for its prompt action in checking war profiteering in essential products, and in calling on the government to take the required steps to restrict the liquor traffic for the duration.⁶³

Shortly after the declaration of war the General Council, through its sub-Executive, assured Canada's Minister of National Defence "of the willingness of the United Church to render its essential service at this time of national need."⁶⁴ The Moderator was asked to send a letter of guidance to all United Church ministers, encouraging them in the work committed to them in time of war. He concluded his pastoral letter in these words:

With repentance, faith and courage let us continue to proclaim the Gospel of Christ and carry on a Christian ministry of unceasing prayer. Our people will be strong to endure only if they can rest assured that God is their strength; and only thus will they be able to rebuild when the present troubles are overpast, and the evil things which now darken our world are brought to an end.⁶⁵

The pacifists responded to what they interpreted as the Moderator's pro-war support letter by issuing a public statement, signed by seventy-five ministers and laymen, under the title, 'Witness Against the War', in which they said:

63. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 19, 1939, pp. 665, 661; Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 14, 1939, pp. 598-599; Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 14, 1939, p. 451; Oct. 10, 1939, p. 461

64. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1940, p. 205

65. Ibid., pp. 205-206

We find ourselves, not without pain and regret, unable to approve of this war. We recognize that other ministers and church members, equally sincere, differ from us and feel in duty bound to participate in it. We take our stand upon the declaration of our own General Council in 1938, 'that war is contrary to the mind of Christ'. We think it ought to be placed on record now that at least some representatives of the Christian Churches disapproved and uttered this protest. We affirm that we are not seeking escape from the burden of sacrifice, and we profess our readiness to implement our citizen loyalty in some form of service equally as taxing, difficult and dangerous as military service, providing it does not contribute directly to the war effort.⁶⁶

On October 25th, 1939, the sub-Executive of the General Council called a meeting to consider the pacifist's manifesto, and also to hear several representations made to the United Church by the civil authorities who, in the light of the document, questioned the loyalty of the Church. Following this meeting the sub-Executive issued a statement in which it declared that the document in question had no official status and represented neither an official organization of the United Church nor the attitude of the Church as a whole. It was also indicated that since the outbreak of war every Presbytery of the United Church had met to consider the Church's stand, and not one of them had expressed itself in the spirit of the pacifist's manifesto.⁶⁷

It was also pointed out that immediately after the declaration of war the United Church had established a War

66. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, Oct. 15, 1939, p. 21

67. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1940, pp. 22-23

Services Committee to co-ordinate the Church's own war effort and to co-operate with other churches and secular organizations, such as the Red Cross and the Y.M.C.A., in offering material comfort and support for service personnel. Within a month more than one hundred and fifty United Church ministers had applied for service as military chaplains, and nearly two thousand congregations had set up War Service units.

The sub-Executive was confident that it expressed the general attitude of United Church people, and regretted that so much attention had been given to an unofficial document whose signatories had gone "far beyond the limits of what is wise and proper in time of war" and whose action had jeopardized "the essential unity and fellowship both of the Church and of the nation."⁶⁸ In concluding its statement, the sub-Executive proclaimed again its confidence in the loyalty of the United Church and declared its readiness to support the nation in the present war "in every way which is open and proper to the Church."⁶⁹

There was a spirited exchange of letters in response to the 'Witness Against the War' issue. Most letters to The Observer opposed the manifesto and the harm that it had done, or could do, now that Canada, like it or not, was at war.

68. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1940, p. 23

69. Ibid., p. 23

The most rational criticism, in an issue whose very nature was bound to evoke strong responses, was that the United Church had not squarely faced the dilemma of reconciling its official statements about war⁷⁰ with its actions once war had been declared.

The 1940 General Council, the first since the outbreak of war, missed the opportunity to issue a clear and unequivocal statement on the Church's attitude to the war. It neither repudiated the formal statements of previous Councils, nor reproved the action of the sub-Executive of October, 1939. Therefore, one is left to assume either that the Council's pronouncements against war (1932-1938) were still the official attitude, or that the 'unreproved' action of its own sub-Executive had been tacitly approved.⁷¹ While the Council apparently considered the matter to be closed, it would have been better had it made a definite statement that would have brought the Church's official declarations out of contradiction with its official actions.

Throughout this period there had been little actual war in Europe. The German invasion of Poland and the Russian invasion of Finland seemed far removed from the involvement Canada expected. Thus the Church could afford to spend its

70. See pp. 186-187

71. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1941, p. 16

energy on the issues raised by the pacifists in their 'Witness Against the War'. In April, 1940, Germany invaded Denmark and Norway, and Canada suffered her first casualties. In May the so-called 'phoney war' came to an abrupt end with the German blitzkrieg in Holland, Belgium, and France. With the collapse and surrender of the French armies, the 'miracle' of the evacuation of the Allied armies at Dunkirk, the Battle of Britain in August-September, 1940 (in which many Canadian airmen took part), and the arrival in Britain of the first contingent of Canadian soldiers, the war for Canada was no longer remote and academic. It was immediate and real.

c) The Chaplains -- One of the first tasks of the United Church's War Service Committee after its organization in September, 1939, was the appointment of chaplains. Under Department of National Defence regulations no minister could be appointed without the approval and recommendation of his denomination. To be appointed, he had to be a duly accredited minister with at least three years of active ministry, able to pass the standard military examination, and be between thirty and fifty years of age.

Among the twenty-nine United Church chaplains that were appointed in 1940 were three from the Bay of Quinte Conference: Rev. H. A. Kent, Principal of Queen's Theological College, who was appointed Senior Chaplain of the First Division, C.A.S.F., in Britain; Rev. W. E. L. Smith of Grafton;

and Rev. W. F. Banister of Bowmanville. Before the war was over, twenty ministers from Bay of Quinte served as chaplains with the armed services or with auxilliary services.

Early in 1940 Rev. Waldo E. L. Smith, minister of the Grafton Pastoral Charge, was appointed a chaplain in the Canadian Army. He served with distinction for more than five years, until his discharge in 1945. His army experience illustrates the life of a typical chaplain 'in action', as well as the way in which home ties with both family and congregation were maintained. In accord with what was to become United Church policy in relation to chaplains, Smith was granted 'leave of absence' from his pastoral charge but continued to be listed as the minister at Grafton. In the meantime, Rev. W. R. Archer, a retired minister, was appointed as 'supply', with the understanding that he would vacate his position when Smith returned home.⁷²

After a tour of duty at Camp Borden in Ontario, Smith went overseas in 1941 and served in England. His first taste of action came on August 19th, 1942 in the Canadian raid on Dieppe, the first Allied experiment in 'combined operations'. He was 'mentioned in dispatches' for his service with the Canadian troops at Dieppe.⁷³ In July, 1943 Smith landed with

72. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1940, p. 111

73. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 22, 1942, p. 564

the Canadian First Division in the invasion of Sicily, and in September, 1943 he was with the same forces when they invaded Italy. He was awarded the Military Cross in an action at the Biferno River. His citation stated:

Some engineers were building a crossing at Colle d'Anchise under direct fire of the enemy. Some of the men were wounded and Captain Smith went to them and ministered to them. His conduct was an outstanding act of gallantry and courage far beyond the bounds of duty.⁷⁴

In commenting on the awarding of the Military Cross to one of its members, the Secretary of Cobourg Presbytery recorded in the Minutes: "Those of us who have had the privilege of knowing Captain Smith know that he would not be found wanting in the hour of need."⁷⁵

Captain Smith wrote to his congregation in Grafton on the occasion of the celebration of its centennial.⁷⁶ In the midst of his duties as a chaplain in Italy he showed his concern as a pastor for his own people 'back home', and wished them well. In September, 1945 Cobourg Presbytery learned that Captain Smith would soon return to his work at Grafton. On October 2nd, 1945 he resumed his pastorate after more than five years as a chaplain, and at its first meeting since his return the Presbytery expressed its pleasure "in his safe

p. 604 74. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, May 3, 1944,

75. Ibid., p. 604

76. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, Oct. 15, 1944, p. 22

return from service overseas."⁷⁷

At the conclusion of the war the General Council recorded its pride and gratitude in the chaplains of the armed services who, with devotion and courage, served the men and women of Canada on active duty. Included in the appreciation of the Church were the wives and families of the chaplains "who bore long separations with uncomplaining fortitude and accepted anxiety and sorrow with Christian courage."⁷⁸

In a statement to the 1946 General Council, Lieutenant Colonel W. F. Banister of the Bay of Quinte Conference, reported for the chaplains who had served during the war. He noted that many servicemen had had little formal connection with the Church, and many were quite apathetic towards religion even though they might have strong feelings of loyalty for the chaplain. They were generally indifferent to denominationalism, but most were receptive to the Christian message especially as they approached the time of actual combat. Combat, for the soldier, was a time of "supreme spiritual awareness" as well as a time of physical danger, and

... the death of comrades was sorely felt and their bodies laid away with a tenderness and reverence touching from such tough warriors. ... To all it seemed, as they viewed the heaps of bodies or rows of crosses, a cruel waste of lives.⁷⁹

⁷⁷. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, Nov. 7, 1945, p. 647

⁷⁸. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1946, p. 272

⁷⁹. Ibid., p. 244

d) 'Killed in Action' -- Wartime casualties were not unexpected, and every family lived in fear that one day news would come of a son or husband killed or missing in action. The chaplain overseas and the pastor at home combined in a ministry of comfort to those to whom the sad news had come. United Church ministers were not spared the sorrow either of breaking the news to the family, or of receiving such news of their own sons.

The first Canadian casualty of the war was Pilot Officer Lloyd Bishop, who was killed in action over France on March 12th, 1940 while flying with the 73rd Fighter Squadron of the R.A.F.⁸⁰ He was a second year student at Queen's when he enlisted, and was the son of Rev. Alfred Bishop of Zion United Church, Pittsburg (north-east of Kingston). Kingston Presbytery sent a letter of sympathy, the first of many such letters sent by the seven Presbyteries to United Church families whose sons had made 'the supreme sacrifice'.⁸¹

The 1942 General Council, meeting in Belleville, took note of the cruel realities of war, and recorded

... its deep sympathy with all our United Church families which have been saddened by casualties in the war. Especially our hearts go out to those ministers whose sons have suffered wounds, imprisonment or death in the struggle, and we pray that the God

80. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, July 15, 1940, p. 1

81. U.C.A., Kingston Presbytery: Minutes, April 30, 1940, p. 3

of all comfort will strengthen and uphold them as under the weight of their own sorrows they seek to minister to the needs of others.⁸²

The only ministerial casualty from Bay of Quinte Conference came late in the war when, during the fighting around Antwerp, Squadron Leader James Gordon Brown, a chaplain with the R.C.A.F., was killed on his 35th birthday, November 27th, 1944, by an exploding German V2 rocket. Brown, a native of Lyndhurst (north of Kingston), was a graduate of Queen's Theological College in 1935. A memorial service was held in the Queen's chapel, conducted by Principal H. A. Kent, former Senior Chaplain of the Canadian First Division, C.A.S.F., who paid tribute to the young officer killed in action while ministering to the needs of his squadron.⁸³

e) From D-Day to V-Day -- The prospect of the imminent invasion of France, and the beginning of the final phase of the war in Europe, was fraught with the hopes and fears of millions of Canadians -- fears for the loss of life which would be inevitable, and hopes that the preparations of four years would be successfully fulfilled. Kingston Presbytery, meeting a month before D-Day, issued the following statement:

In these tense pre-invasion days, having in thankful remembrance God's merciful goodness in so

82. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1942, p. 34

83. U.C.A., Kingston Presbytery: Minutes, Dec. 5, 1944, pp. 4-5; U.C.C. Year Book: 1945, p. 5; The U. C. Observer, Jan. 1, 1945, p. 29

many 'outgates and deliverances' already granted to our arms and those of our allies, we would as ministers and people give ourselves to unceasing prayer and intercession that God's favour may attend the culminating efforts of the United Nations and a speedy deliverance be effected for the enslaved and oppressed peoples of Europe and the world. In furtherance of this ministry of intercession we recommend that wherever possible our people be gathered together for united prayer on the announcement of the beginning of the invasion of Europe, and encouraged to continue steadfast in this ministry of prayer and Godward expectancy until victory is granted.⁸⁴

Other Presbyteries joined Kingston in calling for prayers in the days prior to the invasion, believing that any victory would be won "not by might or by power, but by my spirit, says the Lord of Hosts" (Zechariah 4:6). This reflected the World War I conviction that 'God is on our side' (and the German counterpart, 'Gott ist mit uns').

The twentieth annual meeting of the Bay of Quinte Conference, held in Peterborough, opened on the afternoon of D-Day, June 6th, 1944. As the first item on the agenda, the delegates "listened with rapt attention" to the broadcast of the radio message of King George VI. This was followed by the singing of the national anthem, and the celebration of Holy Communion which had a "new and more immediate significance: the Cross and the Christ were very near."⁸⁵ In the 'Resolution of Loyalty', a traditional practice in the Bay

84. U.C.A., Kingston Presbytery: Minutes, May 2, 1944, pp. 4-5

85. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1944, p. 6; U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, July 1, 1944, p. 2

of Quinte Conference, a formal message to the King told of the encouragement found in his radio address. It continued:

We are profoundly conscious of the debt we owe to the men of the armed forces of the Allied Nations who are at this very moment risking and sacrificing their lives in the long awaited effort to liberate Europe from Nazi tyranny. Our earnest hope is that we may cherish more sincerely the freedom which we enjoy in the British Empire as we realize what it is costing in human life to maintain.⁸⁶

This resolution reflected the ethos of the Conference, with its strong British background and its continued loyalty to 'the crown'.

The invasion of Normandy was a major military success and signalled a sense of the inevitability of victory in Europe. Less than four months later the Presbyteries were anticipating victory in Europe, and suggested "that appropriate religious services be held in every Charge at the time when the war ends in Germany," and rejoiced "in the growing opinion that our churches should be open for special thanksgiving services," and recommended "that special preparations begin now to fittingly observe that day."⁸⁷

The Presbyteries were unanimous in their concern over some of the less desirable aspects of victory celebrations, and the following resolution of Lindsay was typical:

86. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1944, p. 70

87. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 26, 1944, p. 847; Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Oct. 4, 1944, p. 1367

We request that our Provincial Government be petitioned to close all beverage rooms on V-Day, lest the celebration become an orgy of drinking and rioting.⁸⁸

Such representations proved successful, and Belleville commended the positive response of Premier George Drew who announced that all beverage rooms and liquor outlets would be closed on V-E Day.⁸⁹

Victory in Europe came on May 8th, 1945. The war in Europe was over and services of thanksgiving were held across the country. The Bay of Quinte Conference, at its annual meeting held three weeks after V-E Day, issued the following statement of thanksgiving for victory:

Since last we met as a Conference so great and manifold have been God's mercies to us as a Dominion and Empire, that it becomes us to begin our report on the note of doxology and praise. After years of the seeming triumph of cruel and wanton aggression, we have been brought through the valley of the shadows to the upland regions, whence we see the dawn of full and final victory for the cause of truth and right committed to us.

Back of the valour, skill and endurance of our men in arms and of those of our allies we say, 'It is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.' 'O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!' In this spirit of adoring praise and thanksgiving we would call upon ourselves and our faithful people to live our lives more fully under the constraint of the ideal for which others are

88. U.C.A., Lindsay Presbytery: Minutes, Oct. 5, 1944, p. 936

89. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Oct. 4, 1944, p. 1367

suffering and dying that thus God's will and purpose may be more fully realized in our midst.⁹⁰

Thus the day for which Canadians had waited and prayed for nearly six years had dawned. With it came the deep sense of gratitude, as expressed by the Church in the above resolution, deepened by the recollection of those dark days in the summer of 1940 after the fall of France when defeat rather than victory seemed the more probable outcome of the war.

With the war in Europe brought to a victorious conclusion there remained but one obstacle to be overcome before the world would once again be at peace. That was the final victory over Japan in what was, for many Canadians, the forgotten war. It was a war that lacked the immediacy and the emotional intensity of the war with Germany, a war that was left mostly to the Americans to complete. Through the spring and early summer of 1945 the Allies recaptured one Pacific island after another. Then, with an astonishing suddenness, it was all over. On August 6th, 1945 the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, with an appalling loss of life. When the second A-Bomb was dropped on Nagasaki, and the Russians entered the war, the Japanese surrendered. V-J Day was September 2nd, 1945, one day short of six years since World War II began on September 3rd, 1939.

90. B.C.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1945, p. 31

The Presbyteries, in their first meetings since V-J Day and the end of the war, issued resolutions of gratitude. The following resolution by Belleville was typical:

On this our first meeting since the cessation of hostilities, we express our heartfelt gratitude to Almighty God for the return of peace.

We are deeply grateful to all who in high offices and in ordinary places have directed and maintained the struggle. In particular, we record our gratitude to those of the armed services, merchant marine, and auxilliary services, for the cost to them in spirit, mind and body.

We pray God's comfort for those to whom there can be no returning of loved ones. To those who do return, we pledge our friendship, and we call upon our people to do all in their power to help the return of the warrior to the ways of peace. We have been proud of our chaplains and assure them of our fellowship on their return.

Inasmuch as we are all victims in this world tragedy, we beseech God to have mercy on us all and to enable us to pursue the ways of grace, understanding and brotherhood, which are of the Kingdom and by which the Kingdom will come.

The resolution was passed, the members offered their prayers to God, and "the Presbytery bowed in grateful thankfulness for peace."⁹¹

3. The Church and 'The Home Front'

Throughout the six years of war the regular work of the United Church continued, but it continued in the shadows cast by events overseas and in the context of new opportunities and challenges at home.

⁹¹ U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 27, 1945, p. 1404

The war caused a great internal migration of people in Canada: more than one million young men and women were in the armed forces, and the families of many of them moved to the camp areas; another million were employed in war industry plants, of whom nearly one-quarter were women; rural areas were weakened by the loss of many people to the services and war industries; and new housing developments sprung up around the military bases and manufacturing centres.⁹² The Bay of Quinte Conference shared these experiences with the rest of the country, and through several workers from the Board of Home Missions and the Woman's Missionary Society and guidance from the Camp and War Production Committee conducted a ministry to these people.⁹³

The minutes of the Presbyteries record the efforts of the United Church to cope with the challenge. Young servicemen and war workers, many away from the security and the standards of their homes and communities for the first time, and many with their first income and little experience in managing money, were confronted with temptation in the beer parlours and brothels of camp communities. The Church made attempts to welcome these people and to establish them in some aspect of the church fellowship, but often with little

92. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1942, pp. 15-16, 124-125

93. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1942, p. 245

response. Many social problems were aggravated by the tensions of a wartime situation, with home life being a casualty and adding to the work load of ministers and social workers. The note of discouragement is easily detected in the following excerpt from the minutes of Peterborough Presbytery:

Despite the persistent efforts of the churches in Peterborough to reach the new people in the wartime housing areas of the city, no noticeable result has followed, and the [church and social] workers have become discouraged. We feel, however, that the effort has been worthwhile. We believe that when the strain of war is over many of these people will return to the house of God, and that it is our duty as Christians to keep in touch with them at the present moment.⁹⁴

The United Church responded to the outbreak of war by establishing the War Services Committee, which in turn organized thousands of local War Service units. It was recognized that there would be considerable need for support by service personnel, war industry workers, and the families of these men and women. Throughout the war the United Church worked in close co-operation with other churches and groups such as the Red Cross, the Canadian Legion, and the Y.M.C.A., often as one community organization in which the women met regularly to sew, knit, roll bandages, and talk about the war. Many had sons in the services, and these mothers found mutual support in the units. The units were a vital factor in maintaining morale on the home front, and in fostering a very

⁹⁴. U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 15, 1944, p. 826

effective ecumenical spirit. These units also provided a meeting place for many young wives far from their own homes, whose soldier-husbands were overseas.

The service and production record of these units was truly amazing, and on behalf of the whole Church, the servicemen, refugees, bomb victims, war brides, and the many others who had been helped, the General Council Executive paid a fitting tribute to

... the long and faithful service rendered by the multitude of women of our Church who, in War Service Units through the whole land, have laboured to increase the material well-being of men and women in the Armed Forces. More than seven million sewn and knitted articles have been given to the Red Cross, tens of thousands of ditty bags filled for the Navy League, and uncounted comfort boxes despatched to those serving overseas. Home and Church hospitality has been provided for thousands of men and women in uniform on leave in Canadian cities and towns. The significance of the service rendered is beyond any computation in gratitude for it must be in the hearts of the vast numbers who have been its beneficiaries. In that gratitude our whole Church joins.⁹⁵

The United Church was in full support of a maximum national war effort, and of the federal government's attempt to control the cost of living in the time of crisis. Early in the war, the sub-Executive of the General Council

... being gravely concerned that the Canadian war effort should immediately reach its maximum, called upon the Government to mobilize all its resources in men, materials and wealth, alike for government, industry, agriculture and labour and

95. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1946, p. 109

for the striking forces of the country, in order that our nation may contribute its full power towards the freedom of the world.⁹⁶

The Church co-operated with the government in the matter of fund raising by designating 'Victory Loan Sundays' during the war. It will be noted in Chapter V how the purchase of War Savings Certificates by United Church people, made payable at maturity to the Church, was instrumental in paying off the Church's debt.

The Church opposed any tendency on the part of organized labour to call strikes in wartime, noting the serious economic loss and the hindering of the war effort. Yet, in Peterborough the Presbytery was able to express appreciation to the loyalty of the vast majority of industrial workers "who have made their personal welfare subservient to the interests of the nation."⁹⁷ And the Conference recognized the loyalty and productivity of labour and industry:

We are deeply grateful to leaders of industry, labour leaders, to workers in mine and mill, in factories and on farms, and other primary producers for their great contribution to the war effort.⁹⁸

While the United Church supported the government in the war effort it never relinquished its attack on what it considered to be the evils of gambling, alcohol and the abuse

96. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1942, p. 5

97. U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 11, 1941, p. 741

98. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1943, p. 46

of the Lord's Day, even when these were seen by some civil authorities as aids to the financing of the war. Cobourg stated its positive opposition to any attempt to legalize sweepstakes as a means of supporting the war effort, believing "that the Canadian people are ready and willing to respond to every financial need to support the government without resorting to gambling methods;"⁹⁹ and Lindsay protested the increase in raffles and lotteries in raising funds for charitable and patriotic purposes, emphasizing the fact "that while the purpose may be commendable, the method may be exceedingly harmful."¹⁰⁰ Belleville requested the closing of 'wet' canteens in all army camps "to safeguard the young men who are enlisting," and in the "highest interests of our soldiers and citizens and in the successful prosecution of the war."¹⁰¹ This request, as most others in regard to alcohol, went unheeded by the government.

Many families and individuals, confronted with the stresses and uncertainties of wartime and facing the future with apprehension, were receptive to the spiritual and moral leadership which the United Church was prepared to give. At

99. U.C.A., Cobourg Presbytery: Minutes, May 7, 1940, p. 505

100. U.C.A., Lindsay Presbytery: Minutes, October 5, 1944, p. 936

101. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, June 4, 1940, p. 1155

the outset of the war, and at the risk of being misunderstood, the Church recognized and accepted its responsibility to confront both church and state with those spiritual conditions which had made the war possible, and called its own members to an acknowledgement of their share in the social and moral failures of a national and international character that immediately preceded the war.

As the war increased in both scope and intensity the Church recognized the danger to servicemen and civilians alike of becoming victims of the very spirit of evil which had taken possession of Hitler and his followers. Renfrew Presbytery declared its opinion:

In defeating this spirit the Church can make a great contribution ... by way of creating a constructive attitude and providing a basis for constructive action in a world which is in chaos and disorder.¹⁰²

The following year Renfrew again called attention to the war mentality that was an ever-present threat:

If we hope for peace as well as victory we must neutralize the bitter passions of hatred and race prejudice; but if we wait until the war is over to [begin to] build a new order we shall be too late. The new order will be here when the war is over. ... The Church cannot too closely study what kind of a new order the Christian faith demands, cannot too closely observe policies and movements in Canada, nor can it spare any effort to see that the new order is more Christian and less pagan than the old order. The character of the new order is not a

102. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, May 6, 1941, p. 717

side issue to the Church today; it may well prove to be the central task of the Church in this generation.¹⁰³

The matter of the 'new order' became a central and challenging post-war issue for the United Church.

The Church had provided for the readjustment of its service personnel from military to civilian life, and it made special efforts to welcome these men and women back to their communities and congregations. The 'Honour Roll' in practically every United Church was a small but visible way in which the wartime service of its members was recognized. The Church accepted its responsibility in creating a supportive and enlightened public opinion on behalf of its returned service personnel, and in demonstrating a determination that they would have the opportunity for full employment and acceptance, and that they might realize that their services and sacrifices were appreciated by a grateful church and community. The Church commended the Government for its plans to assist the re-establishment of veterans in employment, business, or education, and in the provision of low-cost loans towards the purchase of land and the building of houses.

The United Church, as other churches, had worked and prayed for peace during the 1930s, but when war was thrust upon the world in 1939 it gave its full support to the war

¹⁰³. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, February 10, 1942, p. 744.

effort of the nation. For the duration of the war the work of the United Church in Canada was severely curtailed by a shortage of manpower, with many of its ministers serving as chaplains with the armed forces, by a shortage of finances, and by a distraction of its attention and a diversion of its vitality by events overseas. These six years, 1939-1945, were a 'holding operation' on the home front.

When World War II ended, the Church, as well as the nation, was poised on the threshold of a period of unprecedented opportunity and expansion. Its wartime energies and resources were available and ready to be channelled into the pursuits of peace. This, in part, helps to explain the spectacular growth of the United Church in the post-war years.

CHAPTER V

THE YEARS OF GROWTH: 1945-1960

After World War I there was a widely held belief, based on an unrealistic optimism about the fundamental goodness of both individuals and nations, that the world was entering a new era when war, with its attendant and consequent evils, would be a thing of the past. The world did indeed enter a new era, but it was neither appreciably better nor more secure than the one before 'the war to end war'.

When World War II began the United Church reminded itself and the nation of those conditions that had led to the war, and called on both to acknowledge their share in the social and moral breakdown that immediately preceded the war. While the United Church gave its support to the war effort, it also called itself to make preparations for a 'new order' in which the spirit of peace might prevail and prosper.

Thus there was little consideration given to a return to pre-war conditions when the United Church began planning its post-war role in Canada. In fact, those plans began long before V-Day and took into account the realistic expectation that it would be a different world and a different challenge with which the Church would be confronted when the war was over. From the early days of the war the United Church of

Canada, through its Board of Evangelism and Social Service, and its corresponding Conference and Presbytery committees, reported its concern for the post-war world and the post-war church.¹ It was the firm belief of the Church that if preparations for this so-called 'new order' were not already well under way before the war was over, it would be sought in vain.

The United Church rightly recognized the basic importance of a well-organized church community and constituency to meet the coming challenge. When the war ended in 1945 the United Church was poised on the threshold of a period of unprecedented opportunity and expansion, with all its wartime energies and resources available and ready to be channelled into the pursuits of peace.

This chapter will consider the major factors that contributed to the spectacular growth of the United Church following the war; the creative advances that were possible to a debt-free Church in an era of optimism and prosperity; the shortage of ministers; and the more important aspects that accompanied the phenomena of the explosion of church membership and the expansion of church building; and the ways

1. The Church made careful study of such reports as those of the Malvern Conference of 1940 (concerning the nature of the post-war society in Britain), and had active committees in such areas as World Relations, Reconciliation, and Reconstruction. For example: U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, May 6, 1941, p. 715

in which the Church, including the Bay of Quinte Conference, contended with the changed and changing conditions in the post-war years, 1945-1960.

1. The Return of the Service Personnel

The United Church, as part of its responsibility for the returning service personnel, undertook a role in creating an atmosphere of enlightened public acceptance of these veterans. Ministers were requested to encourage their people to welcome these men and women into a friendly and supportive Christian fellowship within which they would be helped to realize that their services and sacrifices were appreciated by a grateful church and community.

The Presbyteries and the Conference were also concerned with helping the service personnel make a successful transition from military to civilian life. At its spring meeting in 1944, Peterborough Presbytery was addressed by D. G. H. Melton, the chairman of Peterborough's Rehabilitation Committee, who reviewed the program and outlined

.... some of the failures in the rehabilitation effort after the last war, and presented the challenge that will be upon us when victory is achieved. Already considerable legislation has been passed in preparation for re-establishing the uniformed men and women in civil life. To make these laws effective the public must be informed, and take a constructive interest.²

2. U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, May 9, 1944, p. 836

The Conference commended the federal government "for the provisions being made for the re-establishment of Canadian service personnel."³ These provisions covered educational and vocational training, re-employment in industry, buying land and building houses, setting up on the farm or in a small business with grants, loans, and other benefits. The Conference urged each of its congregations

... to form Re-establishment Committees to assist service personnel returning to civil life ... and to do their utmost to bring back into the fellowship of community and church life all such returning men and women.⁴

Belleville Presbytery, in its second meeting after the end of the war, heard an appeal from Rev. A. M. Laverty, a returned army chaplain, who spoke from personal experience with the veterans:

The returned men are not the men who went away. They have changed. They are more mature. No man can make a tour of Ops [overseas military service] and be the same again. They have no patience with sham or artifice. They want things on the level and straight. While they recognize the fleshly sins, they are more concerned about the sins of the spirit. Unless we are concerned and in earnest, they who return will look at us and turn away. ... Their sacrifice must produce better things, and unless our lives are linked with Christ we will fail tragically to create here what they had over there -- a fellowship of kindred spirits.⁵

3. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1944, p. 43

4. Ibid., p. 43

5. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Nov. 29, 1945, p. 1411

This fellowship, of which Lavery spoke, was created in many congregations, and in such congregations significant numbers of returned veterans and war brides found a warm acceptance. In this Christian atmosphere many people became open to the Church's ministry and mission as never before. This accounted, in part, for one aspect of the tremendous growth of the United Church after the war.

2. The Crusade for Christ

The Church was faced with a new situation in the post-war years. For the six previous years its attention had been directed to alleviate the suffering and sorrow caused by the war, now it turned to those plans and programs that had been discontinued or delayed because of the war. With the disciplines and restraints of wartime removed, and with tensions relaxed, a major challenge confronted the Church in the attitudes of many persons towards religion and life.

For several years the Church had been preparing to meet this situation, and the coming of peace did not catch it unawares. As early as November, 1943 the United Church proposed one of the first of its post-war plans, a 'forward movement' to be launched after the war as a practical expression of thanksgiving for victory and peace.⁶ The Church saw

6. U.C.A., U.C.C., Record of Proceedings: 1944, p. 114.

its precedents for such a movement in the teaching of the Old Testament prophets and in the ministry of Jesus, who called the people to repentance, faith and action in a time of crisis and opportunity. At the end of the war the Church ventured forth with this plan under a new title, 'The Crusade for Christ and His Kingdom'. The Crusade was essentially an evangelistic campaign which reflected the Church's determination to confront the moral and social challenge of the times, confident in victory through Jesus its Lord.⁷

The Moderator, Rev. Jesse Arnup, addressed the Bay of Quinte Conference in May, 1945, on behalf of the Crusade. This was three weeks after V-E Day, and the Conference responded to the Moderator's appeal by promising whole-hearted support for the Crusade:

No longer need we ask, "What is the Church's post-war program?" Here we have it under the slogan, 'The Crusade for Christ and His Kingdom'. It is ours to make it a living reality by rededication, consecration and untiring effort.⁸

The national Crusade was formally inaugurated at a mass rally in Toronto's Maple Leaf Gardens on June 10th, 1945, the twentieth anniversary of Church Union. The Observer, reporting the event, said:

Not much time, however, was spent on this [the twentieth anniversary], the whole program being

7. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, Sept. 15, 1945, p. 4

8. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1945, p. 32

built around the challenge of the present and the future to the Church and Church people. For the first time, the United Church of Canada made use in a big way of modern methods of pageantry in appealing to the people. Brilliant uniforms and costumes, loud speakers and spotlights, a professional orchestra and a massed choir of 1,350 voices made an irresistible appeal to the emotions. As a spectacle it was dignified and magnificent.⁹

The work of the United Church was portrayed in dramatic fashion by the 'crusaders' who represented the various boards of the Church, then, led by the crusaders in shining armour,

"these groups dedicated themselves and those they represented to Christ and His Kingdom and marched off to the Crusade."¹⁰

It would be difficult to imagine such a scene being repeated in the 1980s, but it must be remembered that victory in Europe had been won only a month earlier, and victory over Japan seemed a certainty, thus there was a tremendous emotional energy and patriotism to be tapped. The response astounded the doubter and encouraged the faithful, for never before had Maple Leaf Gardens held such a crowd (not even two months before when the Maple Leafs had won the Stanley Cup), with 19,200 being admitted and thousands of others being turned away but holding an 'overflow' meeting outside. The Observer editorial concluded:

If the temper of the people at the Maple Leaf Gardens is indicative of that of the church membership all across Canada, and there is no reason to

9. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, July 1, 1945, p. 4

10. Ibid., p. 4

doubt this, then the time is more than ripe for the great Crusade.¹¹

The six primary purposes of the Crusade, as stated by the Bay of Quinte Conference, were: 1) the rededication of the ministry and the membership of the Church to Christ; 2) the winning to Christ of those not yet reached by the Gospel; 3) the re-enlistment in the fellowship and work of the Church of returning service men and women and war workers; 4) the enlisting of young people in the enterprises of the Church, and the recruiting of candidates for the ministry; 5) the rehabilitation of the country and its people; and 6) the assisting of building a national and world order on spiritual foundations.¹²

Of course, victory in this Crusade depended not only upon the plans and strategies of the national Church and the Conference, but basically upon each Presbytery and pastoral charge doing its share on the local 'front', for each had its own opportunity. The pastoral charges set up their own Crusade committees which examined membership rolls and invited inactive members and adherents to share in the worship, service, and fellowship of the Church. A campaign of Visitation Evangelism was arranged, with teams of members visiting the 'unchurched' people of the community, and the practice of a

11. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, July 1, 1945, p. 4

12. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1946, p. 34

realistic stewardship was encouraged in the congregation. Other objectives of the Crusade were to invite every person not presently a member of the United Church, but who had been enumerated as 'United Church' in the census, into active membership; to have each elder¹³ bring at least one new family into the Church fellowship; and to enroll all eligible children in the Sunday School.¹⁴

The time-line of the Crusade covered two years, from mid-June 1945 to Easter, 1947, during which period emphasis was successively placed on preparation, education, evangelism, dedication, stewardship, consolidation, and advance. The key year, as far as evangelism was concerned, was 1946 when the majority of mass rallies and local missions were held. Throughout this time regular and encouraging reports were heard from all seven Presbyteries and from the pastoral charges that were involved in the Crusade. Many large public rallies were held, and these had a visible impact on the community, but the basic emphasis of the Crusade was on the revitalization of the life and work of the local congregation, the cumulative effect of which would be felt across the whole Church.

13. The 'elder' was an elected member of the congregation who served on the Session, and was responsible with other elders and the minister for the pastoral care, worship, education, and discipline of the people of the congregation.

14. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1946, p. 35

One of the stated objectives of the Crusade was to win new converts to the Christian faith, and the preaching missions called on people to make such a 'decision'. For many this decision marked the beginning of a new life in the Church, and they usually became church members by 'profession of faith'.¹⁵ While no statistics are available regarding 'decisions' made at the preaching missions, accurate statistics are available regarding 'professions of faith'. It is of value to compare such statistics over a five-year period, 1945-1949, and notice the dramatic increase in 1946, the key year for evangelism in the Crusade.

Table IX -- Professions of Faith in the United Church and in Bay of Quinte Conference, 1945-1949.^a

	<u>1945</u>	<u>1946</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1948</u>	<u>1949</u>
United Church	25,457	32,833	28,642	28,367	31,000
Bay of Quinte	2,232	2,819	2,634	2,799	2,782

a. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1946, pp. 212-213; 1947, pp. 214-215; 1948, pp. 214-215; 1949, pp. 200-201; 1950, pp. 202-203

It is significant that in 1946 the number of 'professions of faith' increased nationally by 7,376 (29%) over 1945, and in

15. 'Profession of faith' is the term used to denote a public profession of one's acceptance of the Lordship of Jesus, and the formal reception into church membership by confirmation after a period of instruction.

Bay of Quinte the increase was 587 (26%). This was substantially larger than any annual increase since Church Union, thus one must conclude that the Crusade was a significant factor in the increase of professions of faith in 1946.

The Crusade did not require the Church to take on any new tasks, but only to give a renewed enthusiasm to its regular work. The Crusade did indicate a hunger in many people for a greater emphasis on evangelism, and one result was a deepening of commitment in the lives of those who made a decision or a reaffirmation of faith during the mission.

The type of evangelism that had the most lasting effect was 'visitation evangelism', essentially a lay movement and effective in direct proportion to the number of laymen involved in it and to the depth of their commitment. Many United Church laymen suffered from an inability to articulate their faith, and had never been given the opportunity or the encouragement to share their faith with others. Not surprisingly these laymen were reluctant to call on their neighbours in the community, even after careful training. However, having risked going out, many of these lay visitors found a new sense of commitment and a real joy in sharing their faith.

A Bay of Quinte minister in a rural congregation reported on this type of visitation evangelism:

We conducted our Visitation Evangelism Campaign the first week in March. The roads and lanes were impassable and the weather was miserable. We achieved good results, notwithstanding. We are receiving

fifty new members this Easter, and already we are sensing a quickening effect upon the life of the whole congregation.¹⁶

One layman testified: "I have worked in the Church for years, but never have I known the full joy of religious work until I began to work for the Crusade."¹⁷ And a minister, speaking of the experiences of his lay visitors, said:

The lay folk themselves have claimed that as they have engaged in the work of Visitation Evangelism they have found their own faith being clarified. As they have sought to define it they have made their own faith more real. It has brought about a re-awakening in the life of the whole congregation.¹⁸

The good effect of the Crusade on participating laymen cannot be over estimated, and that, in itself and apart from the statistical successes, made the effort worthwhile.

Another point of view on the value of the Crusade was expressed by the Church's Committee on the Christian Faith:

There is no doubt that the evangelical concern of the Crusade for Christ and His Kingdom has stimulated interest in matters of Christian doctrine. We look forward expectantly to a larger measure of spiritual power coming to the worship and work of our Church because of this renewed theological development. A Christ-centred, biblically-instructed religious faith is a supreme need of this age.¹⁹

It should be noted that the Committee on the Christian Faith was comprised mainly of professors of the Church's theological

16. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1946, p. 165

17. Ibid., p. 166

18. Ibid., p. 166

19. Ibid., p. 105

colleges, and thus not likely to make irresponsible remarks about the results of the Crusade. This statement of approval is, therefore, all the more significant.

3. The Deficit is Paid Off

The United Church's deficit, which became known as 'the debt of honour', was incurred in the early years of Church Union when the Church was determined to keep faith with its Union commitments and to carry on those essential ministries in the areas hardest hit by the drought and the depression of the 1930s. (Despite a serious reduction in Church revenue during these difficult years, when the givings of church members dropped by more than one-half, the United Church continued its work in home and overseas missions. Although drastic and repeated efforts were made to curtail the expenditures and check the growth of the debt, it increased until 1935 when it reached \$1,700,000 (a sizeable amount in the Depression years). By 1937, because of a rigid economy and retrenchment, a balanced budget was maintained and the growth of the deficit was arrested.²⁰

During this period the debt was a heavy burden on the shoulders and the conscience of the Church. It cost \$70,000 a year in interest charges alone, and not only obstructed any

20. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, July 1, 1942, p. 32

current progress, but also threatened to impair its future usefulness. Several attempts to reduce the deficit were only partially successful, and it became increasingly clear to the Church's leaders that this crushing debt must be paid off in full, and as soon as possible. Early in the war an imaginative plan was proposed, whereby church members would buy War Savings Certificates and make them payable at maturity to the United Church. In 1940 the Canadian Government, through a special order-in-council, gave approval to this plan which was subsequently endorsed by the General Council.²¹

A church-wide campaign was launched in March, 1941 under the direction of Rev. Denzil Ridout. The goal of the campaign was the purchase of War Savings Certificates with a maturity value of \$1,700,000, the total amount of the deficit. The plan was that the certificates purchased by participating United Church people would be made payable to the Church in seven and one-half years (at maturity) at the time of the twenty-fifth anniversary of Church Union in June, 1950. In the intervening years the money was available to Canada to help the war effort; hence the slogan, 'A Loan to my Country, a Gift to my Church'.

The plan, of course, had its critics and this criticism was expressed in letters to The Observer: "... it made

21. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1940, p. 122

the Church the tool of the state;"²² "... by buying War Savings stamps and certificates the United Church is endorsing the war effort;"²³ "... the plan, as presented, is as divisive an issue as pacifism."²⁴ However, the Moderator, Rev. Aubrey Tuttle, saw the plan as an inspiration, and gave it his personal endorsement:

The United Church of Canada is committed to the principle of separation of church and state, but God forbid that we should push this idea to the unreasonable extreme of thinking that there should be no mutually beneficial co-operation between them. This plan, proposed by our Church and endorsed by our Government, will free our Church of its financial burdens and thus enable it to carry on its essential tasks more effectively in the critical reconstruction period after the war.²⁵

The President of the Bay of Quinte Conference, Rev. W. W. Cliff, supported the plan:

A golden opportunity, presents itself, even in these dark days of war, to completely liquidate the Church's debt and so free our spiritual energies for post-war service. I heartily commend to all our people the Church's War Savings Certificate Plan, for by a loan to our country and a gift to our Church we express, at one and the same time, a loyalty to our country and the cause of freedom, and a devotion to our Church and Jesus Christ.²⁶

Other Bay of Quinte officials spoke in favour of the plan:

22. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, April 15, 1941, p. 24

23. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, May 1, 1941, p. 23

24. Ibid., p. 23

25. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, Feb. 1, 1941, p. 4

26. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, Feb. 15, 1941, p. 15

... a fine opportunity to serve our country and our church [E. L. Fraser, President of the Conference Lay Association]; ... it offers the one promising opportunity for the elimination of the deficit [Elmer Davis, Chairman of the Board of Publications]; ... every Presbytery in Conference is well organized. I have found the maximum of encouragement, and feel that the response will be most gratifying [Rev. James Semple, Conference Director of the Campaign].²⁷

The officials of the Church spoke of the opportunity presented by the Plan, and their endorsement was necessary and helpful, but it was the people of the Church who seized the opportunity and gave the Plan its practical support. The campaign got off to a slow start, but when the people realized the magnitude of the debt and were convinced that it was 'a debt of honour', and that with such a huge financial burden the Church was unable to make progressive plans for the post-war world, they responded in a generous manner. The Bay of Quinte Conference, at its annual meeting in May, 1941, voted \$1,000 from Conference funds towards the deficit,²⁸ causing The Observer to comment: "This example from one of the smallest Conferences indicates the interest that is being taken in this effort to liquidate the Church's debt of honour."²⁹

The fear of some leaders that support of the campaign might jeopardize the regular givings to the Missionary and

27. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, March 1, 1941, p. 3

28. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1941, p. 39

29. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, Aug. 15, 1941, p. 3

Maintenance Fund of the Church did not materialize. In fact, quite the opposite was the result and in 1941, for the first time in ten years, regular givings to the mission work of the Church showed an increase over the previous year.³⁰ The War Savings Certificate Plan encouraged and stimulated a higher standard of support for both the mission and local ministries of the United Church, and helped create a positive attitude towards church financing that has continued into the 1980s.

In September, 1942 the General Council met in the Bay of Quinte Conference for the second time. The meetings were held in Belleville's Bridge Street United Church, of which Rev. James Semple, Conference Director of the Campaign, was minister. An interesting feature of the Council was the support the government-owned C.B.C. gave to the Church in making available a nation-wide radio network on the evening of September 16th, to report on progress of the liquidation of the deficit by the purchase of certificates. From Newfoundland to British Columbia the reports were most encouraging, and that evening the Church learned that at the mid-way point in the campaign more than one million dollars had been paid or pledged.³¹ This was 60% of the goal of \$1,700,000.

By March, 1944 the United Church had received enough money from the campaign that without further appeal the debt

30. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1942, p. 58

31. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1942, p. 281

would automatically disappear by 1950. The Observer made an interesting and instructive concluding comment:

That was the Plan. It had been completely successful and the deficit of \$1,700,000 will be wiped out. The achievement is more significant when seen that there was little glamour in 'the debt of honour' and little to stir the emotion. The money had been spent, and it was simply a matter of paying back what had been borrowed. It can be argued, perhaps, that the success of a financial campaign is not the highest standard by which to judge the spirit of a Church, but it is one standard.³²

When the Bay of Quinte Conference learned that the deficit had been completely underwritten, the assembled members rose and sang the Doxology.³³ The singing of 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow' was a traditional expression of thanksgiving, but one wonders if it might have been sung with more fervour and more integrity had the Conference realized 100% of its goal, rather than 90%. The final total for the Conference was \$126,341 (at maturity) of the goal of \$140,000. It is of interest to note that this amount, raised as an 'over and above' contribution, was the approximate annual allocation accepted by the Conference for its share in the support of the Missionary and Maintenance Fund.

The last word, one of thanksgiving and appreciation, was spoken by Rev. Denzil Ridout, the national director of the War Savings Certificate Campaign:

32. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, April 1, 1944, p. 16

33. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1944, p. 12

We all rejoice that after three years of work, our task is completed. The Church deficit has been underwritten. Now let us give thanks to God and move forward as a Church into the post-war years, confident, unhampered, courageous, to face the great challenges that are ahead.³⁴

However, the following concluding postscript of 1950 must be added to complete the story. The Treasurer of the Church, Rev. V. T. Mooney, said:

With the maturing War Savings Certificates and the addition of interest on other investments, the Deficit Trust Fund will be sufficient to defray the entire deficit at June 30th, 1950.³⁵

The Plan had captured the imagination and support of United Church people from coast to coast, and the response of church members freed the Church to go forward into the post-war years unhampered by the heavy financial burden it had carried throughout most of its history. But its forward progress would be hindered by a new obstacle, a shortage of ordained ministers.

4. The Shortage of Ministers

The war was over, the Church's debt had been liquidated, the Crusade had sparked a new evangelical concern, the laity were discovering a real sense of meaningfulness in a fuller participation in church life, the Church was moving

34. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, April 1, 1944, p. 17

35. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1950, p. 24

forward, and the prospect for the future appeared bright. The post-war boom had begun. Then a new crisis confronted the Church in the form of a serious shortage of ministers just as it was about to enter a period of unprecedented expansion.

The shortage of ministers should not have come as a complete surprise to the United Church for, with a few exceptions, this had been a constant source of concern throughout its history. There was a temporary surplus of about 175 ministers in the United Church in the first three years after the Union of 1925. This surplus was due to the consolidation of many Presbyterian and Methodist congregations in smaller towns and rural areas, and to the fact that a much higher percentage of Presbyterian ministers than members entered the new United Church.³⁶ This situation led to a persistent, but quite unwarranted, complacency that there was no real problem. This attitude was especially prevalent in Ontario where, in fact, there was no shortage of ministers.

The Depression of the 1930s severely limited expansion in many areas, and required retrenchment in others. This supported the illusion that the Church's work was adequately manned. Until the outbreak of war in 1939, which disrupted the normal supply of ministerial candidates until 1945, there

36. See Chapter III, pp. 113-114

was a widespread impression that the Church had sufficient ministers. One serious consequence of this was a lack of interest in any active recruiting program.

In 1945 the Department of National Defence agreed to facilitate the early release from the armed services of candidates for the ministry to enable them to continue, or to begin, their studies leading to ordination. In 1945 there were 124 candidates for the ministry of the United Church on active service with the Canadian armed forces; and of these, twenty-one secured their release in time to return to their studies in the fall semester.³⁷ The remaining 103 candidates were discharged later, and many of these did return to university or theological college within the next few years. The government made generous allowances to all veterans, including candidates for the ministry, who undertook university training. For each day in the armed forces the ex-serviceman was entitled to a day in university with tuition paid and, where deemed necessary, a modest cost-of-living bonus.

The eight theological colleges of the United Church experienced an increased enrollment of 22% for 1945-46 over the previous college year. Each of the eight colleges shared in this increase which was due in part to the number of veterans returning from the armed forces and registering for

37. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1945, p. xiii

courses in Arts or Theology. Table X, below, indicates the increased number of candidates in the five-year period 1943-1947, and includes candidates in both Arts and Theology.

Table X -- Candidates for the Ministry of the United Church in the Eight Theological Colleges: 1943-1947.^a

	<u>1943</u>	<u>1944</u>	<u>1945</u>	<u>1946</u>	<u>1947</u>
Pine Hill-Mount Allison ^b	63	71	84	96	109
United (Montreal)	23	15	17	21	20
Queen's (Kingston)	18	16	19	22	27
Victoria-Emmanuel (Toronto)	95	99	116	121	128
United (Winnipeg)	36	39	44	44	37
St. Andrew's (Saskatoon)	30	29	41	46	52
St. Stephen's (Edmonton)	13	12	13	12	20
Union (Vancouver)	10	10	11	16	23
Other Arts Colleges	<u>12</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>10</u>
<u>Total</u>	300	299	362	393	426

a. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1944, p. 78; 1945, p. 70; 1946, p. 83; 1947, p. 86; 1948, p. 82

b. Pine Hill was the United Church's college in Halifax, and offered courses in both Arts and Theology; Mount Allison, in Sackville, N.B., offered courses in Arts and first year Theology.

In 1944 the Church issued a small pamphlet, 'The Christian Ministry', to all ministers and chaplains. The pamphlet was a concise statement of information for prospective candidates, and of it the Church said: "It has supplied a great need, and has met with a most generous reception. Our prayer is that

it will aid in the enlistment of candidates for the ministry of the Church."³⁸ The usefulness of the recruiting pamphlet was apparent, for there was a 22% increase in the number of candidates in 1945 over 1944.

The vast majority of candidates from the Bay of Quinte Conference (82 of 87)³⁹ studied either at Queen's or Victoria-Emmanuel in the years 1944-1947. It is interesting to compare the statistics of these two colleges with the Church's other six colleges in this period.

Table XI -- Candidates for the Ministry of the United Church in Queen's and Victoria-Emmanuel compared with the other Theological Colleges: 1944-1947.^a (Increase over previous year shown in brackets).

	<u>1944</u>	<u>1945</u>	<u>1946</u>	<u>1947</u>
Queen's	16	19 (20%)	22 (15%)	27 (23%)
Victoria-Emmanuel	99	116 (17%)	121 (04%)	128 (06%)
Other U.C. Colleges	<u>184</u>	<u>227</u> (22%)	<u>250</u> (10%)	<u>271</u> (09%)
<u>Total</u>	299	362 (22%)	393 (09%)	426 (08%)

a. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1945, p. 70; 1946, p. 83; 1947, p. 86; 1948, p. 82

It will be noted that Queen's enjoyed a much higher percentage increase in 1946 and 1947 than the other colleges, and

38. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1945, p. 69

39. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1944, pp. 26-27; 1945, pp. 27-28; 1946, pp. 31-32; 1947, pp. 32-35.

part of this increase may well have been due to the appointment of Rev. John Leng, a returned chaplain, to work with the large number of ex-servicemen enrolled at Queen's. The chaplain's influence was carried over into peace-time, and the fact that the Principal of Queen's Theological College, Rev. H. A. Kent, had been the Senior Chaplain of the Canadian First Division might also have been a reason why Queen's attracted a larger number of veterans than many other colleges.

Principal Kent, in his first post-war report, said:

The end of hostilities has brought back to Queen's campus our students who served in the forces and are now again at their studies in preparation for the ministry. The increase in numbers, however, will not affect the theological enrollment for two or three years as nearly all the men from the services, as well as the newcomers, are still in the Arts course. The quality of the men who have come in this year is high and special tribute should be paid to those from the services who are no longer in their first youth and have made up their minds now to enter the Christian ministry. ... Ex-servicemen are not only serious but able students.⁴⁰

The principal also noted that many of these veterans had been influenced to become candidates for the ministry through the example of their chaplains overseas. In his 1947 report Principal Kent sounded a warning:

The number of students is slowly growing since the close of the war, though the earlier expectations of some that there would be a very large number of men going from the services into the ministry are not likely to be realized. ... The number of our students is still far too small. The effects of the

40. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1946, p. 86

depression and the war are not yet over, and it would appear that the Church at large has not yet taken quite seriously enough the lack of suitable candidates for the Christian ministry.⁴¹

When the number of veterans entering the ministry did not come up to expectations, the Church began to publicize the need for recruits in The Observer and in regular reports to Conferences and Presbyteries. Then in May, 1947 the Executive of the General Council declared that in reference to the continued shortage of ordained ministers, especially on Home Mission fields, a state of emergency existed.⁴² To meet this emergency at a time of growing opportunity and responsibility, and as a temporary expedient until there was evidence that the Church was producing enough ministers to take care of the needs overseas as well as in Canada, the Church arranged a special course of study for its lay ministers.⁴³ This course was open to those unordained pastors, known as lay supplies, who had at least one year's acceptable experience on a mission field, who were between thirty-five and fifty-five years of age, who showed evidence of their suitability as pastors and preachers, and who were recommended by their Home Missions Superintendent and by their Presbyteries..

41. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book; 1947, pp. 89-90

42. Ibid., p. 11

43. Ibid., p. 12

This special course emphasized the practical work of the ministry and consisted of two three-month semesters in successive summers at one of the Church's colleges, supplemented by guided study during the winter months. This course did not lead to ordination, and the lay supplies understood that they were not eligible for a 'call' but were subject to appointment by the Presbytery.

The United Church had an historical precedent in this matter, in that both the Methodist and Presbyterian churches in the early years of the twentieth century faced a similar emergency created by the expansion of the missionary work in Western Canada. To meet this emergency the churches trained a group of lay workers while, through the regular courses of study, the number of recruits for ministry was increased to the necessary level.⁴⁴ Throughout the history of the United Church the lay supplies have played a small but significant role, supplying a much needed and well received ministry to those people in rural and remote areas who otherwise would have been without the services of the United Church.

The Church recognized several recurring factors that inhibited the recruiting of candidates for the ministry. It was difficult to dispel the myth that there was no actual shortage, especially in Ontario where pastoral charges had

44. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1948, p. 59

little difficulty, in securing ministers to fill vacancies. Ontario, because of its generally higher salaries, smaller and more compact pastoral charges, and educational opportunities, was considered by many ministers from the Maritimes and the prairies to be the most desirable place to exercise one's ministry. It was in Ontario that fifty percent of the Church's membership lived, and it was from Ontario that the majority of candidates were recruited.

The economic aspect was frequently mentioned as a deterrent to recruiting, but this was not a major factor as many candidates came from 'the manse' where they knew at first hand the life-style imposed by small salaries, yet they also saw evidence of their parents' satisfactions and 'rewards' in ministry. No candidate was ever recruited on the pretext that the ministry was economically competitive with other professions, and most candidates entered the ministry with realistic expectations concerning salaries, allowances, and pensions. In fact a considerable number of candidates came out of other professions, or from their own businesses or other employment, where their income was significantly higher than in a church vocation.

Two other factors that contributed to the continuing shortage of ministers were the lack of any regular publicity indicating the need and explaining the ministry as a desirable and rewarding vocation, and the laxity of ministers and

sessions to effectively present young people in their congregations with the challenge of ministry. The Commission on Recruits for the Ministry discerned the underlying cause of the shortage as something different, and emphasized

... that the main difficulties connected with the securing of an adequate supply of the right kind of men for the ministry of the Church are fundamentally spiritual, and hence the remedy for the situation must be spiritual. Wherever there is a heartfelt and deep appreciation of the Christian message and a warm personal loyalty to the Lord Jesus, the head of the Church, there is sure to be a corresponding appreciation of the preaching of the Gospel and of all the ministries of the Church. The whole Church needs a fresh vision of the need of our age and a whole-hearted conviction regarding Christ's power to meet that need.⁴⁵

The report of the Commission described the answer to the problem in its concluding statement:

When the fires of devotion burn brightly upon the altars of the Church we shall hear less and less about the difficulty of securing men for the Church's ministry. A hesitating or lukewarm Church can never hope to secure the loyalty of eager and warm-hearted young men, while a living and forward-moving Church will never call to them in vain.⁴⁶

In 1948 the United Church began a vigorous campaign to recruit candidates for the ministry. Its recruiting policy included some very practical approaches to the problem, and the Conference and the Presbyteries adapted these to suit the local situation.⁴⁷ These recommendations included the

⁴⁵ U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1940, p. 163

⁴⁶ Ibid., p. 163

⁴⁷ U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1948, p. 183

request for the publication in The Observer of regular and factual information regarding the need for recruits; the need for an annual review of recruiting in each pastoral charge and in each Presbytery; the request to high schools and universities to include recruiting material in their vocational promotions; the request to include on the agenda of the Conference annual meeting an opportunity for ordinands to speak to young people about their experience and call to ministry; the request that students conduct preaching missions and 'Church Vocation' rallies in the Presbyteries; and that each minister seek out potential recruits and challenge them to full-time service in the Church.

The recruiting campaign was directed primarily at the youth of the Church, and those who had indicated an interest to their minister or had responded at a Presbytery rally, were invited to a Conference-wide event sponsored by Queen's Theological College in co-operation with the Laymen's Foundation and the Committee of Colleges and Students. From 1948 to 1963 the Conference conducted a number of Christian Vocation week-ends and recruiting rallies.

The results of the recruiting campaign, which 'ebbed and flowed' with the varying tides of circumstances over the years is ~~is~~ illustrated in the graphs on the following pages. It should be noted that the number of ordinands differs from the number of candidates, because some candidates 'dropped

out' before completing the course, while others deferred ordination to pursue post-graduate studies. The graphs reveal the similarity of patterns between the national Church and the Bay of Quinte Conference in the matter of both candidates and ordinands.

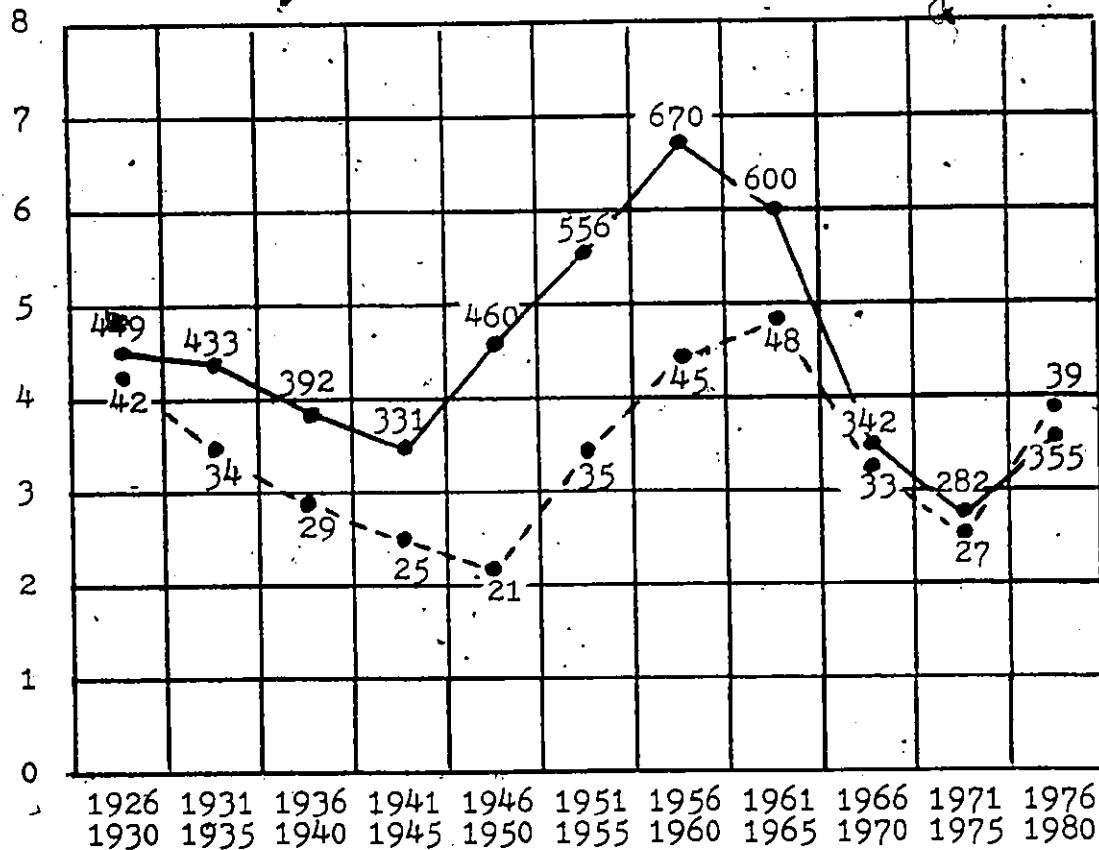


Figure 2 -- Graph showing Candidates of the United Church (solid line) and the Bay of Quinte Conference (broken line) in Five-year Periods: 1926-1980. The figures within the graph are the average number of candidates per period.^a

^a U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1926-1980; B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1926-1980

It will be noted that the number of candidates declined steadily from Church Union until the end of the war; and then increased until the mid-1960s, from whence it declined until the mid-1970s when it took a sharp upward turn. The lowest number of candidates for the United Church was 232 in 1971, and the highest was 704 in 1958; the lowest number of candidates for the Bay of Quinte Conference was 16 in 1972, and the highest was 57 in 1965.

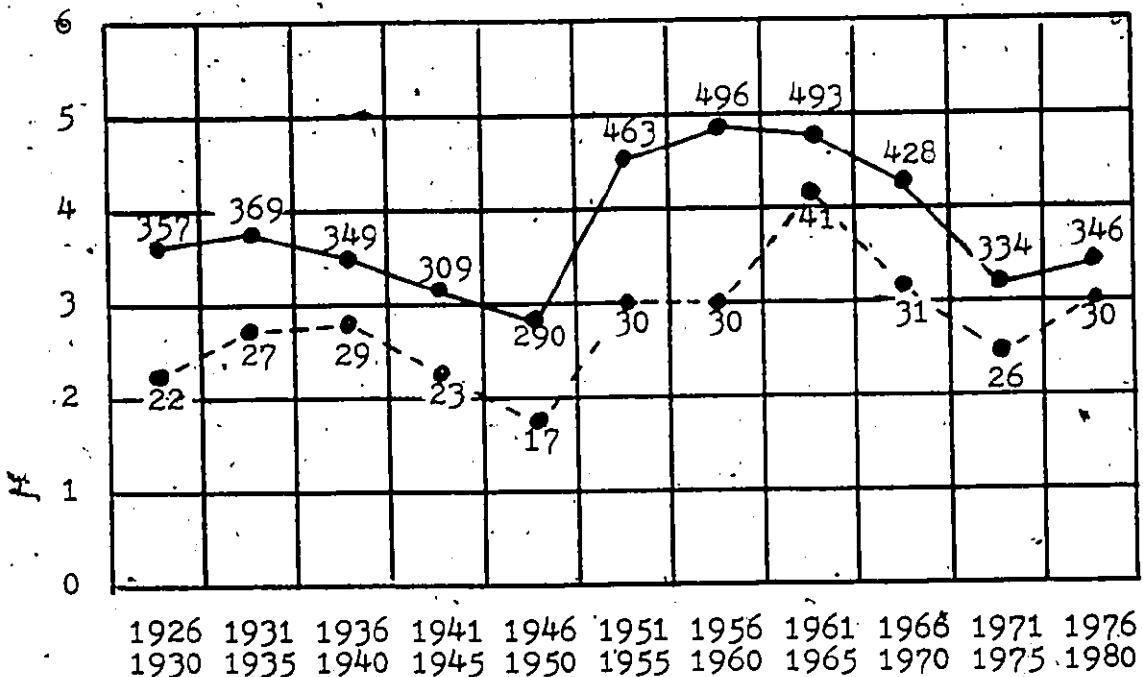


Figure 3 -- Graph showing Ordinands of the United Church (solid line) and the Bay of Quinte Conference (broken line) in Five-year Periods: 1926-1980. The figures within the graph are the total of Ordinands per period.^a

a. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1926-1980; B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1926-1980

In the latest period covered by the graph in Figure 2, 1976-1980, the rate of increase in the number of candidates in the Bay of Quinte Conference surpassed that of the national Church. This is an occurrence of such recent date (and beyond the time-frame of this thesis) that no reason for it is readily apparent, except the possibility of another upward trend in recruiting. If the lines on the graph in Figure 3 were projected, the rate of increase in the number of ordinands in the Bay of Quinte Conference would surpass that of the national Church by 1985.

The pattern for ordinands is very similar to that for candidates, with the low point being reached in the 1946-1950 period in both the Bay of Quinte Conference and the national Church. The high point was reached in the Conference in the 1961-1965 period, and in the national Church in the 1956-1960 period. The lowest number of ordinands in any one year for the national Church was fifty in 1947, and the highest was 114 in 1966; while the lowest number for the Conference was one in 1929 and again in 1959, and the highest was nine in 1952 and again in 1958.

To see the United Church's ordained manpower situation in its proper perspective is necessary to balance the 'gains' through ordinations and ministers received from other churches, against the 'losses' sustained due to retirements, resignations, and deaths of ministers in active service. The

statistics in Table XII, below, indicate that the United Church was actually suffering a net loss of fifteen ordained ministers each year from 1925 to 1960.

Table XII -- Gains and Losses of Ordained Ministers of the United Church and the Bay of Quinte Conference: 1925-1960.^a (Average gains and losses per year are shown in brackets).

	<u>U.C.</u>		<u>B.Q.</u>	
<u>Gains</u>				
Ordinations	2,635	(75)	178	(5)
Received from Other Churches ^b	<u>210</u>	(6)	<u>33</u>	(1)
<u>Total</u>	2,845	(81)	211	(6)
<u>Losses</u>				
Retirements	2,310	(66)	234	(7)
Resignations	460	(13)	36	(1)
Deaths in Active Service	<u>595</u>	(17)	<u>40</u>	(1)
<u>Total</u>	3,365	(96)	310	(9)
	<u>2,845</u>	(81)	<u>211</u>	(6)
<u>Net Loss: 1925-1960 (35 years)</u>	- 520	-(15)	- 99	-(3)

a. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1926-1961; B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1926-1961

b. Each year the United Church received a number of ordained ministers from Great Britain and the United States, usually Methodist, Presbyterian, or Congregational; and a few from Canadian churches, usually Presbyterian or Baptist.

While there had been an occasional year when there was a small net gain, the overall picture since Church Union was not one to give the United Church any reason for complacency or optimism. From 1925 to 1960, the Church ordained

2,635 men and women, and received 210 ministers from other churches, for a total gain of 2,845 ministers. On the other hand, in the same thirty-five year period, the Church lost 2,310 ministers by retirement, 460 by resignation, and 595 by death in active service, for a total loss of 3,365 ministers. This amounted to a net loss of 520 ministers in thirty-five years, or an average loss of fifteen ministers each year from the active work. In this same period the Bay of Quinte Conference suffered a net loss of ninety-nine ministers, or an average loss of three ministers each year.

During these years the United Church had a constantly increasing membership, as Table XIII, below, indicates.

Table XIII^a -- Membership and Persons under Pastoral Care in the United Church and the Bay of Quinte Conference: 1925 and 1960.^a

	<u>Membership</u>	<u>Under Pastoral Care</u>
<u>United Church</u>		
1925	609,729	1,261,778
1960	<u>1,016,879</u>	<u>2,595,720</u>
<u>Increase</u>	407,150 (67%)	1,333,942 (106%)
<u>Bay of Quinte</u>		
1925	68,136	135,072
1960	<u>90,120</u>	<u>189,634</u>
<u>Increase</u>	21,984 (32%)	54,562 (40%)

a. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1961, pp. 239, 242-243;
B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1926, pp. 66-67

It will be noted that the Bay of Quinte's growth was considerably less than that of the national Church in this period. This was partly due to rural depopulation in the Conference during the Depression and the war years, and the dramatic growth of the cities in the post-war period. There were only three cities in the Conference that had a true population 'boom' in the 1950s, these were Oshawa, Peterborough, and Kingston. There was, however, a significant increase in membership (32%) and persons under pastoral care (40%) in the Conference, and yet there were fewer active ordained ministers than at the time of Union. How, then, was this gap filled? Part of the answer is to be found in the following facts.⁴⁸ In the Bay of Quinte Conference in 1960, there were 225 pastoral charges, served as follows:

Ordained Ministers	146
Student Supplies	42
Lay Supplies	17
Retired Supplies	4
Supplied from another Charge	4
Vacancies	<u>12</u>
	225

Of the twelve vacancies, eleven were temporary due to the minister having accepted a call to another pastoral charge (with one exception, where the minister had died), and these would have no difficulty in securing ordained ministers as

48. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1960, pp. 101-111

replacements. The remaining vacancy was a summer mission.

Within the fifteen year period covered by this chapter, 1945-1960, both the national Church and the Conference had a steady increase in the number of candidates in training. The Conference recruited an average of ten candidates each year, but the Committee on Colleges and Students stated: "We need no fewer than 25 new candidates each year from this Conference for at least the next five years."⁴⁹ The following year, 1957, the Committee sounded an ominous note: "We are not even managing to meet the needs of the pastoral charges left vacant by retirement of ministers."⁵⁰ The Committee completed its third warning to the Conference in these disquieting words:

For several years we have not been meeting our own needs, to say nothing about answering the summons that comes from the Church overseas and the new churches that are being formed in our own midst. . . . We will have to double the number of our candidates.⁵¹

These several warnings, while understandable, were not, in fact, entirely accurate nor appropriate for the circumstances. In the five years, 1956-1960, the Bay of Quinte Conference received forty-nine new candidates. This number was eleven more (27%) than was required to replace the five

49. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1956, p. 30

50. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1957, p. 29

51. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1959, p. 29

ordained ministers who had died in active service, the thirty-two who had retired, and the one who had resigned.⁵²

There were, however, other areas of need that could have supported ordained ministers had they been available, such as twenty-two of the fifty-nine pastoral charges that were being served by student supplies or lay supplies within the Bay of Quinte Conference. There was also the challenge of the new church extension charges and the overseas mission fields.

The Conference, as indeed the whole Church, needed to be on guard against an easy optimism that might have arisen in the light of these encouraging statistics of the increased numbers of new candidates. In fact, the trend did not continue beyond the mid 1960s when the United Church was again faced with a shortage of ordained ministers.

5. The 'Boom' in Church Membership

The chronic shortage of ordained ministers was, without question, one of the major problems confronting the United Church in the 1950s. This shortage coincided with, and was accentuated by, the unprecedented growth in church membership with the consequent establishment of hundreds of new congregations and the building of the necessary new churches.

52. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1956, pp. 29-30, 84; 1957, pp. 29-31, 75; 1958, pp. 32-33, 86; 1959, pp. 29-30, 81; 1960, pp. 34, 91

Two obvious factors were involved in this increase. The first was the spectacular growth in the country's population, 58.5% from 1941 to 1961,⁵³ due to natural increase and immigration. In this, the United Church shared with the other churches of Canada. The second factor in the Church's growth, for which the United Church itself was responsible, was its post-war emphasis on evangelism. There were three major evangelistic campaigns in this period which resulted in a large number of accessions to membership. A third, and less tangible, factor that contributed to the growth was an 'attractiveness' that the United Church held for many returned servicemen and their brides, and for immigrants from Great Britain, Germany, and Holland.

The United Church assigned several ministers to work with immigrants at the ports of Halifax and Montreal. The port chaplains met the newcomers, giving them what encouragement and assistance they could in their first few minutes in their new country. This help was given without obligation, and might include a friendly voice in the immigrant's own language (all port chaplains were fluent in several languages), help in finding luggage and clearing customs, and seeing them aboard their train for their new home. This work of welcome and friendship was well-received and long remembered by these immigrants, many of whom chose the United Church as

53. See Table XIV, p. 252

their new church in their adopted land.

At the 1948 annual meeting of the Bay of Quinte Conference, Rev. J. J. Stam, of Rotterdam, Holland told of

... the great need of the Dutch immigrants to this country for the friendship and helpfulness of The United Church of Canada, so like their home church [Netherlands Reformed Church].⁵⁴

Many Dutch immigrants did find a spiritual home in the United Church in the Conference, and many congregations were greatly enriched by these newcomers who remembered the Canadian soldiers as the liberators of their country in World War II.

In the matter of immigrants from Great Britain, the port chaplain received lists of Congregational, Presbyterian, and Methodist members from an aide in England. He tried to meet these people and offer what help he could, then he sent their names to the nearest United Church minister at their indicated destination. This resulted in a significant number of accessions to the membership rolls of the United Church.

The United Church population increased more rapidly than did that of Canada between 1941 and 1961, according to the Dominion Census, as will be noted in Table XIV on the following page. In these twenty years Canada's population increased from 11,506,655 in 1941 to 18,238,247 in 1961, an increase of 6,731,592, or 59%. In the same period the Census indicated that the United Church increased from 2,204,875 in

54. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1948, p. 13

1941 to 3,664,008 in 1961, an increase of 1,459,133, or 66%. However, the United Church had more cause for concern than for elation because of a glaring discrepancy between its own statistics and those of the Census.

Table XIV -- United Church 'Population' in Canada, Ontario, and Bay of Quinte Conference in Census Years 1941, 1951 and 1961; a Comparison of Statistics of the Dominion Census and the United Church.^a

	<u>Total Population</u>	<u>Dominion Census</u>	<u>U.C.C. Statistics</u>	<u>Difference</u>
<u>Canada</u>				
1941	11,506,655	2,204,875	1,737,893	- 466,982
1951	14,009,429	2,867,271	2,002,553	- 864,718
1961	18,238,247	3,664,008	2,609,415	- 1,054,593
<u>Ontario</u>				
1941	3,787,655	1,073,425	804,456	- 268,969
1951	4,597,542	1,320,366	944,000	- 376,366
1961	6,236,092	1,640,564	1,189,995	- 450,569
<u>Quinte</u>				
1941	477,903	198,581	139,009	- 59,572
1951	565,920	230,359	158,862	- 71,497
1961	735,329	280,300	189,612	- 90,688

a. Census of Canada: 1941, 1951, 1961, Ottawa, King's/Queen's Printer, 1944, 1953, 1963, passim; and U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1942, pp. 198-199; 1952, pp. 244-245; 1962, Vol. 1, pp. 2-3

The Dominion Census of 1951 listed 864,718 persons in Canada as 'United Church' for which the Church could not account. It was a source of real concern that of the 2,867,271

persons in Canada who claimed some relationship with the United Church, only 2,002,553 (70%) were actually recorded by the Church as being 'under pastoral care'. The remaining 864,718 (30%) were 'census churchmen', being no closer to the Church than a mere statistic for the census taker. The same situation pertained in the Conference where, in 1951, 230,359 persons were enumerated in the Census as 'United Church', but only 158,862 (69%) of these were on the rolls of Conference congregations. The other 71,497 (31%) apparently claimed United Church affiliation because they were nothing else.

In the 1961 Census the state of affairs was not appreciably altered, although the numbers were greater. The Census showed 3,664,008 persons in Canada as 'United Church', but of these only 2,609,415 (71%) were recorded on the Church rolls. The remaining 1,054,593 (29%) were 'missing persons' as far as the Church was concerned. In the Bay of Quinte Conference, the Census registered 280,300 persons as 'United Church', of whom only 189,612 (68%) were reported in Church statistics. The other elusive 90,688 (32%) constituted a challenge to the Church, which said:

This large segment of Canada's population that makes some claim to be related to the United Church is not to be regarded as a fringe to be cut off, but a field to be cultivated.⁵⁵

55. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1956, p. 113

In view of these Census statistics the Bay of Quinte Conference urged upon all its ministers and sessions a more evangelical appeal to the unchurched '32%' for whose spiritual welfare the United Church was responsible, and who presented a missionary opportunity of considerable challenge to all the Conference.⁵⁶ In the twenty years from 1941 to 1961 the United Church continued to be the largest denomination by far in the area comprising the Conference, larger than the combined numbers of Anglican and Roman Catholic churches in both 1941 and 1951, but slightly smaller than that combination in 1961. It is of interest to note that by 1961 the Roman Catholic population in the Conference region had overtaken the Anglican population, and was second to the United Church.⁵⁷

A major factor contributing to the growth of the United Church in the 1950s was the series of evangelistic campaigns, beginning with the Crusade for Christ in 1945,⁵⁸ and followed by a five-year 'period of advance' to take full advantage of the momentum of the celebrations of the 25th Anniversary of Church Union in 1950.⁵⁹ The Advance was a

56. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1952, p. 40

57. See Table XV, p. 255

58. See pp. 217-225

59. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1948, pp. 194-197; and B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1949, pp. 18, 33-36

Table XV -- Religious Denominations in Canada, Ontario, and Bay of Quinte in Census Years 1941, 1951, 1961; and Ratio to Population (in brackets).^a

	<u>Canada</u>	<u>Ontario</u>	<u>Quinte</u>
<u>United Church</u>			
1941	2,204,875 (19%)	1,073,425 (28%)	198,581 (42%)
1951	2,867,271 (20%)	1,320,366 (29%)	230,359 (41%)
1961	3,664,008 (20%)	1,640,564 (26%)	280,300 (38%)
<u>Anglican</u>			
1941	1,751,188 (15%)	815,413 (22%)	97,832 (20%)
1951	2,060,720 (15%)	936,002 (20%)	118,735 (21%)
1961	2,409,068 (13%)	1,117,862 (18%)	141,682 (19%)
<u>Roman Catholic</u>			
1941	4,800,895 (42%)	882,369 (23%)	86,289 (18%)
1951	6,069,496 (43%)	1,142,140 (25%)	107,771 (19%)
1961	8,342,826 (46%)	1,873,110 (30%)	162,240 (22%)
<u>Presbyterian</u>			
1941	829,147 (07%)	433,708 (12%)	44,220 (09%)
1951	781,747 (06%)	439,072 (10%)	45,211 (08%)
1961	818,558 (05%)	491,436 (08%)	50,103 (07%)
<u>Other</u>			
1941	1,920,550 (17%)	582,740 (15%)	50,981 (11%)
1951	2,230,195 (16%)	759,962 (16%)	63,844 (11%)
1961	3,003,787 (16%)	1,113,120 (18%)	101,004 (14%)
<u>Total</u>			
1941	11,506,655 (100%)	3,787,655 (100%)	477,903 (100%)
1951	14,009,429 (100%)	4,597,542 (100%)	565,920 (100%)
1961	18,238,247 (100%)	6,236,092 (100%)	735,329 (100%)

a. Census of Canada: 1941, 1951, 1961, Ottawa, King's/Queen's Printer, 1944, 1953, 1963, passim

natural follow-up to the Crusade, with similar objectives and strategies: the rededication of the ministry and membership, and the winning of persons for Christian service. The Church was concerned not only to renew loyalties and recruit new members, but to hold those who were in danger of falling away and being lost to the Church. The Advance emphasized the need for church members to witness to their faith, and to accept a discipline of Christian action and sacrificial giving. In this campaign there was the expectation of an increased membership and a strengthened financial base for the expanding work of the United Church. These expectations were realized, inasmuch as it was a five-year period of growth in both membership and finances.

In the five-year period of 'The Advance', 1950-1955, the membership increased in the national Church by 11%, from 821,199 to 912,939; and in the Bay of Quinte Conference by 9%, from 76,347 to 82,840. Persons 'under pastoral care' increased nationally by 15%, from 1,965,300 to 2,265,585; and in the Conference by 9%, from 155,851 to 170,109. The finances of the Church showed a more spectacular increase during 'The Advance'. Mission givings increased in the national Church by 53%, from \$2,977,859 to \$4,566,568; and in the Bay of Quinte Conference by 51%, from \$244,025 to \$368,137. Support of the local work increased nationally by 121%, from \$14,562,727 to \$32,144,453; and in the Conference by 104%,

from \$1,132,630 to \$2,306,314.⁶⁰

The Crusade and the Advance were essentially missions to the Church, but the National Evangelistic Mission of 1956-1958 had a more ambitious scope. It became known as 'The Mission to the Nation', and while it did include the ingredients of the two previous campaigns and had a great impact on the life of the United Church, its specific objective was

... to proclaim the full gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ to both individual and national life in order that through the operation of the Holy Spirit men may become obedient to God's call and the life of the individual and the nation redeemed by God's grace, and directed by his will.⁶¹

The Mission to the Nation began with a period of preparation when ministers and members were expected to rededicate themselves to the cause of Christ and deepen their own spiritual lives before taking the challenge of the Christian faith to the nation. It was estimated that 90% of the ministers and 75% of the members made some act of reconsecration by Christmas, 1956.⁶² Rev. William Berry, Director of the Mission, said: "We believe that it is God who has moved our Church to undertake this Mission to the Nation ... we must pray that God will direct what we do and use it to his glory."⁶³

60. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1951, pp. 216-217; 1956, pp. 256-257.

61. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1956, p. 182

62. Ibid., p. 182

63. Ibid., p. 191.

The overall theme of the Mission was 'Calling Canada to Christ', and within this theme there were four major missions in the areas of family life, community life, daily work and economic life, and civic and political life. These four missions were conducted in many Presbyteries, but with varying degrees of involvement and success.

It was the mass rallies, usually held in arenas, that captured the 'spotlight', and these were led by evangelists of international reputation, such as Donald Soper and Joseph Blinco of the British Methodist Church, and Ernest Campbell of the Presbyterian Church in the United States. These three men conducted successful campaigns in the Bay of Quinte Conference in Kingston, Peterborough, and Oshawa. An evangelist of a more emotional nature was Charles Templeton, a Canadian, who led a large and responsive mission in Belleville. Of the four missionaries noted, Donald Soper came closest to representing the United Church stance on evangelism. This stance was described by Rev. Angus McQueen, Chairman of the Board of Evangelism and Social Service:

Vital evangelism for our time, as the United Church of Canada understands it, must possess certain characteristics: it must be intellectually sound, morally acute, socially relevant, church-related, it must confront people with the claims of Jesus Christ and present them with a plain choice, and it must be spiritually joyful and liberating.⁶⁴

64. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, March 15, 1958, p. 7.

The Bay of Quinte Conference expressed itself as well-pleased with the results of the Mission, and experienced a greater participation by the people than had been expected. In its summary of the Mission the Conference stated:

The impact of the Mission on the life of the Church has been significant. This impact cannot but continue as the Church goes forward to do its work strengthened and with deepened conviction among its ministers and members.⁶⁵

The Mission to the Nation contributed significantly to the statistical growth of the United Church in the 1950s, with the peak years for accessions to membership by 'profession of faith' being 1956-1958, the years of the Mission. The large, public evangelistic rallies confronted the individual with an opportunity to make a public profession of faith, often referred to as a 'decision'. Many of these people then took a course of instruction from their own minister in a church membership class, at the completion of which they made a profession of their faith in a service of public worship in their own church and were received into membership and their names recorded on the roll of the local church.

The preaching missions of the 1950s received a great deal of publicity, and were instrumental in bringing many people into a new relationship with Christ and the Church. These missions, however, were regarded as supplementary to

65. B.Q.A.; B.Q. Year Book: 1958, p. 61

the ongoing work in the local congregation with its steady, if unspectacular, emphasis on evangelism. It was primarily from this source that the regular increase of membership was realized. The Church regarded 'professions of faith' as a reliable indication of a congregation's spiritual health, and these, for 1945-1960, are shown in Table XVI, below.

Table XVI -- Professions of Faith and Total Membership of the United Church and the Bay of Quinte Conference: 1945-1960.^a

	<u>Professions of Faith</u>		<u>Total Membership</u>	
	<u>U.C.</u>	<u>B.Q.</u>	<u>U.C.</u>	<u>B.Q.</u>
1945	25,457	2,232	749,374	70,212
1946	32,833	2,819	767,998	71,954
1947	28,642	2,634	780,234	72,689
1948	28,367	2,799	791,677	73,611
1949	31,000	2,782	806,179	75,337
1950	31,382	2,449	821,199	76,347
1951	31,372	2,333	834,118	76,953
1952	33,368	2,860	849,256	77,964
1953	35,012	2,666	869,901	79,685
1954	38,196	3,085	894,556	81,715
1955	37,536	2,551	912,939	82,840
1956	40,155	3,104	933,488	84,506
1957	40,749	3,147	955,303	86,917
1958	41,713	3,124	980,461	87,486
1959	38,300	2,844	996,576	88,905
1960	40,482	3,031	1,016,879	90,126

^a U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1946-1961; B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1946-1961

It will be noted that the accessions by 'profession of faith' varied from year to year, with the largest number of accessions coinciding with special evangelism campaigns: the Crusade in 1946; the Advance in 1954, and the Mission to the Nation in 1956-1958. The lowest number of accessions followed the completion of the evangelistic campaigns when there was an inevitable decrease in enthusiasm for such work. The membership, on the other hand, showed a steady annual increase from year to year and reflected increases by transfer of membership from other churches as well as by professions of faith, reduced by natural losses and by transfers to other churches. In 1960 the membership of the United Church surpassed the one million mark for the first time, while the Bay of Quinte Conference recorded over 90,000 members.

The United Church had a good record of accessions, but was faced with the problem of nominal membership -- those who gave only token support in attendance and finances. Of this situation, the Board of Evangelism and Social Service commented as follows:

One of the mistakes of evangelism has been to presume that its major task is to get decisions for Christ, and to forget, when a decision for Christ has been made, the real work of evangelism, that of integrating the person into the local fellowship of the church, has just begun. Too often the newborn in Christ receive little spiritual nourishment, and so die in their spiritual infancy. As it is the nature of newborn babes to grow only if they are fed, so it is the nature of those coming into the Church to grow in grace only if they are fed the

riches of the gospel in Christ Jesus through Christian worship and nurture.⁶⁶

It was one thing for the Church to promote and conduct the 'high profile' evangelistic campaigns by which many persons were converted to the Christian faith, but it was quite another thing to bring these new converts into an active and informed participation in the life of the local church. Upon the minister, the session, and the congregation rested the responsibility for the spiritual growth of these new members, usually accomplished through worship, visitation, counselling, and practical opportunities for study, work and fellowship in the congregation and community.

A disquieting aspect of the church membership statistics was the increased number of non-resident members, the persons who had moved without notifying the church but whose names were retained on the roll of the local church. In 1946 there were 93,846 non-resident members in the United Church; by 1960 this number had grown to 129,674, an increase of 31%. It was perhaps inevitable in an increasingly mobile society, with families moving frequently, with the anonymity of apartment dwellers in the city, and the consequent sense of isolation and rootlessness, that there would be a weakening of loyalty to the Church. These non-resident members were the Church's 'displaced persons', who were often lost to the

66. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1956, p. 111

Church because of a combination of disinterest on their part and an inadequate system of following up families that had moved and relating them in a positive way to the church in their new community. This remains a problem for the Church.

6. The 'Boom' in Church Building

Through the war years, and until the end of 1946, the population of Canada increased at a steady but gradual rate of approximately 175,000 persons annually. For the next ten years the annual rate of increase was an astounding 404,000, and in the following three years, 1957-1960, the growth rate was only slightly less impressive at an average of 365,000 per year. In the thirteen year period under consideration, 1947-1960, the nation's population increased by 5,127,000; while in the same period the population of the United Church increased by 1,025,000.⁶⁷ Every major city and town shared in this increase to some extent, spreading itself into new suburbs and industrial parks where the newcomers lived and worked.

The growth of the cities, the development of new industries, and the increase and shifts in the population were the three major factors that challenged and compelled the United Church to embark on a program of church building unequalled in the history of Canada. A new and gigantic Home

67: U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1960, p. 139

Missions task, known as 'Church Extension', was added to the work of the Church. The essential meaning of Church Extension was given by Rev. Malcolm Macdonald, Secretary of the Board of Home Missions and National Director of the project:

It is planting Christian churches and providing preaching and pastoral ministries for people who live in the newly created communities, who have no places of worship, no Sunday Schools; and none of the organizations and fellowships of the Church that are so vital to the well-being, spiritual and moral care, of all ages.⁶⁸

To carry out this program a fund of nearly \$15,000,000 was required. This money was raised by Church Extension councils, and by allotments from the Missionary and Maintenance Fund, supplemented by funds raised through Presbytery and private donations. This was an investment in the future of the country and the future of the United Church, and became a new form of evangelism in the 1950s as the borders of the Church and the frontiers of the Christian faith were strengthened and enlarged.

Church Extension, as such, dates from 1947, the year the United Church initiated plans to launch the enterprise. The plans covered four major areas: 1) surveying the existing situation, and forecasting the foreseeable needs of an expanding church; 2) establishing Church Extension councils and Presbytery committees to attend to local details of purchasing property, checking plans, and allocating funds; 3) sponsoring

68. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1960, p. 141

financial campaigns and arranging grants and loans from the Board of Home Missions to assist in building churches, church halls, and manses; and 4) finding ordained ministers to give experienced leadership to the new congregations. These plans were translated into a policy for local Church Extension, whereby the Presbyteries had authority to determine the methods of raising and administering the funds for approved projects.⁶⁹ The formulation of this policy was a recognition that the 'boom' had, in fact, begun.

In the post-war era of expansion the United Church was financially well prepared to meet the opportunities to advance its missionary work in Canada. The 25th Anniversary of Church Union, in June, 1950, saw the Church's deficit paid off,⁷⁰ and a readiness to accept the financial challenge of Church Extension. From 1940 to 1950 support for the Missionary and Maintenance Fund doubled from \$1,451,609 to \$3,009,980 per year. This had been a steady gain across the Church, in which every Conference and Presbytery shared, and it indicated that the people were giving realistically to ensure attainment of the Church's financial goals. This healthy situation was healthiest of all in the Bay of Quinte Conference, as a summary of the decade in Table XVII, on the next page, shows.

69. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1951, pp. 9-10

70. See pp. 225-231

The 25th Anniversary Year had been the most financially satisfying in the United Church's history. As has been noted, the Church's debt had been completely liquidated in 1950; and in addition the Pension Fund was placed on a sound basis, with pensioners receiving a 25% increase in benefits. But the most significant feature of the year was surpassing the \$3,000,000 mark in support of the Missionary and Maintenance Fund for the first time.

Table XVII -- Support of Missionary and Maintenance Fund in Dollars in the United Church and the Bay of Quinte Conference: 1940-1950.^a

	<u>1940</u>	<u>1949</u>	<u>1950</u>	<u>Increase Over:</u>	
				<u>1940</u>	<u>1950</u>
Bay of Quinte	113,700	215,589	246,234	116%	15%
United Church	1,451,609	2,706,114	3,009,980	107%	11%

a. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1951, p. 23

This achievement marked the tenth successive year that support for the Missionary and Maintenance Fund had surpassed the previous year's givings, and set a new record for one year's givings. While every Conference in the Church shared in this achievement, Bay of Quinte had the highest percentage increase of all. It is also important to note that the goal was reached in a year in which the Church made a generous response to a number of special appeals, totalling \$300,000 for

overseas relief, the Manitoba flood relief, a special 25th Anniversary thankoffering for student support, and payment of pledges for the capital campaign for the Pension Fund.⁷¹

It was in the context of this strong and encouraging financial report, which indicated the Church's ability to support a new program of outreach and expansion, that the Board of Finance made the following statement:

The chief reason why the United Church of Canada requires a substantial increase in givings in the immediate future is the need of Church Extension. The rapid growth in Canada's population, and the remarkable shift of population to the edges of large cities, necessitates the building of at least 150 new churches. To this end the General Council has approved plans for local Church Extension campaigns. ... The place of the United Church of Canada, in Canadian Protestantism of the future will be quite largely determined by the success of these endeavours.⁷²

There was no doubt that sufficient money was available for the Church's needs. The Canadian income in 1950 was \$14.2 billion, an 8% increase over 1949, and must be seen in comparison to the national income in 1940 of \$4.5 billion.⁷³

The United Church then issued a call to its members to an even greater measure of stewardship of all their resources in order to maintain the momentum of financial support gained during the celebrations of its 25th anniversary, and to meet

71. U.C.A., Year Book: 1951, p. 21

72. Ibid., p. 21

73. Ibid., p. 25

the challenge of the country's expansion and the Church's opportunity. This was to be a stewardship of time and energy, of initiative, of obedience to the missionary imperative, as well as the stewardship of financial resources. The United Church saw this new missionary task as an unparalleled opportunity and responsibility to establish new congregations on the new frontiers, and thus reach out to the unreached and church the unchurched.

The first Church Extension survey and forecast in 1947 appears extremely modest in retrospect; but at the time it came as an unsettling surprise to the Church to discover that the existing and foreseeable need was for 150 new churches and fifty new manses.⁷⁴ As the country grew in population in the 1950s, so too did the need for more churches, church halls and manses. In the light of succeeding surveys the estimates continued to rise until at the end of 1960, in Church Extension projects alone, 504 new church units and 235 manses had been built.⁷⁵ A church unit was defined as either a church or a church hall, but in fact more than 80% of the new units were churches.

To this impressive total of 739 new buildings in thirteen years, built under the Church Extension program, must be added the new churches, new halls, and new manses

74. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1960, p. 139

75. See Table XVIII, p. 269

that were built by local congregations without Church Extension funds. The following Table indicates the scope of the building 'boom' in this era of expansion.

Table XVIII -- Churches and Manses built by the United Church of Canada: 1947-1960.^a

	<u>Churches</u>	<u>Manses</u>	<u>Total</u>
Church Extension Charges	504	235	739
Aid-Receiving Charges	451	219	670
Self-supporting Charges	<u>808</u>	<u>344</u>	<u>1,152</u>
<u>Total</u>	1,763	798	2,561

a. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1960, pp. 139-141; 1961, p. 144

The total of 1,763 churches built in thirteen years (1947-1960) may be better appreciated when it is compared with the total of only 350 churches built in the first twenty-one years of the Church's history (1925-1946).⁷⁶ The overall total of 2,561 churches, church halls, and manses built from 1947-1960 averaged 197 buildings per year, or sixteen per month, or four per week. Another way of stating this amazing construction feat is to note that the United Church built five new churches or manses every nine days for thirteen years. The scope of the Church Extension program in building new churches in this period is one that is unmatched in the

76. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1960, p. 140

history of the Church in Canada.

Church Extension projects in the Bay of Quinte Conference were confined mainly to Belleville, Kingston, Oshawa, and Peterborough, the four cities that had experienced the typical post-war expansion. In these cities fourteen new churches and eight new manses were built.⁷⁷ However, the building of new churches, church halls, and manses was not restricted to these four cities, and throughout the Conference other cities, towns, and villages shared in the building 'boom'. In total, during the years 1947-1960, thirty-six new churches, nineteen church halls, and twenty-two manses were erected in the Conference. Of this number, four were the result of a complete rebuilding project after fire had destroyed the previous building. In addition to these seventy-seven new buildings, there were many renovations and extensions to existing buildings to accommodate enlarged congregations.⁷⁸

Two community church ventures, one in the 'atomic' town of Deep River and the other in the 'hydro' village of Rolphton, were completed in the 1950s, with the United Church being the major contributor of both finances and people in

77. These churches were, Belleville: College Hill, Eastminster; Kingston: Edith Rankin Memorial, Kingscourt, St. Andrew's, St. Margaret's, St. Matthew's; Oshawa: Cedardale, Harmony, Northminster, Southminster, Westmount; Peterborough: Grace, Northminster.

78. These statistics are gleaned from the Minutes of the seven Presbyteries in Conference, 1947-1960, passim

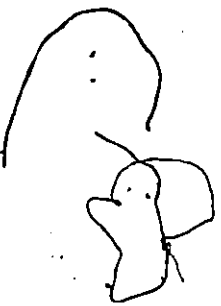
each case. In this period, fifteen new pastoral charges were constituted and several others were realigned; the latter being a prelude to the major realignment and amalgamation program of the 1960s, which will be considered in Chapter VI.

For its first twelve to fifteen years, Church Extension was a challenging and an adventurous task that enlisted and maintained the interest and the support of the United Church. By 1960, however, much of its appeal had been diminished because of the sustained demands made on behalf of this cause, and by then the most difficult dimension of this outreach ministry was having to contend with a growing indifference that had dulled the sharp edge of the Church's concern in this still important area. This sense of responsibility to Church Extension, with some exceptions, remained dormant until it was re-awakened in the mid-1970s by a new challenge of expansion and opportunity, and emerged with a new philosophy and a new name, 'New Church Development'.

The country's post-war period of prosperity and growth in population challenged the resources of the United Church. By 1950 the debt that had plagued the Church for twenty years had been paid in full, and the Church's money and energy were released for creative advances on a new frontier. During the years 1945-1960 the Church experienced a spectacular growth in membership and persons under pastoral care, partly accountable to the phenomena of three major

evangelistic campaigns. This growth was confirmed by the Canadian census, whose statistics gave the Church cause for serious concern as they revealed a million people with a stated preference for the United Church but who were not recorded on the Church's own rolls. Throughout most of this period much of the Church suffered from a shortage of ordained ministers, but this shortage was not felt as acutely in the Bay of Quinte Conference as in other parts of the Church.

The prosperous reality and optimistic attitude of post-war Canada was reflected in the Church's strong financial position, its growing membership, and a period of amazing and unprecedented church expansion. But this 'boom', like all periods of sudden growth, could not continue unabated, and by 1960 there were signs that 'the golden age' was over and that once again the United Church would have to summon up all its strength to hold its own against the inroads of an increasingly secular society.



CHAPTER VI

THE YEARS OF CHANGE AND CHALLENGE: 1960-1975

The post-war years of growth lifted the membership, finances, and property holdings of the United Church^o to record levels. But this prosperity, while a welcome contrast to the difficulties encountered during the Depression and World War II, was not without its problems. It tended to foster an unfortunate attitude of self-satisfaction just as the Church was entering a critical fifteen-year period in its history, a 'mid-life crisis' from its thirty-fifth to its fiftieth year, 1960-1975.

These were years of changed, and changing, conditions in an increasingly secular society. Many accepted standards and practices were being questioned, and the Church discovered that it was not immune from such interrogation. The secularism of the times thrust itself upon a Church that was somewhat surprised to feel the first mild shock-waves of a modest revolution. And revolutionaries, even revolutionaries in the Church, ask questions ... and take actions.

Three questions asked by the Church, and the actions taken in response, will be considered in this chapter. The questions are: 1) What could the United Church do to remedy the unacceptable situation of the over-churched rural areas

in the Bay of Quinte Conference? 2) What course of action could the Conferences of the United Church take to realize their desire for more self-determination in a Church with an expanding and centralized bureaucracy? 3) What could the United Church do to diminish the scandal of a denominationally divided Protestantism in an ecumenical age?

In seeking to answer these questions the United Church took three courses of action that could be summarized in three words: 'Realignment', 'Regionalism', and 'Reunion'. Of these three courses of action, the first two were reasonably successful, the third was only partially successful.

1. Realignment of Pastoral Charges

The United Church inherited a strong base of support in the rural communities and churches of the Bay of Quinte Conference from the Methodists at the time of Union in 1925. The Methodist Church had been the strongest of all the churches in Eastern Ontario, and had been the most influential in shaping the social life of the people. The rural area of the Conference was still largely inhabited by the descendents of the original settlers who formed a stable and closely-knit society of people who had attended the local one-room school together, who helped each other at seedtime and harvest, who shopped at the same general store in the village, who relaxed together at the neighbourhood square

dance or box social, and who worshipped together at the small crossroads church.¹

This long-established pattern of rural life began to change in the 1950s. Much of the land proved to be unsuited to modern agricultural methods, or had been exhausted by years of poor farming practices, and was no longer able to provide economic security for the farmer.² Many old family farms were sold, and many of the new owners did not feel bound by the traditional patterns of loyalty to either community or church. These changing conditions challenged the United Church to re-examine its role and to explore new approaches in its ministry to the rural community.

a) The Need for Realignment -- The approach taken by the Bay of Quinte Conference in the 1960s to this rural problem was to reduce the number of pastoral charges and congregations by a program of realignments and amalgamations, with the expectation that this would result in a stronger and revitalized rural church.

Four definitions will be helpful in understanding the United Church's response to this problem. By 'rural church'

1. Pamphlet, 'The Challenge of Change to the Rural Church', Toronto, Board of Evangelism and Social Service, The United Church of Canada, 1967, pp. 1-2.

2. R. C. Langman, Poverty Pockets, Toronto, McClelland and Stewart, 1975, pp. 17-20, 30-32

is meant the church in the country or in a community with a population of under 2,000. By 'pastoral charge' is meant the basic unit of organization in the United Church, consisting of one or more congregations in which a minister has been given 'charge' of the pastoral care of the people. By 'amalgamation' is meant the merging, or consolidation' of two or more congregations in a pastoral charge in order to provide a more viable unit of worship and work. By 'realignment' is meant the adjustment of pastoral charge boundaries in order to make a more equitable distribution of ministerial manpower and a more efficient use of the Church's resources.³

By 1960 it was apparent that many churches, once strong and self-supporting, and an influential factor in the rural community, had become so depleted in numbers that they were forced to request mission funds in order to survive, while others had become so weak that their very existence was seriously threatened. In many cases it was a simple matter of not enough interested families remaining in the community to give the necessary support to the local church.

The problem of a decreasing rural population and overchurching was not new. The Bay of Quinte Conference Rural Life Committee recognized the situation as early as

3. New Prospects for the Rural Church, Toronto, Board of Home Missions and Board of Evangelism and Social Service, The United Church of Canada, 1959, p. 5

1950, and had recommended that the Presbyteries undertake a survey of rural churches to determine if some might be closed and others amalgamated or realigned.⁴ This resulted in the first serious attempt at a major realignment in the Conference since 1927; and from 1950 to 1960 six pastoral charges were realigned, and forty-one churches were amalgamated or closed.⁵

In 1952, the national Rural Life Committee, whose secretary was Rev. John Leng of the Bay of Quinte Conference, warned of the threat to the rural church of the population shift from rural to urban centres, and reached the same conclusion as the Conference had reached two years earlier, that the solution to the problem would involve "realignments, amalgamations, and sometimes drastic changes in pastoral charge boundaries."⁶ The Committee also realized "that such procedures will be met by reluctance to give up old arrangements, traditional backgrounds, and sentimental attachments."⁷ This 'reluctance' was to present the most difficult and delicate area of negotiation in the realignment program of the 1960s, especially in Belleville Presbytery.

4. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1950, p. 72

5. See Table XIX, p. 286

6. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1952, p. 163

7. Ibid., p. 163

The 1958 annual meeting of Conference was reminded by its Home Missions Committee that a strong rural church was still essential to the well-being of the whole United Church:

The importance of the rural church and the rural ministry must be re-asserted, and this can only be done by rural churches being satisfied with no second-best standards of churchmanship.⁸

It was difficult, however, to avoid 'second-best standards' in small, struggling pastoral charges comprised of as many as six congregations, with as few as two or three miles between them. Such situations, while warranted in 'horse and buggy days', were no longer acceptable.

This, together with another problem, was recognized and stated by the Conference Home Missions Superintendent, Rev. Gordon Porter, in his 1960 report:

In the rural areas we have too many small churches inadequately equipped, poorly attended, and placed within a short distance of each other. ... A problem is also posed by too many rival Protestant churches in villages and rural areas. Some communities of less than 800 people are called upon to maintain five and six churches. In such instances organized religion has become a divisive factor rather than a source of unity and healing within the community.⁹

A common result of such conditions was a divided community, a dispirited congregation and minister, a short-term pastorate, and the unwise use of mission funds. The national Board

8. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1958, p. 39

9. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1961, p. 150.

of Home Missions, one of whose responsibilities was the fair and wise distribution of its budget, was concerned with the number of small, subsidized rural charges and with the denominational rivalry in many rural areas. It questioned itself whether the grants it gave to aid-receiving charges were always justified, and reached this conclusion:

Subsidies of mission funds are only justified when we are meeting a real need, serving real constituencies, and helping build the Kingdom of God rather than the ranks of a denomination.¹⁰

The Conference Home Missions Committee, and its Presbytery counterparts, kept the problems of the rural church in mind, and wherever it seemed appropriate recommended realignments and amalgamations that would consolidate the work and effect savings in both ministerial manpower and missionary monies. Belleville Presbytery, as part of its 'master plan' prepared in 1960,¹¹ underwent considerable realignment between 1960 and 1965, reducing the number of its pastoral charges by eight (from 53 to 45) and the number of its congregations by fifty (from 165 to 115).¹² A survey taken in 1962 by Renfrew Presbytery, indicated that there were "too many charges with less than the required General Council minimum of 150 to 200 families ... [and] an immediate need for

10. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1962, Vol. 2, p. 138

11. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 16, 1960, p. 2134

12. See Table XIX, p. 286

a realignment of pastoral charge boundaries."¹³ Renfrew responded rather slowly to this 'immediate need', and it was not until 1964-1965 that it made realignments that reduced the number of its pastoral charges by four (from 29 to 25) and the number of congregations by eleven (from 63 to 52).¹⁴

Three committees, Rural Life, Property and Boundaries, and Home Missions, worked closely together in the matter of realignments, and their functions were sometimes misunderstood by those pastoral charges most in need of assistance. This note of apprehension is detected in the disclaimer of the Rural Life Committee in its 1963 report to Conference:

The Rural Life Committee is not a committee to close churches, to dissolve congregations, or to alienate feelings. It is an educational committee which can only give advice and assistance to Presbyteries in effecting amalgamations and realignments.¹⁵

How well it succeeded in its educational responsibility was judged by the manner in which amalgamations and realignments were effected, and in the subsequent health of the pastoral charge or congregation affected.

b) The Implementation of Realignment -- In 1965 the work of amalgamation and realignment in the Bay of Quinte

13. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 25, 1962, p. 1449

14. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1965, Vol. 1, pp. 44, 144; 1966, Vol. 1, pp. 44, 143

15. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1963, p. 72

Conference began in earnest. Rev. Harold G. Lester, Conference Home Missions Superintendent, in an address to the Home Missions Committee of Conference on the subject, 'A Realistic Approach to Solving the Problems of Rural Churches', said:

The Church must recognize itself to be a part of the community. What affects the community also affects the Church. Therefore, the changes in the social structure of the rural community must be followed by modifications in the life and structure of the Church if the Church is to be relevant to the conditions of 1965. Any attempt to change the situation requires a knowledge of the facts of the whole environment. Such information is available. If any lasting good is to come from changes made, they must be made after a thorough study of the facts and careful planning in their light. Such surveys and consequent action must be implemented on a Presbytery-wide and even a Conference-wide basis.

Rural Life schools should be conducted so as to take the laymen of the rural Church into our confidence and to enlist their understanding and support. We must remember the voluntary nature of the work of the Church. In our planning for the future, let us not try to outdo the community and the school in recreational facilities. Our primary task is Evangelism, Christian Education, and Worship. . . . We do not exist merely to perpetuate the past, but to build for the future, and the horizon of the present and the future has gone far beyond the boundaries of the particular pastoral charges to which we happen to belong. May God grant us wisdom and guidance for this task.¹⁶

The Home Missions Committee responded positively to Lester's call for 'modifications in the life and structure of the Church', and prepared the following recommendation which it presented to the 1965 annual meeting of Conference:

16. B.Q.A., B.Q. Home Missions Committee: Minutes, March 3, 1965, p. 15

We recommend to the Bay of Quinte Conference that there be set up a Conference Committee composed of representatives of Home Missions, Rural Life, Property and Boundaries, and Church Extension, to work with corresponding committees in each Presbytery in a thorough study of the total situation of the pastoral charges within the bounds of Presbyteries and Conference, taking into consideration church, sociological, economic, geographical and educational factors in every community; these to be correlated at the Conference level to provide a basis of fact upon which to plan our future work.¹⁷

The recommendation was adopted, and Conference had taken the first step on the road to the most dramatic and sweeping realignment of pastoral charges in the entire United Church.

A Survey Committee was appointed in 1965 to prepare a questionnaire on the life and work of the Church in the Bay of Quinte Conference. This questionnaire was helpful to the Presbyteries in determining data about the church and community, such as trading and shopping areas, transportation and communication lines, educational and recreational facilities, natural boundaries, communities, and location of churches and families of all denominations. Belleville, Cobourg, Kingston, Oshawa, and Peterborough Presbyteries made good use of the data in their programs of realignments. Renfrew Presbytery had completed its realignment program by 1965, and had no need of a further survey, while Lindsay did not consider making any major changes in pastoral charge boundaries.

17. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1965, p. 24

In its report to the 1967 annual meeting of Conference, the Survey Committee noted the following situations as discovered through the questionnaires:

a) Many congregations were so small that it was difficult to have a satisfactory service of worship or an adequate program of Christian education.

b) The physical capacity of most rural churches was far beyond the needs of dwindling congregations.

c) Some ministers on the smaller pastoral charges did not have enough work to merit full-time employment or to challenge them to do their best, while others on the larger pastoral charges were working to the limit of their strength.

d) The overall shortage of ordained ministers required the wisest deployment of those available, and the release of others to more needy areas.

e) The money and the effort being spent to keep some small churches open could be better used in the wider mission of the Church.¹⁸

The survey confirmed what was already obvious to the careful observer, but it did supply some helpful data to those Presbyteries that had responded to the Conference's recommendation that a careful study of their pastoral charges be undertaken, using the results of the survey and other data,

18. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1967, p. '64'

and where warranted "to proceed with a definite program of realignment and amalgamation on a Presbytery-wide basis."¹⁹

Belleville Presbytery, which had already undergone a major realignment (1962-1963) but was still overchurched in many rural areas, was selected as the pilot project. It was a good choice, as Belleville had, in fact, already completed its survey and accepted the proposals for realignment before Conference made its recommendation. A Survey Implementation Committee was appointed to work under the direction of the Home Missions Superintendent, Rev. Harold G. Lester,⁴³ and within the following guidelines:

a) Each pastoral charge was, "as far as possible and practicable," to have a minimum of 200 families; to be a geographical entity and a 'natural' community; and the people should not have to travel more than ten miles to the church.

b) Each pastoral charge was to consist of one or, at the most, two congregations, but exceptions would be made in certain situations; the most suitable church buildings were to be used, and surplus real estate was to be sold; and the best of Christian education facilities was to be provided.

c) Each pastoral charge was, wherever possible, to have the services of an ordained minister.

d) The whole Presbytery was to be involved in the program

19. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1967, p. 65

of realignment at the same time; and all realignments were, as far as possible, to take place at the same date.²⁰

The Presbytery was divided into four zones (Tweed, Belleville, Napanee, Prince Edward), in which meetings were held with representation from each pastoral charge (eight lay people and the minister) to consider each situation in detail. The findings from these meetings, including recommendations from the pastoral charge and data from the survey, formed the basis of the Survey Committee's report to a special session of Presbytery on February 8th, 1967. After a review of the Committee's work, the long and detailed report was presented in its entirety for consideration, amendment, and appropriate action. Each of the forty-one recommendations concerning amalgamation and realignment was considered, item by item, and adopted.²¹

The majority of the actions took effect on July 1st, 1967, and the remaining recommendations were implemented by 1969. As a result of this drastic action, covering the period 1965-1969, Belleville Presbytery reduced the number of its pastoral charges by ten (from 45 to 35) and the number of its congregations by sixty (from 115 to 55).²²

20. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 8, 1967, p. 2577

21. Ibid., pp. 2576-2584

22. See Table XIX, p. 286

The extent of the amalgamations and realignments in the Bay of Quinte Conference is shown in Table XIX, below.

Table XIX -- Number of Pastoral Charges (in brackets) and Congregations in Bay of Quinte Conference, by Presbyteries: 1950, 1960, 1965, 1970, before and after Realignment.^a

<u>Presbytery</u>	<u>1950</u>		<u>1960</u>		<u>1965</u>		<u>1970</u>	
Belleville	(55)	178	(53)	165	(45)	115	(35)	55
Cobourg	(21)	51	(21)	49	(20)	44	(14)	31
Kingston	(42)	105	(40)	87	(44)	96	(33)	60
Lindsay	(27)	67	(24)	59	(22)	58	(21)	57
Oshawa	(30)	56	(32)	57	(33)	58	(32)	49
Peterborough	(22)	47	(23)	49	(30)	66	(24)	50
Renfrew	(32)	<u>71</u>	(30)	<u>68</u>	(25)	<u>52</u>	(26)	<u>56</u>
• <u>Total</u>	(229)	575	(223)	534	(219)	489	(185)	358

a. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1951, pp. 221-222; 1961, pp. 247-248; 1966, Vol. 1, p. 143; 1971, Vol. 1, p. 161

There had been reductions due to realignment in Belleville (1962) and in Renfrew (1964), and increases due to Church Extension projects in Kingston and Peterborough (1960-1965). From 1960 to 1970 the number of pastoral charges in Conference was reduced by thirty-eight, from 223 to 185 (17%), and the number of congregations was reduced by 176, from 534 to 358 (33%), with the major reductions made between 1966 and 1969. The union with the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1968; which will be considered in Section 3 (b), accounts

for the increase in Renfrew between 1965 and 1970.

While Belleville Presbytery was the most highly publicized program of realignment in the entire United Church, and is used in this thesis as the prime example, four other Presbyteries in the Bay of Quinte Conference also underwent major realignments in the 1960s. These were Cobourg, Kingston, Oshawa, and Peterborough, with Kingston reducing the number of its pastoral charges by eleven (from 44 to 33) and the number of its congregations by thirty-six (from 96 to 60) in the period 1965-1969.²³

Three examples from Belleville Presbytery will serve to illustrate the variety of situations encountered in the program of realignment.²⁴

a) Foxboro Pastoral Charge consisted of three congregations in 1966: Foxboro, Halloway, and Marsh Hill. The two rural congregations, Halloway and Marsh Hill, amalgamated with the village congregation at Foxboro to become a one-point pastoral charge on July 1st, 1967. The two rural church buildings were sold, and converted to private houses.

b) Trinity was a strong one-point pastoral charge in the town of Napanee. It agreed to accept two small, struggling rural congregations, Gretna and Anderson, which were absorbed

23. See Table XIX, p. 286

24. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 8, 1967, p. 2582

into Trinity which remained a one-point pastoral charge with a substantially increased membership. The two rural churches were closed, and the properties sold.

c) The following example involves a combination of three elements: amalgamation, realignment, and transfer to another Presbytery. Shannonville was a two-point pastoral charge, consisting of a village congregation in Shannonville and a rural congregation in Melrose, which was amalgamated into one congregation at Melrose. Deseronto was a three-point pastoral charge, consisting of a town congregation in Deseronto and two rural congregations, Morven and Fourth Line. Fourth Line and Morven were amalgamated into one congregation at Morven, and were then transferred to the Bath Pastoral Charge in the Kingston Presbytery. Deseronto and Melrose were realigned to become the new Quinte Pastoral Charge. The church building at Shannonville was sold, while the historic old Fourth Line church was closed for worship but retained by the pastoral charge.

c) The Results of Realignment -- In practically all cases the newly amalgamated or realigned pastoral charges were inaugurated by a suitable service of worship, in which the contribution of the original builders and members was acknowledged and the labours of the people of the new pastoral charge were rededicated to the worship and service of God. Thus, past, present, and future were recognized.

With the primary part of the realignment program completed, a second, and in many instances, a more difficult, problem emerged: that of the disposal of 'surplus' church buildings. Many people had a strong and sentimental attachment to these buildings, some of which had been built by their ancestors more than a century earlier.

Of the sixty churches closed in Belleville Presbytery between 1965 and 1970, a number were renovated for use as Christian education or church activity halls, and others reverted to the estate of the original owner who donated the land. The remaining forty buildings were disposed of by the local trustees, under the proper church procedures and subject to the advice and approval of the Presbytery. Many of these buildings were sold to the community for the nominal sum of one dollar, to be used as community halls and thereby continued to be gathering places for the people. Others were sold as homes or places of business, some became community museums, and a few were sold to other denominations when it was considered that such sales would not create a divisive influence in the community. Still others were dismantled, and the useable material sold, with the empty lot being put to new uses. In all cases the United Church was to have the right to repurchase if the new owner decided to sell, and in all cases the purchaser had to pay all legal and real estate fees and commissions.

The pioneering work of Belleville Presbytery in the matter of amalgamations and realignments did not go unnoticed by the United Church, nor by the Anglican Church. This fact was reported by the Survey Implementation Committee:

We have pioneered, and there is evidence that others will follow our example. We note with interest that the Anglican Diocese of Ontario is engaged at present in a survey, patterned on our efforts, and with the same goal in mind -- the strengthening of the rural church, and the enabling of congregations to participate more fully in the wider mission of the Church. . . . Though we have met with gratifying results in most situations, we have learned through experience and can offer valuable counsel to those who would undertake such restructuring of the Church.²⁵

Using Belleville Presbytery as a model, four other Presbyteries in Bay of Quinte Conference, and Presbyteries in other Conferences from Newfoundland to British Columbia, engaged in the amalgamation and realignment of pastoral charges.

Rev. Harold G. Lester, Home Missions Superintendent of the Bay of Quinte Conference, had directed the survey of Belleville and Kingston Presbyteries and had a thorough knowledge of the entire realignment program. In an interview with The Observer on the results of the program in Belleville Presbytery, he said:

On the whole, there's been much less ill-feeling than we expected. Nobody's completely satisfied -- that's understood, of course -- but I don't think anyone would want to go back to the old systems and

25. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, April 25, 1967, p. 2614

charges now that they've had amalgamation for a year or so. ... But the really important thing is that people are now looking at the Church from a wider point of view. Its not just four walls and a roof, or just a building to perpetuate a certain group of people. Even if the pioneer building goes, the Church can go on stronger than before.²⁶

There had been some misgivings about realignment, and some strong criticism against it, and the United Church did lose some disaffected members to the pentecostal churches, but when it was an accomplished fact and the people had experienced the advantages of it, it was generally well accepted.

One standard against which the realignment program could be measured is its compliance with the requirements of the Guidelines.²⁷ One requirement of the Guidelines was that each pastoral charge was, wherever possible, to have the services of an ordained minister. In 1960, only 158 of the 222 pastoral charges (71%) had the services of an ordained minister; while in 1970, 164 of the 185 pastoral charges (88%) had the services of an ordained minister.²⁸ In both years under comparison the remaining pastoral charges were served by lay or student supplies. In this respect, realignment was a success. Another requirement of the Guidelines was that each pastoral charge was to consist of one or, at the most, two

26. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, Sept. 15, 1968, p. 17

27. See pp. 284-285

28. U.C.A. U.C.C. Year Book: 1961, pp. 574-576; 1971, Vol. 2, pp. 272-278

congregations, with exceptions permitted under certain conditions. In 1960, only 110 of the 222 pastoral charges (49%) consisted of either one or two congregations; but in 1970, 139 of the 185 pastoral charges (75%) met the requirement.²⁹ By this standard, too, realignment had succeeded.

The primary requirement was that, as far as possible and practicable, each pastoral charge was to have a minimum of 200 families. Table XX, below, indicates that, in this respect also, realignment was a success.

Table XX -- Number of Families Under Pastoral Care per Pastoral Charge in Bay of Quinte Conference, by Presbyteries: 1960 and 1970, before and after Realignment.^a

Presbytery	Under 200		Over 200		Total	
	1960	1970	1960	1970	1960	1970
Belleville	32	8	21	27	53	35
Cobourg	11	1	10	13	21	14
Kingston	23	8	17	25	40	33
Lindsay	10	4	14	17	24	21
Oshawa	12	8	20	24	32	32
Peterborough	8	4	15	20	23	24
Renfrew	16	11	13	15	29	26
<u>Total</u>	112	44	110	141	222	185

a. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1961, pp. 332-357; 1971, Vol. 1, pp. 45-57

29. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1961, pp. 574-576; 1971, Vol. 2, pp. 272-278

As a result of amalgamations and realignments in the Conference, the number of pastoral charges with under 200 families was reduced from 112 to 44; and the number with over 200 families was increased from 110 to 141.

From a statistical standpoint the realignment program in the Bay of Quinte Conference must be judged a success. In his report to the 1969 annual meeting of Conference, the Home Missions Superintendent noted some results of realignment in Belleville and Kingston Presbyteries: total membership showed an increase, and congregational givings for both local and mission funds were higher than before realignment. He continued his report:

Two facts do stand out. In two Presbyteries alone [Belleville and Kingston], because of the action they have taken, our Church, either the pastoral charges themselves or our Board of Home Missions, will spend just about \$70,000 less on ministers' salaries and travel in 1969 than we would have done had the pastoral charges remained the same as in 1965, although the ministers on realigned charges will be receiving the new 1969 minimum [salary], or in some cases, well above it. We have also saved for the rest of the church about eighteen ministers. Yet our purpose has not been just to save money or men. It has been our hope to provide strong bases for worship, fellowship, and training, from which our people may go out to face our mission as a Church in our communities.³⁰

Another firm indication of the success of the program of realignment was that in 1968, Rev. Harold Lester, whose name was synonymous with realignment, was elected President

30. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1969, p. 70

of the Bay of Quinte Conference. In the same year, Rev. Howard Kennedy, who was chairman of the Survey Implementation Committee in Belleville Presbytery, was elected chairman of his Presbytery. These two elections, coming as they did in the year following the realignment program, were significant signs of approval of the program that had so dramatically changed the pastoral charge boundaries of the Conference.

There were some who interpreted the whole process of realignments as a retrenchment, but most eventually recognized it as a necessary, courageous, and creative approach to correcting the unacceptable situation of the overchurched rural areas in the Bay of Quinte Conference.

2. The Development of Regionalism

At its inception in 1925 the United Church of Canada had eleven Conferences, representing the provinces and regions of the country. Bay of Quinte was one of six Conferences in Ontario, two of which crossed provincial boundaries, and was comprised of the pastoral charges in thirteen counties in central and eastern Ontario.³¹ The original administrative organization of the United Church consisted of boards and committees at the national Church headquarters in Toronto and, as far as was practicable, a corresponding committee

31. See Chapter I, pp. 2-3

structure in the Conferences and Presbyteries. The interests of the national boards were represented in the Conferences by field secretaries and by superintendents of Home Missions. These were national officers appointed by, and responsible to, their boards and assigned to designated areas of work.

The popular use of the term 'regionalism' as it is used in the United Church, relates it to the area of a Conference. A better word would be 'decentralization', for that is what is implied; however, because it is the accepted term, 'regionalism' will be used in this section of the thesis. It depicts the desire of the Conferences to have a greater share in the shaping of policy and making decisions, and for more self-determination within the national Church's guidelines for spending funds within their own jurisdictions.

a) The Beginning of Regionalism -- Regionalism did not have an easy entry into the structures of the United Church. In 1952 the General Council authorized a study on the advisability of establishing Conference offices. This study was conducted by means of a survey of the Conferences and Presbyteries.³² A questionnaire was circulated, which asked four basic questions:

1) Would the work of the Church be more effectively done if there were established within each Conference an office

32. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1952, p. 155

with a full-time officer related closely to the Conference area, and also to the whole work of the Church?

2) Should such an officer be appointed by the General Council on the nomination of the Conference; and should he be made secretary of Conference, or should the duties of such an officer be performed by a full-time, long-term president?

3) Is it likely that the advantages gained would justify the expense?

4) Would it be advisable to try out this experiment in one or two Conferences which favour it?

In the Bay of Quinte Conference, five of the seven Presbyteries replied to the questionnaire. Cobourg, Kingston and Renfrew responded with a simple 'No'; but Belleville and Peterborough offered reasons for their negative responses.

Belleville replied:

The establishment of a full-time officer and office within each Conference would not make the work of the Church more effective, nor would it justify the cost. It would not assist in the sphere of pastoral relations... [but] it might be of help in Christian education.³³

Peterborough's reaction, while negative, had a qualifying note that would not exclude experimentation:

We were not in favour of this being launched throughout the whole Church, but we were agreed that it might be a help to some of the Conferences, and that it might be tried out in such Conferences as an

33. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, April 28, 1953, p. 1772

experiment. We felt that such Conferences as tried it out should share in the cost. It was felt that, if such an officer be appointed, he should also be the Secretary of the Conference rather than the President, and should be appointed by the General Council on the recommendation of the Conference.³⁴

There was only a limited response to the survey, with four of the eleven Conferences replying. Of these, three were opposed to the establishment of Conference offices (including Bay of Quinte). Sixty-eight of 104 Presbyteries made reply, and of these, forty-one were opposed. In the light of the limited replies and the generally negative response, the 1954 General Council recommended that "no further action be taken in respect of the proposal to establish Conference Offices with full-time Conference officers."³⁵

Despite this rebuff, however, the seeds of regionalism had been sown in the minds of the Conferences. They lay dormant for several years, but sprouted in the early 1960s.

In 1958 the General Council appointed a Long Range Planning Committee, within whose broad terms of reference was the request to "study the structure and polity of the United Church with respect to their adequacy to meet the needs of a growing church in a changing world."³⁶ In its first report to General Council in 1960, the Committee introduced the

34. U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, Feb. 18, 1953, p. 1168

35. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1954, p. 212

36. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1958, p. 241

subject of regionalism:

How can Presbyteries, Conferences and General Council be related more effectively to the total work of the Church? How can we relate the work of the Boards and the General Council more effectively to the local congregation? ... How should the field services of the various Boards be developed? Can they be co-ordinated more effectively? What shall be our policy regarding 'regional' offices?³⁷

The report showed concern for the effective inter-relating of the Church's structures, and implied that regional offices might be the catalyst in the process.

Some significant decisions were made in connection with regionalism in the 1960s. The 1962 General Council called for a strengthening of the Conferences, and authorized an annual meeting of all Conference presidents for an exchange of ideas, a sharing of concerns, and gaining a better understanding of the national character of the United Church in which the regions would have an increased participation.³⁸

The 1964 General Council approved three major steps towards regionalism.³⁹ In the matter of restraining the expanding and centralized bureaucracy, the United Church began the reorganization of its nine national Boards into five Divisions and, with a change of policy in 1958, gave the Conferences the right to elect their representatives to these

37. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1960, p. 246

38. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1962, p. 318

39. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1964, p. 254

Divisions rather than to merely nominate them as before. The Church also recognized the desire of the Conferences for more autonomy in regional administration. The third, and most publicized and visible, step was the appointment of Rev. Robert Henderson as the first regional officer in the history of the Church. He was appointed as Executive Officer of the British Columbia Conference which had been selected for the three-year experiment. Henderson's duties included giving continuity and leadership to the Conference, co-ordinating the work within Conference, relating the Conference to the national Church and vice versa, and assisting the committees in Conference and the Presbyteries to become more effective.

This experiment in regionalism was judged to have been a success, and in 1968 executive secretaries were named in two other Conferences, Alberta and the Maritimes. The 1968 General Council also authorized the appointment of executive secretaries in the remaining Conferences when a need could be demonstrated.⁴⁰

In 1971 there was a national consultation of all the Church's field staff personnel with the national Field Staff Committee to discuss the whole concept of regionalism, and to prepare guidelines setting out policies and procedures as they related to Conference staff persons. Thus, within a

40. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1968, p. 117

decade of its introduction, regionalism had become a firmly established fact in the United Church.

b) Regionalism in the Bay of Quinte Conference -- It was within the wider context of regionalism in the United Church that Bay of Quinte Conference developed its own approach and its own Conference staff. For the first thirty-five years Bay of Quinte shared its Home Missions superintendent, its Missionary and Maintenance field secretary, and its Christian Education field secretary with either Toronto or Montreal and Ottawa Conference. Other field services in Bay of Quinte, because of its small size and its proximity to Toronto, were provided by national officers who made regular visits to the meetings of the Presbyteries and the Conference. These were strong and able men whose very competence and prestige as national officers tended to foster a dependence on 'Toronto', with the result that Bay of Quinte was the last of all the Conferences to have its own field staff, resident within the Conference area.

It was not until 1960 that Bay of Quinte gained the exclusive services of Rev. Gordon Porter as its own Home Missions Superintendent, but he continued to live in Ottawa where he had resided while serving both Montréal and Ottawa Conference and Bay of Quinte. In 1961, when Porter returned to the pastoral ministry, Rev. Harold G. Lester of Queen

Street United Church in Lindsay was appointed Home Missions Superintendent for Bay of Quinte, with his home and office located in Kingston. Thus he became the first resident field staff person in the Conference.

Bay of Quinte, the only Conference without its own Christian Education Field Secretary in 1961, made a strong and successful appeal for the appointment of such a person.⁴¹ Rev. Duncan White was named to this position, and he established his home and office in Peterborough. There was no concept of a field staff 'team' at this time, and each man, White and Lester, went about his own work from his own office with little attempt at co-ordination of schedules.

When White resigned his position to return to the pastoral ministry, Oshawa Presbytery expressed its thanks:

We feel that Mr. White has served both Presbytery and Conference well. We feel that he has raised the level of Christian education throughout the Conference, and although he did not always get the support he merited he did excellent work.⁴²

The discordant note in these words of appreciation about lack of support reflected a lingering uncertainty concerning the validity of a Conference field staff role. This concern re-appeared several times in the next five years. White was succeeded in July, 1966 by Rev. George Ambury who established

41. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1961, p. 29

42. U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, April 30, 1966, p. 934

a Christian Education office in Kingston.

Thus Kingston, with Conference's two field staff residing there, began to take on some aspects of a Conference headquarters. This position was enhanced by its hosting of the annual meeting of Conference over a twelve-year period, 1959-1970, and its being the site of Queen's Theological College. The first suggestion of setting up a permanent Conference Office was made by Peterborough Presbytery in 1966, when it requested the Conference Executive to give consideration "to the establishment of a Conference Office from which Field Secretaries might work; this both in the interest of efficiency and economy."⁴³ With the appointment of the first Executive Secretary in 1970, and the prospect of a staff team of four persons plus secretarial staff, the need for adequate office space became apparent, and the Conference Executive authorized the establishment of a Conference Office in Chalmers United Church, Kingston.⁴⁴

This move did not meet with whole-hearted acceptance in some parts of the Conference. Lindsay Presbytery suggested that the Conference office be divided, with two staff persons to remain in the Kingston office, and a second office to be opened in Peterborough from which two other staff persons

43. U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 29, 1966, p. 23

44. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1971, p. 38

would work.⁴⁵ This suggestion revealed not only area loyalties, but also a serious misunderstanding of a stated basic principle of the Conference's concept of regionalism, that there be one office and one staff team.⁴⁶ This principle was reaffirmed by the Conference Executive in 1973, and the issue was satisfactorily resolved.⁴⁷ The wisdom of this decision became more evident in the subsequent actions of two other Conferences, Montréal and Ottawa, and Alberta, each of which reverted to one central office when it was discovered that the two-office, two-staff system was unsatisfactory, unmanageable, and expensive.

The Executive Secretary, as the liaison between the General Council and the Conference and the senior staff officer in Conference, was the key appointment in the formation of the Conference staff team. The lengthy process of securing an Executive Secretary for Bay of Quinte began in November, 1968, when the Long Range Planning Committee authorized a study of the subject. A survey was made of those Conferences having an Executive Secretary, and as a result of its findings a report was made to the 1969 annual meeting of the

45. U.C.A., Lindsay Presbytery: Minutes, April 18, 1973, p. 2097

46. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1970, p. 45

47. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1973, p. 16

Conference strongly recommending such an appointment.⁴⁸

From May, 1969 to April, 1970 the committee charged with the task of securing an Executive Secretary met six times to discuss this important step for Conference. During this period the details of the job description were completed and approved, prospective candidates were contacted and given a preliminary interview, and four of the eleven persons nominated were selected to be interviewed by the General Council Committee on Executive Secretaries. Two of the four nominees withdrew, and the other two were interviewed in Toronto in June, 1970. On September 17th, 1970 the Sub-Executive of the General Council concurred with the recommendation of its Committee on Executive Secretaries, as had the Conference Executive on September 9th,⁴⁹ and "appointed the Rev. W. Joseph Price to be the Executive Secretary of the Bay of Quinte Conference, effective July 1st, 1971."⁵⁰ Bay of Quinte thus became the seventh of the eleven Conferences to have an Executive Secretary, and had taken its formal step into the realm of regionalism.

The Conference Executive met in October, 1970 to consider the future field staff needs of Bay of Quinte. Reports

48. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1969, p. 12

49. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1971, p. 39

50. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1971, Vol. 2, p. 4

and recommendations from the seven Presbyteries and the five Divisions of Conference formed the basis for discussion and decision. At this meeting it was decided that seven persons would be required to fill the future field staff requirements of Conference.⁵¹ These seven proposed staff positions were eventually filled by four persons, by combining several of the suggested positions. The Bay of Quinte Conference staff team assumed its present form on July 1st, 1973.⁵²

A Conference Staff Committee was appointed to provide support and guidance for the staff, to examine the needs of Conference that could be serviced by the staff, to set realistic priorities, and to make annual performance reviews. Each Presbytery had a representative on the Staff Committee who brought the needs of Presbytery to the attention of the staff, and who helped clarify the role of the staff to the Presbytery and thereby allay the reservations and misgivings some persons still held towards the staff in the early years of regionalism. The Committee's first report to Conference commended the staff, and noted that the staff was "beginning

51. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1971, p. 41

52. The Conference Staff Team was comprised of the following persons, with date of appointment and position in brackets: Rev. Joseph Price (July 1, 1971, Executive Secretary), Rev. Frazer Lacey (July 1, 1972, Program and Leadership Development), Rev. Victor Levan (July 1, 1973, Personnel), Rev. Margaret Errey (July 1, 1973, Mission and Stewardship); and two secretaries, Mrs. Marion Fee, and Mrs. Mary Bolton.

to add a dimension of cohesiveness to the Conference."⁵³ The members of the staff were each inducted into their offices in a special service of worship at the annual meeting of Conference, in which service the members of Conference affirmed their support for their staff.

c) An Appraisal of Regionalism -- As the United Church moved from centralized leadership to regional development in the early 1970s, there was some serious concern among national churchmen that the witness of the Church would be fragmented. Typical of a negative reaction was that of Rev. Angus McQueen, a former Moderator, who equated regionalism with 'an intense provincialism'. He said:

The trouble [with regionalism] is that while our priorities and structures become more local, the problems facing our modern age become more global and are not going to be met effectively by a pre-occupation with local issues. ... What concerns me is the reversion to narrow horizons and insularity. ... An intense provincialism is a denial of the universal mission of the Church.⁵⁴

Of course there was concern with local issues. This was part of the region's responsibility, a responsibility that had too often been ignored by national staff in past years, but there was no 'pre-occupation' with these to the exclusion of wider needs. The criticism of 'reversion to narrow horizons and

53. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1974, p. 70

54. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, May, 1973, pp. 50-51

insularity' and denying 'the universal mission of the Church' was convincingly countered by the expanding horizons and the growing world consciousness of the Conferences. Two examples will illustrate this development.

First, there was the Block Grant Consultation, an annual meeting of representatives from all Conferences to decide on the most equitable distribution of available funds for home mission projects across the Church. This was the end result of a process that began with those congregations and projects that required financial support, meeting in the Presbytery to determine what was necessary and fair; then the Presbytery representatives meeting in the Conference to consider all these requests within the proposed mission budget; and finally the national consultation in which Conferences negotiated face-to-face until agreement was reached. Rather than promoting provincialism this process fostered mutual understanding and co-operation. It was good for the regions, and it was good for the national Church.

Second, there were the regular seminars in which the Conference executive secretaries met with the secretaries of the national Divisions to discuss regional, national, and global concerns. These meetings helped develop a better understanding not only of the aspirations of the Church in the different Conferences, but of the people in those Conferences as citizens of Canada as well as members of the United Church.

This, too, was mutually beneficial to both the national and the regional Church.

One result of regional development, as pointed out by The Observer in an editorial,⁵⁵ was the weakening of the traditional powers of the Division secretaries in Toronto, and an increase in the responsibilities of the Conference staff. How well the Conferences exercised this authority and responsibility is a measure of the success of regionalism. There was a necessary emphasis on the needs of the Presbyteries and the pastoral charges, and in Bay of Quinte, as throughout the Church, the positive results of having a resident regional staff were evident.

From an administrative standpoint, there was a more efficient and a more effective Conference; a better and more co-ordinated and productive field services system and committee structure; an improved communication among Presbyteries, and between Conference and General Council; a more consistent interpretation of Church policies and actions; and an opportunity for realistic long-range planning and implementation because of continuity in the Conference office.

From the standpoint of people in the Presbyteries and the pastoral charges, there were more opportunities for 'self-improvement' in training events and workshops locally

55. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, October, 1973, p. 13

designed for church officials, teachers, secretaries, treasurers, and presbyters; in stewardship education and financial planning; in pastors' groups; in the development of 'local' resources; and in improved personnel policies and pastoral relations procedures.

Regionalism, by these standards, must be judged a success. And not to be overlooked in the history of regionalism, and in its successful implementation, is Rev. John Leng of the Bay of Quinte Conference. He served as secretary of those General Council committees that were responsible for the development of regionalism and Conference staff, and was a master of administration and organization, a man ideally suited to guide the General Council Conference Staff Committee during its formative years. On the occasion of his retirement in 1975, the Bay of Quinte Conference paid him a modest tribute "for the fine work he has done in his present position."⁵⁶

In his report to the 1973 annual meeting of Conference, the Executive Secretary noted the challenge confronting the Church in those years of change:

If one word sums up the new situation in the Church it is 'regionalism' -- the transferring of many responsibilities from the National to the Conference, yet maintaining a strong sense of belonging to the national Church. This autonomy has made, and will increasingly make, for a more realistic relating

56. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1975, p. 170

of our dollars to our needs, a greater flexibility of action, a greater mobility of resources, and a more immediate and sensitive reserve of leadership skills available to those who will make use of them.

In this new situation we have, of necessity, employed the techniques of trial and error -- some things have worked, and we shall continue to capitalize on these; other things have failed, and these we have already discarded. ... It would be unrealistic to expect unanimous approval for the course of action Conference has chosen to take, and so faults and flaws could be found by those who sought them. But this is a risk we are willing to take, for the unacceptable alternative is to do nothing. As we continue to experiment and to explore, we ask for your co-operation. We are confident you will let us know if we have gone too far ... or not far enough!⁵⁷

Those years of change, 1960-1975, brought the realization of Bay of Quinte's long-held desire for more self-determination in its own affairs. They were years of exploring the many possibilities of regionalism and developing wider opportunities for witness and service as a stronger, more mature Conference within a stronger national Church.

3. Church Union: Failure and Success

The United Church of Canada, born of the union of the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational churches, and committed to seek the fulfillment of Christ's prayer "that all may be one" (John 17:22), was, by its own Basis of Union, pledged to be a 'uniting' as well as a 'united' church. The

57. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1973, p. 54

stated policy of the United Church was:

... to foster the spirit of unity in the hope that this sentiment of unity may in due time, so far as Canada is concerned, take shape in a Church which may fittingly be described as national.⁵⁸

The United Church has been true to its policy, and has always been open and receptive to union discussions with any other churches in the hope of achieving some positive results that would diminish the scandal of a denominationally divided Protestantism in Canada.⁵⁹

In its fifty year history the United Church has been enriched by two small unions. In 1930 the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Bermuda (11 congregations, 775 members) became part of the United Church, as did the Evangelical United Brethren Church (62 congregations, 10,170 members) in 1968. At various other times from 1925 to 1975 ten individual congregations of other Christian denominations were accepted into the United Church of Canada.⁶⁰ And for thirty-two of the first fifty

58. The United Church of Canada, The Manual, Toronto, United Church Publishing House, 1978, p. 11

59. The term 'Protestantism' is used in this thesis to refer to that system of Christian faith and practice as distinguished from 'Roman Catholicism', and includes the Anglican Church. This term presents some difficulty for many Anglicans who consider themselves a 'via media' between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. It was a 'divided Protestantism' rather than the larger issue of a 'divided Christianity' that was the immediate concern of the United Church in the church union negotiations with the Anglican Church; but a complete union of all Christian churches is the ultimate goal of the United Church of Canada.

60. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1975, Vol. 2, p. iv

years the United Church was engaged in union negotiations with the Anglican Church of Canada.

Two proposals for church union will be considered in this section: one that succeeded, and one that failed. In 1968, eight years of negotiations were brought to a successful conclusion with the union between the Canada Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the United Church of Canada. Unfortunately, the same outcome did not issue from the union negotiations between the Anglican and the United churches for in 1975, after thirty-two years of discussion, the Anglican Church decided that previously approved plans for union with the United Church were no longer acceptable and terminated the process.

a) The Union Plan that Failed -- The Anglican and the United churches had been engaged in church union talks since 1943 when the United Church accepted the invitation of the Anglican Church to discuss unity.⁶¹ The war years had been conducive to co-operation among the churches, as evidenced by the formation of the Canadian Council of Churches in 1944 and in an increasingly active ecumenical spirit. The United and Anglican churches felt a special responsibility for giving leadership in co-operative ventures, as between them they

61. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1944, p. 179

represented two-thirds of the Protestant population of the country.

While the Anglican and United churches had been engaged in union negotiations since 1943, and had been committed to organic union since 1950,⁶² it was not until 1963 that any definite action had been taken with regard to preparing a plan of union.⁶³ During these twenty years the discussions focussed on doctrinal questions, the defence of denominational positions, and the differences between episcopal and conciliar systems of church polity. There was some co-operation in rural mission projects, and the courteous and formal exchange of fraternal greetings and good wishes at each other's gatherings, but little real progress.

The 1958 General Council recognized that an "unmistakable apathy in this matter has replaced earlier enthusiasm,"⁶⁴ and showed its frustration with the limited results of the church union discussion by expressing doubts about the sincerity of the Anglican Church:

The time has come when, in our judgment, the Anglican Church of Canada should make plain whether it really wishes to continue these conversations, or whether it now desires to terminate them. For our part, we declare that the United Church of Canada is willing to continue with patience the slow

62. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1950, p. 149

63. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1964, p. 432

64. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1958, p. 220

process of such spiritual exploration, so long as it is carried on in good faith. Our Church is committed to the quest of larger unions and we cannot be true to our own ideals and allow the discouragements of any single moment to lessen our zeal in the cause to which we have pledged our best endeavour.⁶⁵

The Anglican Committee on Reunion responded to the concerns expressed in the United Church's statement, and deeply regretted "the impression that appears to have been given to the United Church that we have not been serious in our efforts towards reunion."⁶⁶ The response continued:

We are keenly aware of the difficulties and disappointments that have been encountered in the course of the conversations ... [but] record our continued conviction that the unity of the Church is the will of God and that therefore it is the bounden duty of all Christians to work unceasingly towards this end. We unanimously agree that we should continue conversations with the United Church in all sincerity and good faith.⁶⁷

The United Church welcomed the opportunity the Anglican response presented to continue the union conversations, and reaffirmed its pledge to seek organic union with the Anglican Church as the final goal of this endeavour.⁶⁸

The publication in 1960 of a study guide on church union, 'Growth in Understanding', was a modest step forward. All the Presbyteries in the Bay of Quinte Conference arranged

65. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1958, p. 221

66. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1960, p. 439

67. Ibid., p. 439

68. Ibid., p. 440

study groups, as requested by the General Council. Renfrew Presbytery's action was typical:

We express our concern for the disunity of the Church, and give voice to our wholehearted support of the use of the booklet 'Growth in Understanding' in joint study groups of Anglican and United Church people.⁶⁹

This concern and openness was communicated to Bishop Reed of the Diocese of Ottawa, and resulted in several joint study sessions. It was by such meetings that the question of union was kept before the two churches until a major breakthrough was achieved in 1965 with the publication of 'Principles of Union'.

This document, the combined work of the two churches' union committees, dealt with the basic principles of faith and order and overcame a major obstacle to union with the Anglican recognition and acceptance of United Church ministries and memberships as valid.⁷⁰ In 'Principles of Union', subsequently adopted by both churches, full and unanimous agreement was reached on "the essential elements in the faith and order of the Church, and the main principles that should govern the union of the two churches."⁷¹ The adoption of

69. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, November 22, 1961, p. 1392

70. Principles of Union, Toronto, The Anglican Church of Canada and The United Church of Canada, 1965, p. 12

71. Ibid., p. 7

'Principles of Union' by the Anglican General Synod in 1965 and the United Church General Council in 1966, as a statement upon which to proceed in negotiating union,⁷² gave fresh impetus to union discussions and moved them beyond an emphasis on bargaining to one of trust in which the valid traditions of each church would be honoured in a new and visible expression in structure, worship, and witness in the new Church.

In September and October, 1965, all Presbyteries in the Bay of Quinte Conference held special study sessions on the 'Principles of Union', many of which were led by Professor Donald Mathers of Queen's who was one of the authors. The action of Peterborough Presbytery was typical of the Conference's response in approving both the principle of union and the 'Principles of Union', and calling for renewed effort in practical co-operation with the Anglican Church in rural mission areas.⁷³ For three years there was an evident spirit of goodwill and sharing in joint study groups and worship services, especially in Belleville and Kingston Presbyteries and the Diocese of Ontario, whose boundaries were practically identical. This was mainly due to the open support of union and co-operation by Bishop Kenneth Evans.⁷⁴ By 1970, however,

72. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1966, p. 578

73. U.C.A., Peterborough Presbytery: Minutes, Sept. 28, 1965, p. 21

74. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1968, p. 66

the mood had changed, and interest in union was dissipating in both churches.

A Council for the Defence of the Faith was formed, and warned the Anglican Church that union on the basis of the 'Principles of Union' would result in schism.⁷⁵ The Primate of the Anglican Church, Archbishop Howard Clark, admitted publicly that he could detect no grass-roots movement towards organic union in his church, and the Moderator of the United Church, Rev. Wilfred Lockhart, agreed that the interest in his church was also at a low ebb.⁷⁶ It was recognized by the Conference that many co-operative programs with the Anglicans were of relatively little value, and not worth the effort, the time, or the money to maintain.⁷⁷ Professor Stuart Ryan of the Law Faculty at Queen's University, an active pro-unionist and Chancellor of the Diocese of Ontario, told the meeting of the Synod in Kingston in 1970: "Interest in union is falling off. The climate for union isn't as good as it was in 1965."⁷⁸

The highlight of 1971 was the joint session of the Anglican General Synod and the United Church General Council

75. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, May 1, 1968, p. 13

76. Ibid., p. 13

77. B.Q.A., B.Q. Union Committee: Minutes, December 3, 1969

78. Kingston Whig-Standard, News item, May 28, 1970, p. 21

in Niagara Falls in January. The setting gave rise to many jokes in the press about 'premarital honeymooning', but, as it turned out, there would be no 'wedding'. One of the few tangible results of the union talks was the agreement to publish a joint Anglican-United Church hymn book. The hymn book was actually published, and is presently in wide use in both churches. The secretary of the Hymn Book Committee was Rev. Stanley Osborne of the Bay of Quinte Conference, a man of recognized ability in the field of church music. Each of the churches elected an ardent pro-unionist to lead it during the slow walk towards union, Edward Scott as Primate of the Anglican Church and Arthur Moore as Moderator of the United Church. The first draft of 'Plan of Union' was accepted and commended to the two churches for study.⁷⁹

The next year, 1972, was marked by a noticeably deteriorating attitude towards union. Three examples from Bay of Quinte illustrate the situation as it existed in Conference. In March a consultation was held in Kingston with members of the union committees of Belleville and Kingston Presbyteries and their counterparts in the Diocese of Ontario. Also present were the Secretary of the General Council, the Primate of the Anglican Church, and the two Executive Commissioners of the Commission on Church Union. It was hoped that

⁷⁹. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1971, pp. 67, 38, 63

the consultation would provide a model for 'Mission in the mid-Seventies', but very little was accomplished except to make clear to the United Church what had been suspected since the death of Bishop Evans, that church union was a 'dead issue' in the Diocese and in the Conference. Bishop Evans, a strong pro-union advocate, was succeeded by Bishop John Creeggan, a conservative anti-unionist. In a letter to the Secretary of the General Council, Mr. John Black, President of Bay of Quinte Conference, noted the complete cessation of co-operation in the area since Bishop Evans' death:

It is my feeling that even though Bishop Creeggan assures us of his support of an ecumenical thrust such as is planned, I am equally sure that the climate which he has obtained in the Diocese of Ontario toward Church Union must influence the outcome and therefore if it is proceeded with the success of a joint venture will probably be in spite of the apparent lack of enthusiasm to share in any venture which might produce organic union.⁸⁰

No 'joint venture' was forthcoming from this consultation and, in effect, it marked the last official attempt at union negotiations and co-operation between the two churches in the Bay of Quinte Conference region in this period.

In mid-March, Rev. Ernest Long, Secretary of the General Council, was again in Kingston. In an address to the Presbytery, and reported by the press, he said that he was becoming impatient with Anglican opposition to church union,

80. B.Q.A., Letter, Black to Long, Feb. 28, 1972

"some of it on the grounds of tradition, some on doctrine, and some seems sheer unwillingness to change."⁸¹ The opposition on grounds of doctrine was the most difficult for the United Church to understand, inasmuch as agreement on matters of doctrine had been reached in 'Principles of Union' in 1965.

The third example of deterioration of attitudes to union is seen in the response to attempts to spark interest in studying the first draft of the proposed 'Plan of Union'. The report of Oshawa Presbytery's efforts is revealing, seeing that of the forty-eight copies of this proposal sent out to Anglican and United Church clergy in the area, only eleven replies were received, and a tabulation of these responses showed "that apathy towards church union is widespread."⁸² Oshawa's Church Union Committee admitted to being 'disenchanted', and only reluctantly agreed to continue its work. Belleville Presbytery also seriously considered disbanding its church union committee because of the apparent unwillingness of the Anglican Church to co-operate, but retained the committee because of the United Church's long-standing commitment to church union.⁸³

81. Kingston Whig-Standard, News item, March 15, 1972, p. 7

82. U.C.A., Oshawa Presbytery: Minutes, June 15, 1972, p. 300

83. U.C.A., Belleville Presbytery: Minutes, March 14, 1972, p. 2861

The revised 'Plan of Union' was published in 1973, and commended to the Presbyteries for study. It was a well prepared document, incorporating the suggested revisions from the Presbyteries, and was well-received by the church's leaders. However, it was not received with any enthusiasm by the Presbyteries. This was understandable, as it was the fourth study document in thirteen years, and by that time most United Church people had little real expectation that union with the Anglican Church would be realized. The United Church was obviously becoming weary with suggestions for co-operation and study, when it appeared that the Anglican Church was engaged in an ecclesiastical charade. This feeling was supported by an article in the Ecumenical Digest which asked:

Is Anglican credibility and honour to be trusted? Are Anglicans really serious when they enter into negotiations, or does their innate politeness prevent them from speaking the truth to other churches?⁸⁴

Perhaps it was also politeness, or at least an unwillingness to admit the inevitable, but at its fiftieth annual meeting in May, 1974, the Bay of Quinte Conference made its last official effort to keep the church union issue before its people. Rev. Arthur Moore, a former Moderator and a leading proponent of church union, said to the Conference: "We are a uniting Church, and the best way of celebrating

84. Ecumenical Digest, October/November, 1973, p. 2

our fiftieth anniversary is to move towards this further church union."⁸⁵ There was a lengthy discussion of the subject of church union, at the conclusion of which Rev. Elias Andrews, a former President of Conference and a past Principal of Queen's asked:

Where is the spirit of faith and adventure as we face this new manifestation of the Church? The genius of the United Church is to be a uniting church, and if we back away from union now we shall be unfaithful to our heritage. Let this Bay of Quinte Conference reaffirm our faith in Church Union.⁸⁶

The Conference then unanimously approved the following resolution :

That this 50th Annual Meeting of the Bay of Quinte Conference go on record as reaffirming our commitment to Church Union; and that in this Golden Jubilee Year, through our Division of Mission, this Conference do its utmost to involve our Presbyteries and our congregations in a Conference-wide study of 'Plan of Union'.⁸⁷

This resolution, in spite of its appeal to anniversary sentiment, was unable to generate any enthusiasm in the Conference and, apart from a few dutiful and scattered efforts at study, 'Plan of Union' remained a relatively unused document.

The General Council met in Guelph, Ontario in August, 1974, with Church Union being a priority item on the agenda

85. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1974, p. 137

86. Ibid., p. 138

87. Ibid., p. 139

and the subject of much debate and concern. On the evening of August 22nd, the Council voted on the recommendation of its Committee on Church Union, and by an overwhelming majority (with only four dissenting votes) gave "general approval to the Plan of Union" as representing "the direction in which the United Church should move."⁸⁸ Rev. Edward Scott, Primate of the Anglican Church, who was present as the result of the vote was announced, said to the Council: "In all honesty, I do not expect the Anglican General Synod will be this enthusiastic."⁸⁹

The Primate's apprehensions were picked up in an article in the Anglican paper:

In contrast to the United Church, whose General Council has overwhelmingly approved Plan of Union, the Anglican Church is looking to its first vote on the Plan with hesitation, confusion, and a gradually solidifying opposition from its bishops. ... The focus of their discontent is the section in the Plan of Union on episcopacy which limits and defines the bishop and his role in a way Anglican tradition has never done.⁹⁰

As it happened, the Plan of Union never came to a vote in the General Synod. The House of Bishops, meeting in Toronto in February, 1975, issued the following statement: "Plan of Union in its present form is unacceptable; most of

88. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1974, p. 68

89. U.C.A., The U.C. Observer, October, 1974, p. 16

90. The Canadian Churchman, November, 1974, p. 32

us doubt that there is serious hope for a successful outcome to a further revision process."⁹¹ Two days later, February 6th, 1975, the National Executive Council of the Anglican Church upheld the action of the bishops by affirming "that Plan of Union in its present form is not acceptable."⁹²

Rev. Donald Ray, Deputy Secretary of the General Council, issued a letter to the ministers and members of the United Church, in which he said:

As United Church people we can feel disappointed and frustrated and even angry when what we believe to be our will to achieve union seems not to be matched by others. Nevertheless, the fact of church union is so much a part of the fabric of the United Church of Canada, that we are called to show to the Churches of our Lord that with patience and grace, we will continue to be ready to enter into or to continue negotiations towards organic union with any interested Christian body. . . . This is part of Canadian church history taking place in our Fiftieth Anniversary Year!⁹³

The general reaction of the United Church to what had happened was one of disappointment, but quiet acceptance. Anglican reaction, judging from articles in their church paper, had in it a note of apology. Canon Peter Tett, of the Diocese of Ontario said:

It was unfortunate that their [the bishops] statement was so late in coming. I had feelings of guilt and sadness, because I think that the Anglican

91. The Canadian Churchman, March, 1975, pp. 1, 8

92. Ibid., p. 9

93. Letter, Ray to the United Church, Feb. 14, 1975

Church has been dishonest in this whole affair. There has been far too much double talk on the part of Anglicans towards union, and this recent move to scrap the Plan of Union has led to a loss of credibility on the part of the Anglican Church.⁹⁴

An editorial in The Canadian Churchman echoed Tett's sentiments. It said, in part:

For many years now the Anglican Church has professed a desire to work towards unity with specific churches and with all churches. Recent events on union have brought Anglican credibility into question and much work must now be done throughout the Church before any other denomination will look this way for union.⁹⁵

In November, 1975, the United Church, through the Executive of its General Council, offered the Anglican Church

... a moratorium on negotiations toward organic union until such time as that Church expresses a firm desire to resume such negotiations with the goal of a new embodiment of Christ's Church in Canada.⁹⁶

The Anglican Church accepted the moratorium, and thirty-two years of negotiations for church union formally came to an abrupt end.

The question must be asked: Why did the church union negotiations between the Anglican and United churches end in failure? The discussions began in 1943 in a spirit of friendly co-operation, and while there had been an unspoken

94. The Ontario Churchman, March, 1975, p. 1

95. The Canadian Churchman, July/August, 1975, p. 4

96. U.C.A., U.C.C. Year Book: 1976, Vol. 2, p. 6

'understanding' between the two churches, there was no formal document upon which to proceed until 'Principles of Union' in 1965. Until this commitment, union had remained comfortably in the distant future, but when union became a definite prospect in the foreseeable future it created some difficult tensions for the Anglican Church which it seemed not prepared to face. This did not present a problem to the United Church for whom church union was literally a way of life. Although the problems of non-episcopal confirmation and ordination, intercommunion, and women clergy were all 'officially' overcome during the negotiations, they remained as insuperable barriers to many Anglicans. Another factor in the failure of the church union talks was the threat of schism that faced the Anglican Church with the formation of the Council for the Defence of the Faith. This small but vocal group, led by Rev. Carman de Catanzaro of Peterborough, provided a rallying point for the 'anti-unionists' within the Anglican Church.

Rev. Robert B. Craig, of Peterborough Presbytery, was the Executive Secretary of the Anglican and United churches' Committee on Union and Joint Mission, and was completely familiar with all aspects of the church union negotiations. It was his considered opinion that the major reason for the failure of these negotiations was on the principle of organic union, as accepted by both churches in 1965 in 'Principles of Union'. In 1975 the bishops, and the National Executive

Council of the Anglican Church, rejected 'Plan of Union' as 'unacceptable', but they did not state in what way it was unacceptable. However, it seems reasonable to conclude that the motive for withdrawing from the union negotiations was the inability, or the unwillingness, of the bishops to envision organic union and the time when the Anglican Church of Canada, as such, would no longer exist.⁹⁷

Was the United Church in no way responsible for the failure of the church union negotiations? It would seem unrealistic to place the blame entirely on one side, yet it is a matter of record that the United Church voted overwhelmingly for church union while the Anglican Church rejected it.

b) The Union that Succeeded -- January 1st, 1968 marked the consummation of union between the Canada Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church and the United Church of Canada. The Evangelical United Brethren Church was relatively unknown in Canada apart from Western Ontario and the Ottawa Valley.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church was formed in 1946 as the result of a union of the Evangelical Church and the United Brethren in Christ Church. These two churches originated in Pennsylvania in the early nineteenth century as missionary responses to the spiritual needs of the German

97. Letter, Craig to Price, August 27, 1976, p. 1

settlers in the area. Jacob Albright, a former Lutheran who became a Methodist lay preacher, was the founder of the Evangelical Church; and Philip Otterbein, a minister of the Reformed Church in Germany, and Martin Boehm, a German-American Mennonite, together founded the United Brethren in Christ Church. Each of these churches shared a common Methodist background, and borrowed heavily from Methodist doctrine and polity. They often worked together in close co-operation in new communities of German-speaking immigrants.

In the early 1800s, in the exodus following the American Revolution, many settlers from Pennsylvania moved north to Ontario (then Upper Canada). By the 1830s, in response to requests from these German-speaking people, missionaries from these two churches had come to what is now the Kitchener-Waterloo area and had established classes and congregations. By 1865 the work of the Evangelical Church in Ontario had developed sufficiently to warrant the organization of a separate Canada Conference. One of the first acts of the new Conference was to send a missionary, Rev. Frederick Scharffe, from its stronghold in Western Ontario to the German-speaking immigrants who were then settling in Renfrew County in the Ottawa Valley. By 1867 Scharffe had organized congregations in Pembroke and Locksley.⁹⁸

98. Henry Getz, in The Canadian Evangel, Spring, 1969, pp. 3-4, 24-25

The similarity in doctrine and practice inspired the Canada Conference of the Evangelical Church to seek union with the Methodist Church in Canada in 1890, and again in 1911, but each time its petition to the General Conference in the United States was refused.⁹⁹ Meanwhile, in 1911, the Ontario Conference of the United Brethren in Christ Church (1,400 members) united with the Congregational Union of Canada, and through the Congregationalists came into the United Church of Canada in the union of 1925.¹⁰⁰ The Evangelical Church, while being quite open to union, did not enter into the union negotiations of 1925 because of its involvement at that time in establishing a new missionary work in western Canada, the Northwest Conference, which came into being in 1926.

In 1945, with the Evangelical Church and the United Brethren in Christ Church in the final stages of negotiations which led to union in 1946 in the United States, the Canada Conference of the Evangelical Church considered whether to remain associated with the parent body in the United States or to seek union with the United Church of Canada. There had been some union discussions between the two churches in the 1930s, but nothing came of these. A ten-man Joint Committee

99. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1946, p. 200

100. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1966, p. 558

on Union of the two churches worked out a draft basis of union in 1945 (very similar to the one that was accepted in 1966), but the matter was tabled,¹⁰¹ and nothing more was proposed until 1960. However, cordial and co-operative relationships between the two churches was maintained.

The proposals for union between the Evangelical United Brethren and the United churches began in earnest in 1960, with the two churches recognizing a common Methodist heritage and a close similarity in both doctrine and practice. Because of union negotiations then going on in the United States between the Evangelical United Brethren and the Methodist churches, the Evangelical United Brethren Church in Canada had to decide whether to become part of the Methodist Church in the United States, to remain a small independent church in Canada, or to seek union with the United Church of Canada. In 1962 the General Conference in the United States authorized the Canada Conference to proceed with negotiations with the United Church of Canada. In 1964 a plan of union, called 'A Consensus', was prepared by a Joint Committee on Union, and subsequently approved by the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1965 and by the United Church of Canada in 1966.¹⁰²

101. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1946, p. 202

102. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1968, p. 452

The necessary legislation was sought and secured from the province of Ontario, and the Evangelical United Brethren Church, in accord with its constitutional law, declared that:

The Canada Conference on the first day of January 1968 shall become a part of The United Church of Canada and be known as The United Church of Canada. The United Church of Canada on and after the first day of January, 1968 shall be the ecclesiastical and legal successor to the Canada Conference.¹⁰³

The Service of Consummation was held in Zion Church, Kitchener, with more than one thousand persons in attendance. The Moderator of the United Church, Rev. Wilfred Lockhart, received representatives of the ministers, missionaries, and congregations, following which he declared "the Canada Conference to be received into the United Church of Canada."¹⁰⁴ The whole service was described as a moving and memorable demonstration of unity.

At the time of union the Canada Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church had 10,170 members, sixty-two congregations in forty-four pastoral charges, and forty-five ministers; of which 1,169 members, nine congregations in four pastoral charges, and four ministers were within the area of the Renfrew Presbytery in the Bay of Quinte Conference.¹⁰⁵ Renfrew Presbytery was represented by its chairman

103. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1968, p. 452

104. Ibid., p. 452

105. U.C.A., U.C.C. Record of Proceedings: 1966, p. 558; U.C.C. Year Book: 1969, Vol. 1, pp. 44-45

at the final meeting of the Canada Conference in October, 1967; and Renfrew invited the four ministers of the Canada Conference (Revs. Bauman, Culp, Getz, and Shatto) to be its guests at the November, 1967 meeting of Presbytery.¹⁰⁶

The 1968 annual meeting of the Bay of Quinte Conference welcomed these four ministers and their congregations to the fellowship of the Conference and the United Church at the opening session:

The Canada Conference of the Evangelical United Brethren Church is now part of the United Church of Canada. This is a significant event in the life of our Conference as nine congregations and four pastors come within our bounds. We welcome them most sincerely.¹⁰⁷

The one discordant note in the otherwise harmonious union within the Bay of Quinte Conference was the discontent of Rev. John Culp, who requested to be transferred from the United Church to the Northwest Conference of the Evangelical Church (which had remained out of the Union). His discontent was reflected in two of the three congregations on his pastoral charge, with the result that Augsburg and Killaloe petitioned Renfrew Presbytery to withdraw their congregations from the United Church.¹⁰⁸ The Presbytery appointed a small

106. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, Nov. 1, 1967, p. 1771

107. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1968, p. 66

108. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, April 15, 1969, p. 1903

committee to meet with the congregations, and, when it became apparent that they were determined to leave, made the necessary arrangements for dissolving the Golden Lake Pastoral Charge and transferring the members from Killaloe and Augsburg who wished to remain with the United Church to the congregation at Golden Lake. Of the dissidents, Renfrew Presbytery said: "We still regard them as brothers in Christ, and they go with our blessing."¹⁰⁹

Apart from this unfortunate 'secession' of two small congregations of eighty-six members, the union has worked out very well. Looking back at eight years of union in the Bay of Quinte Conference, the tangible results of the union are these:

- 1) The Conference gained 1,169 members, nine congregations, and four ministers; but subsequently lost eighty-six members, two congregations, and one minister by 'secession'.

- 2) Of the four former Evangelical United Brethren Church ministers, only one was still serving his former congregation (Rev. Henry Getz, at Zion in Pembroke); and five former Evangelical United Brethren Church ministers were serving United Church congregations. This provided a wider field of service for these five ministers than would have been possible before the union, and also gave the United Church members in

¹⁰⁹. U.C.A., Renfrew Presbytery: Minutes, May 12, 1969, p. 1926

those congregations an opportunity to gain an appreciation of a slightly more evangelical approach to the Christian faith than they had previously experienced.

3) That the former Evangelical United Brethren Church ministers were received without discrimination is seen in the fact that one of them was called to Cambridge Street United Church in Lindsay, one of the largest congregations in the Conference, and four of them were elected as chairmen of three different Presbyteries.

4) Former Evangelical United Brethren Church members who moved to other parts of the Conference where there had not been one of their congregations, now had a church home in the United Church:

5) The Conference gained an excellent campsite and real estate in the Golden Lake Camp property.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church enriched the United Church by a small but significant addition to the quality of its work and witness in the successful union of 1968. And while there was disappointment that the union with the Anglican Church failed to be achieved, it was not without its positive aspects. There were benefits from the years of union negotiations, and these must neither be lost nor forgotten. Even without the organic union for which the United Church worked in its discussions with the Anglican Church,

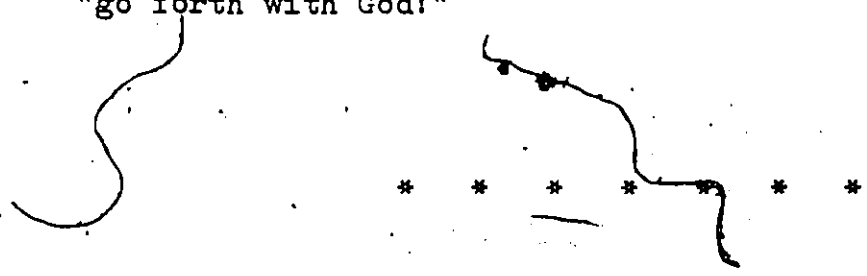
the unity for which Christ prayed (John 17:21) was perhaps a step closer. There had been improved co-operation in rural mission projects, and some good experiences in 'shared ministries'. The occasional celebration of intercommunion has done much to heal the wound at the Lord's Table, and there was a better appreciation for each other's traditions. The United Church had made a sincere, and a partially successful, attempt to diminish the scandal of a denominationally divided Protestantism in Canada, and remained open to further unions.

The program of amalgamations and realignments of the 1960s resulted in a more consolidated and viable Conference, and was recognized as a creative approach to correcting the problem of the overchurched rural areas of the Conference, and served as a model for other parts of the United Church. By the mid 1970s regionalism had become an established fact, and resulted in a more efficient and responsive Conference, encouraged with a new dimension of self-determination in its own affairs, and enabled to take a more responsible role in a stronger and more united national Church.

The Bay of Quinte Conference came to its Golden Jubilee in the same spirit of gratitude and adventure that was so evident in its inaugural meeting in 1925.¹¹⁰ At the annual

110. B.Q.A., B.Q. Year Book: 1925, pp. 3-4; 1975, pp. 137-138

meeting in Peterborough in 1975, more than 400 delegates met in the Market Plaza early on Sunday evening, May 25th, then marched in a joyful procession to the Memorial Centre, as their 'fathers in the faith' had marched to Toronto's Mutual Street Arena on June 10th, 1925. There they joined in a great congregation with the 6,500 persons already assembled, the largest crowd to ever attend any event in the Centre, to worship God and to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of Church Union, to reflect on the history of the Bay of Quinte Conference and the many tests that had challenged them, and to find in that reflection and worship a renewed reason to continue the pilgrimage into the future as they prepared to "go forth with God!"



* * * * *

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

This thesis has considered the history of the Bay of Quinte Conference from its Inauguration in 1925 to the celebration of its Golden Jubilee in 1975. In the half century under examination a number of important topics appropriate to the subject have been discussed. Throughout these fifty years the Bay of Quinte Conference, a region with a unique and historic past, had developed into a strong, viable, and integral unit within the United Church of Canada, sharing with the other Conferences in demonstrating the success of Church Union. A brief résumé and a word of interpretation of this history is all that remains to be presented.

The first settlers in the Bay of Quinte region were the United Empire Loyalists who had left their homes in the United States after the American Revolution and moved north in the 1780s, bringing little with them except their loyalty to Britain and a pioneering spirit. The challenge of the frontier tested their pioneering spirit, and the War of 1812 tested their loyalty. These people stood the test, and their combination of loyalty to British tradition and an affinity for American democracy and ingenuity, but a determination to be something other than 'American' and something more than 'British' resulted in the 'Bay of Quinte character'. Racially British-American, politically conservative, economically

thrifty, culturally imitative, rural and hard-working, proud of their Loyalist past and pleased that theirs was the homeland of the first settlers and the cradle of religion in the province of Ontario, these pioneers and the later immigrants from Britain and the United States gave the region its individuality, traces of which are still evident.

The churches, especially the Methodist which was the most indigenous of Canadian churches and the first to be independent of either British or American control and was the predominant church in the region, played a significant role in the political and social life of the people and in shaping the character of the community. For the three uniting churches, Congregationalist, Presbyterian, and Methodist, the recollection of their ancestors leaving the settled and the familiar for the unknown and the unexplored, their discovery of the benefits of a blended heritage, their experience of each being a united church, and a willingness to 'go forth with God' in a further adventure, were factors in preparing them for joining together in the Union of 1925 to form the United Church of Canada.

The Bay of Quinte Conference, birthplace of two of the three 'fathers of Church Union', and the cradle of both Presbyterianism and Methodism in Ontario, came into being with the other Conferences on June 10th, 1925. The Methodists were careful to make both the Congregationalists and the

Presbyterians welcome in the Conference that bore an historic Methodist name and was predominantly Methodist in number. In many ways the graciousness and generosity of the Methodists, after Union as before, was a major factor in the success of Church Union, and the new Church was never seriously threatened by divisions along former denominational lines. The theology of the United Church, essentially conservative, was readily accepted in a conservative Conference by each of the three uniting churches. The first years were concerned with the organization of the Conference and the consolidation of the Union, and saw the emergence of a strong and viable United Church in the Conference, a Church whose strength and viability would be tested in the crisis of a continent-wide Depression in the 1930s.

It is difficult, even in retrospect, to appreciate the impact of the crisis that was The Great Depression. The United Church, with the rest of the country, experienced the distress and the discouragement of that decade. However, the challenge of the troubled and threatening 'thirties' served to strengthen the still young bonds of Church Union. The response of the Bay of Quinte Conference to the urgent needs of the drought-stricken West gave tangible evidence to its people of the reality and success of Church Union, and was a significant factor in the development of a Church more united in spirit and in purpose, nationally and in the Conference,

and more firmly established in the loyalty and affection of its members. The United Church would need this unity of spirit and purpose, plus a strength beyond itself, to survive the six years of testing that began in September, 1939.

The United Church, as other churches, worked and prayed for peace in the 1930s, but when war broke out in 1939 it gave its full support to the war effort of the nation. For the duration of the war the work of the United Church was severely curtailed by a shortage of ministers due to so many serving as chaplains in the armed forces, by a shortage of finances, and by a distraction of its attention and a diversion of its vitality by overseas events. Those six years, 1939-1945, were a 'holding operation' for the Church on the 'home front'. When World War II ended, the Church was poised on the threshold of a period of unprecedented opportunity and expansion, with its wartime energies and resources available and ready to be channelled into the resumption of its work which had been interrupted by the war. This, in part, helped to explain the spectacular growth of the United Church in the post-war years.

Canada's post-war period of prosperity and growth in population challenged the resources of the United Church. The prosperous reality and optimistic attitude of the country was reflected in the Church's strong financial position. By 1950 the debt that had plagued the Church for twenty years

had been paid in full, releasing the Church's money and energy for creative advances in mission. From 1945 to 1960 the United Church experienced a spectacular growth in membership, partly accountable to the phenomena of three major evangelistic campaigns, which was accompanied by an unprecedented program of church building and expansion. But this 'boom' could not continue unabated, and by 1960 there were signs that 'the golden age' was over and that the Church would have to summon up all its strength to hold its own against the inroads of an increasingly secular society.

The Evangelical United Brethren Church enriched the United Church by a small but significant addition to its numbers and to the quality of its work and witness in the successful Church Union of 1968. This was partial compensation for the later disappointment of 1975 when, after thirty-two years, union negotiations with the Anglican Church were terminated. The United Church had made a sincere, and partially successful, attempt to diminish the scandal of a divided Protestantism in Canada; and remained open to future unions. The sweeping program of amalgamations and realignments in the Bay of Quinte Conference in the 1960s was widely recognized as a creative approach to correcting the problem of the over-churched rural areas, and served as a model for other parts of the Church. By the mid 1970s regionalism had become an established fact, and resulted in a more efficient and more

effective Conference, encouraged with a new dimension of self-determination in its own affairs and enabled to take a more responsible role within a stronger and more united national Church.

The previous chapters have examined several topics, selected for their importance to the subject and arranged in a sequence within the chronological framework in which the history of the United Church in the Bay of Quinte Conference during the fifty years, 1925-1975, has been presented in this thesis. These topics were selected as being the most important and the most representative, but this writer would recommend several other areas for further research in any future study of the Conference.

These would include a detailed study of the work of Christian Education in the Conference; a consideration of the changing role of Evangelism and Social Service, and its relationship to government in traditional and contemporary issues; and an examination of the history of Home Missions in Bay of Quinte, noting the significance of lay supply and student supply ministries. Two less academic, but interesting and useful, studies would be the compilation of a 'family tree' for all congregations, past and present, in the Conference; and tracing the outcome of resolutions passed by the Presbyteries and the Conference, and the effect they had in changing the direction of Church or government.

The reasons for researching the history of the Bay of Quinte Conference were to examine and assess certain aspects and events in the life of the United Church in the Bay of Quinte from 1925 to 1975; to note the development of the Conference over those fifty years; and to illustrate the fact that Church Union was a success. Out of this research has arisen several recommendations for further study in specific areas; and two major conclusions.

1. The Development of the Conference -- These were busy and eventful years, and much had happened within, and to, the Conference between 1925 and 1975. There were many changes, mostly gradual and well-accepted, as the Conference sought to keep pace with the changing times. The Minutes of the Conference and the Presbyteries during this period depict an active and vital Church as it went about its work in a practical way. The most encompassing and far-reaching of all the changes was the development of regionalism within a centralized church structure. In the early years the region was very secondary to the national church with its strong and able leaders, who established priorities, set goals, and gave explicit instructions to the regions who were expected to meet the assigned requirements. This was understandable and necessary in the formative years. In these years Conference and Presbytery committees were often little more than echoes

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of national committees, as a comparison of their Minutes will confirm. This pattern began to change with a practical post-war approach to the challenge of growth and opportunity. By the 1960s the trend towards greatly increased regional self-determination was evident, with resident field staff, some control of budget, more initiative, and a larger share of responsibility for Conference affairs.

A prime example of this was in the matter of realignments to correct the unacceptable situation of overchurched rural areas. Bay of Quinte Conference recognized a problem in its midst, assessed the situation, and planned and implemented its own course of action without help or interference from the national Church. This successful program, regionally initiated and completed, became a model for other regions in the Church.

The Bay of Quinte Conference developed from a dependent, nationally-directed region in its early years, through a growing awareness of a national consciousness during the Depression and War years, into a strong and responsible region in the 1970s, better enabled to take its place within the national Church (which showed its inherited Methodist genius for organization, and its own vitality and resilience by adapting its structures to new situations), and sharing its concerns, resources, and actions with other regions and with the national Church in a mature, unfragmented, United Church

which, in itself, was a demonstration of the success of the Church Union of 1925.

2. The Success of Church Union -- In the post-union years the United Church was, of necessity, faced with the initial task of organization and consolidation. The organization of the Bay of Quinte Conference was accomplished without any major difficulties. In a region that had been predominantly Methodist, the 'Methodists' were very careful not to overwhelm the 'Presbyterians' and the 'Congregationalists' by the sheer weight of numbers, so for a few years there was an artificial but nonetheless effective arrangement of sharing leadership in Conference and the Presbyteries among the three uniting churches. The task of blending denominational identities was more difficult, but was accomplished by patience and the natural processes of ministers and laity meeting and mingling in church courts, by the movement of former Methodist ministers to former Presbyterian congregations, and vice versa, and by new classes of graduates from the theological colleges being recognized as 'United Church' rather than 'Methodist' or 'Presbyterian'. In the post-war building boom the new churches erected in new suburbs were United Church from the beginning, unencumbered by any denominational background, and this fact further ensured the success of Church Union in the Conference.

The success of the Union in its regional-national aspect was first demonstrated during the Depression when the Bay of Quinte Conference, with other eastern Conferences, responded to the needs of the drought-stricken West with what amounted to a freight train of 260 railway cars of food and clothing. This relief program helped solidify the Union, and made the Conference more aware of the national character of the United Church and of its responsibility within such a Church. In the 1970s the co-operation of the regions with one another and with the national Church was demonstrated by the regular meetings of Conference and national secretaries, the annual meeting of Conference presidents, and the Block Grant consultation at which agreement was reached among the Conferences about mission projects and appropriate funding to support them. In dealing with such issues, priorities, and finances in an atmosphere of mutual trust, the regions came to a better understanding of each other and of the national Church, and of their responsibilities to one another within the whole United Church family.

The 'uniting' aspect of the United Church was manifested in the Bay of Quinte Conference by the reception of a number of congregations from other denominations, in addition to the Union of 1968 with the Evangelical United Brethren Church. Over the years a number of ministers have been received into the United Church by the Conference from other

churches, including the Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Methodist and Presbyterian, from Britain, the United States, and in more recent years from Asian and Caribbean countries.

There was an obvious determination in the Conference to work hard at making Church Union a success. Whatever else may have changed during the years from 1925 to 1975, one thing has remained the same, the certainty that the Church Union of 1925 was a good and a worthwhile venture of faith and that it has been an outstanding success.

The backward look, the retrospect, has its place and its value, especially at the time of reaching a significant milestone such as a fiftieth anniversary. This thesis has provided the opportunity to pause and review the history of the Bay of Quinte Conference, to consider the distance already travelled, to recall the three-fold heritage, to note the development of the Conference, and to find in this pause and recollection a renewed reason to continue the journey, to thank God "our help in ages past, our hope for years to come", and to heed the challenge to "go forth with God!"

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ABSTRACT OF

Go Forth With God! The History of the Bay of Quinte
Conference of the United Church of Canada: 1925-1975¹

The United Church of Canada came into being on June 10th, 1925, bringing together in one new Church all of the Methodists, most of the Congregationalists, and two-thirds of the Presbyterians in Canada. The Bay of Quinte Conference is one of twelve regions within the United Church.

To examine and assess certain selected topics within the general subject of the history of the Bay of Quinte Conference from 1925 to 1975; to note the development of the Conference over those fifty years; and to illustrate the success of Church Union is the purpose of this thesis.

The Bay of Quinte region was homeland to the first settlers in the province, the United Empire Loyalists who arrived from the United States in the 1780s, and cradle of religion in Upper Canada (Ontario), with the Methodists and Presbyterians establishing churches in the 1790s. The churches, especially the Methodist, played a significant role in the development of the region and the province.

The early years of Union saw a predominant Methodist majority determined to make Church Union a success. Careful

1. William Joseph Price, doctoral thesis presented to the Faculty of Theology of Saint Paul University, Ottawa, Ontario, December, 1980, xvii-366 p.

not to overwhelm the other two churches by sheer weight of numbers, and with graciousness and generosity, after Union as before, they made the Presbyterians and Congregationalists welcome in a Conference that bore an historic Methodist name.

The experience of the Great Depression and World War II helped sharpen the national consciousness of the Conference, and it emerged from these troubled years as a stronger region within a more united national Church. The Conference shared in the country's optimistic attitude and post-war prosperity, and enjoyed a spectacular growth in membership and an unprecedented era of church building and expansion. It was enriched by the small but successful union with the Evangelical United Brethren Church in 1968, which compensated to some degree for the later disappointment when thirty-two years of union negotiations with the Anglican Church ended in failure.

A sweeping program of amalgamations and realignments helped solve the problem of an overchurched rural community in the 1960s; and the recognition of the fact of regionalism in the 1970s resulted in a more efficient and more effective Church. The overall impression of those years was that of a vital and active Church, certain that '1925' had been a good and worthwhile adventure and resolved to make Church Union a continuing success.

The Bay of Quinte Conference had developed in its half-century of history from a dependent, nationally-directed region in its early years into a strong and viable Conference by 1975, adapting its structures to cope with changing situations, sharing its resources with the eleven other regions and with the national Church in a mature, unfragmented, United Church of Canada, which in itself was a demonstration of the success of Church Union. The Bay of Quinte Conference, proud of its historic past and confident of its promising future, paused briefly to recall its heritage and celebrate its Golden Jubilee, and then, with renewed purpose, prepared to "go forth with God!"

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