

While British Columbia has a reputation as a highly secular province, it is also true that it contains a strong conservative Protestant, or evangelical, element. N. K. Clifford's suggestion that by the 1930's Western Canadian Protestantism had organized itself into a two-party system composed of liberals and conservatives certainly is credible in the case of British Columbia. (1) In fact, present evidence seems to suggest that B. C.'s conservative Protestant population has become proportionately larger since the 1930's than that of any other province in Canada, including Alberta, usually considered the country's "Bible belt". (2)

Examination of the evangelical population of the province quickly reveals incredible diversity within its ranks. Despite general agreement on doctrines such as the authority of the Bible and the nature of salvation, members can be categorized into a broad range of denominational groupings with variables such as ethnicity, socio-economic status, styles of worship and attitudes towards interdenominational cooperation, education and the wider society often playing key roles in their classification.

One important group of evangelicals in the province is composed of the theological conservatives who remained within the mainline Protestant denominations even though liberalism had reduced evangelicalism to a minority position in most of those denominations by the 1910's. These conservatives were generally of Anglo-Saxon decent, tended to be found in the Presbyterian, Baptist and Anglican denominations and were more concentrated in the Vancouver and Victoria

urban areas than were many other evangelical groups. Their numbers are difficult to determine but it is clear that they played a particularly key role from the 1910's through to the 1940's in founding interdenominational institutions which served the wider conservative Protestant community before the newer and smaller evangelical denominations were able to develop their own institutions.

For several decades Walter Ellis was probably the most influential figure in Vancouver's mainline evangelical community. He made his main contribution while serving in his dual capacity as principal of the Vancouver Bible School from its founding in 1918 until his death in 1944 and as minister of Fairview Presbyterian Church from 1926 until 1944. In addition, he lectured for five years before 1918 at Bishop Latimer Hall, the low-church Anglican theological college, and in 1917 became a prime mover behind the Vancouver Evangelistic Movement which spearheaded much strategic conservative Protestant activity in the city. Later, newer interdenominational evangelical organizations, such as the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, benefited from his support. It is intended, by means of a study of his career, that some light will be shed on Walter Ellis and also on several of those major institutions which gave strength to evangelicalism in Vancouver in the first half of this century.

Born in Derbyshire, England, Ellis came to Canada at the age of twenty in 1903 as assistant to the Anglican chaplain accompanying English settlers to the Barr Colony in Saskatchewan. The next nine years were spent studying in Toronto and by 1912 he had earned his B. A. (honours) and M. A. in Semitics from the University of Toronto and

the academic requirements for his B. D. from the evangelical Anglicans' Wycliffe College. He came to Vancouver to serve a one year locum at St. Mark's Church and in 1914 joined the faculty of Bishop Latimer Hall in 1914. Four years later he was married to Alice Mitton, also a fairly recent arrival from England. (3)

Latimer Hall had been founded on distinctly evangelical lines in Vancouver's West End on the model of Wycliffe College in 1910. Leading Vancouver citizens, including Charles H. Tupper, foremost among the city's elite, H. J. Cambie and the Rev. C. C. Owen of Christ Church, were active participants in its establishment. (4) Strong support was also received from the Colonial and Continental Missionary Society of London and W. H. Griffith Thomas, the renowned conservative theologian at Wycliffe College. (5) Ellis taught Church history at Latimer Hall and the Old Testament and Apologetics courses offered in common with St. Marks, the High Church college begun in 1912. (6)

In 1917 Ellis became active with the interdenominational Vancouver Evangelistic Movement (V. E. M.) in planning the French E. Oliver evangelistic campaign, the event which probably did the most to bring to public attention the widening division between liberal and conservative Protestantism. The V. E. M., a small group of businessmen, professionals and clergy, listed among its purposes the sponsorship of a mass-evangelism campaign, the establishment of a local Bible training school and the provision of a permanent base in the city for the China Inland Mission. Its members felt the public "preaching of the definite, positive and simple Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ" of a large evangelistic campaign would be useful in countering the growing secularism of Vancouver and the spread of

liberal theology in the churches. (7) The services of Dr. French E. Oliver, an ordained Presbyterian minister from Los Angeles were secured and a temporary wooden tabernacle, capable of seating five thousand, was built on the old court house site on Hastings Street.

(8)

Oliver's campaign was not supported by most of the city's clergy and he could not have endeared himself to all when he declared war on liberalism by announcing on May 20, 1917, the opening day of the eight-week campaign, that it was his intention "not to use a feather duster in defense of the faith and in criticism of higher criticism."

(9) Nonetheless, the first six weeks of the campaign experienced no great public controversy as thousands crowded to hear the evangelist and nearly two thousand responded to his call for conversion. (10)

During the last two weeks of his stay, however, the differences between Oliver and his V. E. M. supporters and members of the Vancouver Ministerial Association developed into a bitter controversy described by the media as "the biggest sensation of recent years in Vancouver religious circles." (11)

Dr. John McKay, principal of Westminster Hall, the Presbyterian college, publicly charged that Oliver was holding up "gross caricatures" of modern theology by associating the preaching of modern clergy with the "wild statements of irresponsible agnostics and rationalists." (12) The Rev. Ernest Thomas, minister of Wesley Methodist Church and strong exponent of the social gospel, was reported at length in the Province as preaching that the campaign was a conspiracy by the business community to suppress the Social Gospel movement. (13) He rejoiced that "the effort to dominate the pulpits of

Vancouver by browbeating and high finance has come to naught." Not only had the Vancouver Ministerial Association refused to officially endorse the campaign, he reported, but the Methodist Conference had condemned "any movement cloaked in the name of evangelism which was carried on in hostility to social reform, religious education and modern scholarship." He claimed that all the Presbyterian and Congregational ministers in the city upheld the Methodist stand as did "the younger, brainy Baptists." Thus, "Vancouver has chosen the path of advance and insists on the Christian pulpit being free to speak the great words of social justice and to recognize as revelations of God the discoveries of the scientist." (14)

Thomas was not far amiss in detecting a lack of fervor in the sponsoring committee for social reform as the primary commitment of the campaign was clearly for the salvation of individuals. However, it does not appear that the membership of the V. E. M. represented the business and financial elite of the city. In fact, of the nine identifiable men who served with Ellis on the central committee, only four were directly engaged in the business community and they do not seem to have reached the upper echelons - one was the accountant of a lumber firm, another was the manager of an insurance agency, the third was a salesman for a logging equipment firm and the fourth was the owner and operator of a box manufacturing plant. Two on the committee were in the medical profession and three were involved in religious institutions. (15)

The conservatives argued that the central issue in the controversy was one of the true Christian Gospel being defended against the attacks of unbelief. Oliver claimed it was time to

aggressively defend the truth against "the scholastic infidelity of 'modern intellectuality' which seeks to emasculate the gospel of Jesus." He pointed to the nearly two thousand converts gained in six weeks of preaching as proof that the traditional message was more relevant and effective to modern man than that preached by many city ministers. (16) The question was seen as one of religious authority. Oliver claimed he preached the same doctrine as the apostles and the Protestant reformers but charged that "direct efforts were being made to lead men and women away from the direct authority of the Bible." (17) The new theology lacked the ring of authority and Dr. J. L. Campbell, pastor of the city's largest Baptist church, First Baptist, told an applauding crowd at the tabernacle that "any theology that was not 1900 years old was no good." (18) At the close of the campaign, the membership of Broadway West Baptist Church published the concerns of many conservative protestants in a motion of support for Oliver. In it they expressed hope that he hold similar campaigns in other Canadian cities in order

. . . to stem the tide of infidelity that under the guise of modern scholarship is undermining the faith of the people in the Divine inspiration and authority of the Blessed Bible, including its clear and definite teaching on the foundation truths of our eternal salvation. (19)

Ellis had been out of the city during the controversy surrounding the Oliver campaign and was distressed to learn of the vituperative nature of the debate and the role which Oliver and some members of the V. E. M. had played in it. He fully agreed that liberal theology was dangerous to the churches but his concern that a strong stand for conservative theology not be associated with strong invective marked

the beginning of a gradually growing rift between himself and the more militant conservatives, or fundamentalists, in the city. (21)

Ellis was also chagrined that both sides in the debate had seemed to pit scholarship against belief in traditional Christian doctrines in a way that implied the two were necessarily opposed to one another. He was a good scholar, having excelled in his graduate work in Semitics at the University of Toronto and had been invited by J. P. McCurdy to be his associate at the school of archaeology in Cairo. (22) As a young minister he had quickly acquired a reputation for preaching thoughtful, scholarly sermons and his love of books was such that his personal library at the time of his death contained between five and six thousand volumes. (23)

He was thus not at all opposed to higher academic study as were many evangelicals but he did criticize the methodology and assumptions of many modern scholars. He belonged to the Scottish Realist school of thought and firmly believed in Bacon's and Newton's scientific method of observing and classifying facts and thus rejected as speculation the newer modes of explanation which relied upon hypotheses inferred from the facts. He wrote for a popular audience,

What of "Science"?
many scientists are searching the
creation of my God. His works as well
as His Word will bear the closest
investigation. I fear no
contradictions. Sometimes in the enthrall-
ment of their investigations scientists
formulate hypotheses to explain or coordinate
the facts they have discovered. Sometimes
these hypotheses conflict with
Scripture, but we must always
distinguish between the Scientist's
facts and his explanations. (24)

The major problem he found with the explanations of modern

scientists was that they took only natural causes into account. The implications of this approach were bad enough when confined to the scientific realm but they were devastating when it was consciously applied to biblical and theological studies.

The eight week Oliver campaign had given the V. E. M. sufficient momentum to continue as a permanent organization with headquarters at 121 W. Hastings Street. Operating for a number of years, it employed an evangelistic agent, held Bible study classes for new converts and operated a religious literature depot. (25) Of greater significance for the religious life of the city, however, were the two related institutions which emerged after the campaign - the Vancouver Bible Training School and the China Inland Mission home for personnel enroute to and from the Orient.

Despite Ellis' unhappiness with certain aspects of the Oliver campaign, he agreed to become principal of the Vancouver Bible Training School (V. B. T. S.) (26) The post was to be part-time and he had no intention whatsoever of leaving the Anglican Church or his teaching position at Latimer Hall. Consequently, he was stunned upon returning from his honeymoon in the summer of 1918 to find himself replaced at Latimer Hall because of opposition to his taking responsibility for what was considered to be a rival institution. In addition, the most Rev. A. U. dePencier, the High Church Bishop of the diocese, repeatedly refused to renew his ministerial license because of his extensive involvement in an interdenominational institution. For the next seven years he and his new wife remained within the Anglican Church but he was limited to the role of a layman. During that time he worked full-time to develop the new Bible school. (27)

V. B. T. S. was the second Bible institute established in Canada and was closely patterned after the first, Toronto Bible College, which had been founded in 1894. (28) Ellis was a close friend of the long-term principal of the Toronto school, Dr. John McNicol, and was extended an invitation to join his faculty in 1923. (29) The V. B. T. S. curriculum and organizational structure closely followed the pattern set in Toronto and the council frequently looked to the example of the older, larger institution in its deliberations (30).

The dual purpose of V. B. T. S. was to provide biblical instruction for the many new converts from the recent evangelistic campaign and to train a supply of lay workers who could serve as Sunday School workers, pastor's assistants, and foreign, city and rural missionaries. Students could take either a full or part-time course of studies and great emphasis was given to evening courses. It was not originally intended that it would train clergymen and be a direct competitor of the theological seminaries. Its educational entrance requirements were more flexible than that of the seminaries, it granted a two, and then three, year diploma rather than a theological degree and it admitted women as well as men students. However, as theological liberalism became more entrenched in most mainline seminaries, some evangelicals chose it for all or part of their ministerial education. (31)

The school served, and was supported by, evangelicals from a broad cross section of mainline denominations. When classes opened in September of 1918, Dr. J. L. Campbell, pastor of First Baptist Church, and Rev. Charles Thompson, the Presbyterian director of the China Inland Mission's operations in Vancouver, worked with Ellis as

part-time instructors. Robert W. Sharpe, a prominent Baptist businessman, presided over a council composed of a number of Anglican, Baptist and Presbyterian laymen and ministers. (32) Of the total of eighteen part-time faculty who taught with Ellis between 1918 and 1944, seven were Presbyterians, three were mainline Baptists and one was an Anglican (Canon G. H. Wilson, one of the founders of Latimer Hall). The seven faculty not belonging to mainline denominations included four independent Baptists, one Free Methodist, one Plymouth Brethren, and one Regular Baptist. The student body came from a similar, though even broader, range of denominations but Baptists formed the largest group. (33)

This high degree of interdenominational mainline involvement helped to make V. B. T. S. quite different from many Bible schools on the continent which, though frequently interdenominational, directed their appeal to a relatively narrow spectrum of evangelical opinion. It adopted a stance similar to that of Toronto Bible College which, especially under the principalship of McNicol, had gained a reputation as an institution which was theologically conservative but which allowed for breadth on contentious eschatological and ecclesiastical questions. (34) The academic calendar of V. B. T. S. promised that "no sectarian nor merely denominational tenets will be taught in the classes." Breadth was particularly an issue with Ellis who decried the narrowness found in many Bible institutes.

. . . the Bible Schools must enlist the sympathy of Christians on the widest lines consistent with truth. For us this means that we should make friends to ourselves of members of all the Churches who will sympathetically cooperate. So far as possible we should

give them a voice in our affairs; at the same time we must zealously guard the matters of our faith which we hold as fundamental. (35)

Eschatology especially was an issue which threatened to divide evangelicalism. Most Bible institutes were strongly dispensationalist and at conferences of Bible Institute leaders attempts were made to adopt a common dispensationalist statement of faith. Ellis wrote in 1919 to Dr. A. Gray of Moody Bible Institute, Chicago, strongly arguing against the adoption of a narrow statement, especially with regard to eschatology. (36) Later in the same year the V. B. T. S. council rejected a statement proposed by Gray on the grounds it was too exclusive. (37)

Such refusals to adopt a dispensationalist statement made the school suspect in the eyes of many. In 1930 the council was informed that the influential Prairie Bible Institute of Three Hills, Alberta, was spreading a rumour that V. B. T. S. held a postmillennial position - a view associated in the minds of many with liberalism. (38)

Locally, dispensationalists were putting such pressure on the school to give up its broad eschatological stance that Ellis felt "caught between two fires", with liberalism on the left and dispensationalist fundamentalism on the right. (39) Ellis held the historicist premillennial view which, while not containing the optimistic view of history of postmillennialism was neither as pessimistic as dispensationalism. He stressed the figurative rather than the liberal interpretation of apocalyptic literature and found the dispensationalist approach made the Bible a "grotesque study book". (40) Of major concern to him, however, was that this not become a divisive issue and he was able to work closely and amicably over long

periods with some dispensationalists. (41)

Classes were held the first year in the facilities of the V. E. M. on Hastings Street but as numbers grew it moved to its own rented quarters on West Broadway, just east of Cambie Street. Four years later, a lot on the corner of West Tenth Avenue and Fir Street was purchased and a three story building was constructed and dedicated nearly debt-free in September, 1923. (42) The 1930's and 1940's saw the school reach its greatest size but a period of such sharp decline set in during the early 1950's that its operation as an interdenominational institution was forced to cease in 1956. Its assets were then turned over to a fairly recent arrival in the city, the Baptist General Conference, and it developed a new, more sectarian constituency. (43)

Compared with several Bible institutes in the Canadian Prairies, the Vancouver Bible School was never very large. Combined full and part-time enrollment exceeded one hundred only several times in the 1930's and 1940's. (44) The largest full-time enrollment of forty was reached just after World War II. (45) However, the school's significance appears to have been out of proportion to its size in at least two ways. A total of one hundred and fifty-four of its students between 1918 and 1953 entered some kind of Christian ministry in a full-time capacity, or married someone who did so. (46) Quite a large proportion of these went overseas as missionaries, particularly to China. Secondly, the impact of V. B. T. S. on the evangelical community of Vancouver was greatly enhanced by its regular Thursday evening lectures for local Sunday School teachers and leaders. Each Thursdays' lecture explicated the lesson provided for the week in the

International Uniform Lesson series. The series was an interdenominational curriculum published in the United States since the mid nineteenth century and was in widespread usage throughout the Protestant world until the 1950's. (47) Upwards of one hundred fifty Sunday School teachers and leaders from a broad cross-section of city churches regularly crowded into the V. B. T. S. auditorium for the popular lectures given by Ellis.

The influence of the school upon the Baptists of the province appears to have been particularly significant. The liberal-conservative issue was openly controversial in the denomination which split into two in 1927 as the thoroughly conservative Convention of Regular Baptist Churches separated from the more inclusive mainline B. C. Baptist Convention. (48) Although Ellis did not leave any opinions specifically on the schism in the Baptist ranks, he did make it plain in other contexts that he saw in the separatist tendency an unhealthy assertion of independence. (49) Consequently, it is difficult to argue that Ellis and V. B. T. S. played a direct role on the split. Yet, a number of Baptist laypeople and ministers had been confirmed in their conservative theology while studying under Ellis and some of these were part of the seceding group in 1927. (50)

It is more clear that V. B. T. S. played a significant role in keeping alive a conservative group within the mainline Baptist Convention. Over the twenty years following 1927 these conservatives made very extensive use of the school as they had no denominational school in Canada which they felt met their needs. The council recognized the importance of that constituency in appointing Rev. J.

E. Harris, a mainline Baptist minister, as principal following Ellis' death in 1944. Earlier that year, Harris had published an article in the denominational periodical in which he explored the causes of the Baptists' lack of vigour in Western Canada. He concluded that a loss of confidence in traditional beliefs was largely responsible. The copy of the article he kept in his personal papers bears the handwritten notation "a bit of my endeavour to 'strengthen the things that remain.'" (51) It appears he saw his new role at V. B. T. S. in the same light and worked continuously to build upon and extend the contacts Ellis had made with conservative mainline Baptist churches and individual members in the province. (52) The links between the school and these Baptists were such that the denomination's opening of its own lay training institute, the Baptist Leadership Training Institute, in Calgary in 1949 resulted in a sharp decline in V. B. T. S. enrollment as it became difficult to recruit students in what previously had been its most fertile field. (53)

The other major institutional outcome of the V. E. M. was the establishment of a home for the China Inland Mission (C. I. M.) in Vancouver. Founded by the Englishman, J. Hudson Taylor in 1865, the C. I. M. was one of the world's largest and most influential interdenominational mission societies. It was a forerunner of fervent overseas evangelism and of a very broadly based evangelical interdenominational cooperation in the effort. Yet, while allowing for the greatest breadth possible within the spectrum of evangelical Protestantism, its missionaries were among the first to detect and expose liberal theology among missionaries on the field. (54) By the early twentieth century the mission was maintaining approximately a

thousand missionaries in the interior of China. (55) Each year scores of missionaries from Great Britain, Europe, Eastern Canada and the United States passed through Vancouver, "the gateway to the Orient" in that age of ship travel. Around the time of the Oliver Campaign, members of the V. E. M. helped the mission acquire a large guest house to accomodate such personnel on West Eleventh Avenue, less than one block from the corner where V. B. T. S. would locate in 1923. (56) The home also gave the mission quarters for an orientation program for missionary recruits from the western part of the continent. More importantly, it made it possible for travelling missionaries to stay longer in Vancouver and, with their strong evangelical commitment and international perspective, to lend their support to evangelical concerns in the city. The home remained open for over thirty years but the Communist victory in China in 1949 disrupted the flow of missionaries and necessitated its closing. (57)

The C. I. M. and V. B. T. S. maintained a very close, mutually beneficial relationship for over three decades. Ellis had seriously considered overseas missionary work before deciding to emigrate to Canada and he maintained an interest in missions throughout his life. (58) He was strongly supportive of the C. I. M., encouraged his students to serve under it and sat on its Vancouver council for many years. The C. I. M. was also strongly supportive of V. B. T. S. Rev. Charles Thompson, its local representative, had been a member of V. E. M., served on the council of the new school and was one of its part-time lecturers. The close geographical proximity of the two institutions to each other after 1923, the steady stream of C. I. M. missionaries as guest lecturers at the school and the general close

cooperation contributed to a high level of interest among the students in China and a fairly large number of them went there as missionaries. (59)

The C. I. M. and V. B. T. S. were influential in promoting in the city a "Keswick-style" emphasis upon the inner spiritual life. Since the 1870's, annual conferences had met in Keswick, England, drawing thousands of evangelicals, mainly from Anglican and Reformed churches. "Practical holiness" was emphasized and promoted through intensive prayer and Bible study. (60) J. Hudson Taylor had been profoundly influenced by the conferences and thus the C. I. M. became very closely connected with Keswick. (61) The outlook of Ellis was also greatly shaped by Keswick teaching. Archdeacon Joynt, a Keswick speaker, was rector of the church he had attended for five years in London. (62) At Wycliffe College he was greatly influenced by W. H. Griffith Thomas, one of the foremost exponents of Keswick-style holiness teaching in North America. (63) It is thus not surprising that annual "Keswick weeks", designed to encourage deeper consecration on the part of students and local church members, were jointly planned by V. B. T. S. and the local C. I. M. director at least until the 1930's.

Ellis was presented with a dilemma in 1926 in the form of an invitation from Fairview Presbyterian Church to become its minister. The congregation was largely from the former Chalmer's Presbyterian Church which had amalgamated with a Methodist congregation to form Chalmer's United Church. Like approximately one-third of the Presbyterians in Canada, the members did not concur with the 1925 creation of the United Church of Canada out of the Congregational,

Methodist and Presbyterian churches and sought to continue the Presbyterian Church in Canada. (64) In the case of the Fairview church, liberalism in the new United Church was a key factor for nonconcurrence. (65) Being familiar with Ellis' theology through the Thursday night public lectures at V. B. T. S., its members sought him as preacher. Ellis was very reluctant to leave the Anglican Church, even though confined to the role of a layman in it, but the continuing Presbyterian Church across the country was short of ministers and he was swayed by the need of the new congregation with which he was theologically compatible. In addition, he needed a larger income to support his family, which at that time included two boys, than V. B. T. S. could provide. The church's location at Fir Street and Eleventh Avenue, only one block from V. B. T. S., made it possible for him to continue his duties as principal at the school, which the church strongly supported. (66)

He was highly regarded by the congregation and respected for his warm, yet scholarly, preaching. He displayed considerable energy in carrying the combined load of academic and ministerial duties and saw the church develop into one of the more influential evangelical congregations in the city. It was never very large, growing from one hundred forty members in 1925 to two hundred and fifty in 1944, nor was it particularly wealthy. Its membership represented a broad cross section of occupations, but middle class managers, professionals and other white collar workers comprised nearly sixty percent of the total while approximately one-third were skilled and unskilled workers. (67) However, its influence has been far out of proportion to its size and

wealth. Since 1925 a total of thirty-one of its members have become full-time ministers and workers, twenty in the Presbyterian Church in Canada and eleven in other denominations and independent missions. Twenty of the total received all or part of their training under Ellis. (68) Not only did the congregation contribute to the Presbyterian mission fund at a higher rate per member than nearly all other Presbyterian churches in the city, it also supported interdenominational work heavily through a special missions budget.

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When Ellis died at the age of sixty-one in 1944, the type of conservative Protestantism he had struggled to preserve under pressure from both the left and the right continued in Vancouver's mainline denominations. (70) Fairview Presbyterian Church continued as a strong evangelical congregation but some of the other institutional expressions of mainline evangelicalism changed considerably. The decline of V. B. T. S. in the early 1950's was attributable to a number of factors, including the closing of the C. I. M. home and the opening of the Baptist Leadership Training School in 1949. By the 1950's, many who might have considered Bible school studies for missionary or even ministerial work in an earlier era were needing higher levels of education than V. B. T. S. was offering. Being in an urban environment, the school was affected far more by rising educational standards than were the Bible institutes in the Prairie provinces which generally drew from a more rural-based constituency. In addition, the much larger Bible institutes such as Prairie Bible Institute, had developed a widespread appeal and were drawing some rural students who previously may have considered V. B. T. S. (71)

In the same period that V. B. T. S. was in rapid decline, the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship at the University of B. C. was growing rapidly. The student group had been formed by Anglican, Baptist, Presbyterian and Plymouth Brethren students in 1925 in response to the liberalism embraced by the Student Christian Movement (72) It was largely student initiated and led but was greatly influenced by the evangelical student movement in Britain with which it eventually affiliated. The presence of the C. I. M. in the city proved very helpful to the group by providing a steady stream of missionaries, many of whom were Oxford and Cambridge graduates, to address the students. During the 1930's the evangelical student groups at other Western Canadian Universities were in decline, but U. B. C.'s group, in large measure due to this strong international influence, was full of vitality. (75) Ellis had been strongly supportive of the I. V. C. F., and frequently opening his home near the campus to its gatherings. Both he, and later, Harris, often addressed the group and some of its members attended evening classes at V. B. T. S. (74)

In 1968, Regent College, which was enrolling two hundred full-time graduate students in Christian Studies by 1980, was established on the U. B. C. campus. Its founders were not from mainline denominations but were all members of Plymouth Brethren assemblies. However, through considerable previous involvement in interdenominational organizations, including V. B. T. S. and I. V. C. F., they had established considerable rapport with evangelicals in the major denominations. Marshall Sheppard, prime mover of the founding committee, had regularly attended evening lectures at V. B. T. S. in

the 1930's and 1940's and had been deeply influenced by Ellis' teaching. (75) With an inclusive evangelical statement of faith, the college almost immediately appealed to mainline conservatives and the denominational makeup of its faculty and student body was soon very similar to that which had existed at V. B. T. S. (76)

In mass-evangelism too, the influence of the institutions in which Ellis played such a crucial role continued long after his death. The 1965 Billy Graham - Leighton Ford Vancouver crusade which drew crowds of up to 30,000 was largely organized by men influenced by those institutions. Of the local campaign committee of six, two members had studied under Ellis at V. B. T. S. and another two were members of Fairview Presbyterian Church.(77)

It is not, of course, overly productive to speculate what institutional forms mainline evangelicalism might have taken in the city without Walter Ellis' influence. It is clear, however, that the fundamental role he played in developing evangelical institutions in Vancouver was crucial to the continuation and growth of a conservative Protestant element in the city which, while opposing the hegemonous liberal theology, was distinguishable from a fundamentalism which isolated itself in sectarian exclusion.

ENDNOTES

(1) N. K. Clifford, "Religion in the Thirties: Some Aspects of the Canadian Experience", The Dirty Thirties in Prairie Canada, R. D. Francis & H. Ganzevoort, eds., (Vancouver: Tantalus Research, 1980).

(2) Census figures and membership figures for a number of denominations seem to indicate this. I intend to pursue this further in later research.

(3) Interview with Mrs. A. E. Ellis, Vancouver, B. C., Jan. 11, 1982.

(4) Bishop Latimer College, Minutes of Council, May 26, 1909. For an evaluation of Tupper's status, see Robert A. McDonald, "Business Leaders in early Vancouver, 1886-1914", Ph. D. Thesis, U. B. C., 1977, pp. 240-242.

(5) Bishop Latimer College, Annual Report of Principal, Minutes of Trustees, May 16, 1912.

(6) Bishop Latimer College, Quarterly Report of Principal, Minutes of Council, Oct. 16, 1918.

(7) "A Statement of the Aims and Methods of the Vancouver Evangelistic Movement", (handbill, 1917, in Ellis papers.)

(8) The Vancouver Daily Province, May 21, 1917, p. 15.

(9) Ibid. (10) Ibid., July 7, 1917, p. 10.

(11) Ibid., July 7, 1917, p. 15 and July 10, 1917, p. 10.

(12) Ibid., July 17, 1917, p. 20.

(13) For Thomas' importance in social gospel circles, see Richard Allen, The Social Passion, Religion and Social Reform in Canada, 1919-1928, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).

(14) The Vancouver Daily Province, July 16, 1917, p. 19.

(15) Henderson's Vancouver City Directory, (Vancouver, 1917 & 1918).

(16) The Vancouver Daily Province, July 7, 1917, p. 10.

(17) Ibid., July 11, 1917, p. 22.

(18) Ibid., July 7, 1917, p. 16.

(19) Ibid., July 16, 1917, p. 20.

(21) Ellis interview, Jan. 12, 1982. Also, the Vancouver Bible Training School, Council Minutes, 1918 to 1925 allude to such a division.

(22) George M. Marsden, Fundamentalism and the Shaping of American Culture, (New York: University of Oxford Press, 1955.

(23) Unidentified newspaper clipping, 1913, in Ellis papers. Ellis interview, Jan. 28, 1983.

(24) Walter Ellis, "My Own Religion Today, (article intended for publication in Vancouver Sun, c. 1930) in Ellis papers.

(25) Vancouver Evangelistic Movement, Minutes, Aug. 7, 1917, in Ellis papers. As only a few fragments of the Vancouver Evangelistic Movement papers are extant, it has not been possible to ascertain when its activities ceased.

(26) In its 61 year history it was known as Vancouver Bible Training School, then Vancouver Bible School, then Vancouver Bible Institute and, finally, while under the auspices of the Baptist General Conference, Vancouver Bible College.

(27) Ellis interview, Jan. 11, 1982.

(28) Vancouver Bible Training School, Council Minutes, May 17, 1918.

(29) Ibid., May, 1923.

(30) Ibid., June 17, 1918, April 9, 1931 & January, 1945.

(31) Interview with Rev. Robert Birch, Burnaby, B. C., Feb. 4, 1982.

(32) V. B. T. S., Council Minutes, June 24, 1918.

(33) V. B. T. S., Annual photographs, 1918-1944, in Ellis papers. Interview with Miss Norma Cuthbertson, (Vancouver) Feb. 11, 1982 and Ellis interview, March 20, 1982.

(34) Warren Charelton, "Dr. John McNicol and Toronto Bible College", The Canadian Society of Presbyterian History, Papers, 1977, 38-57.

(35) V. B. T. S., Calendar, 1940, p. 7, in Ellis papers. V. B. T. S., Principal's Report, Council Minutes, March 8, 1919.

(36) V. B. T. S., Council Minutes, April 11, 1919.

- (37) Ibid., Dec., 29, 1919.
- (38) Ibid., May 2, 1930.
- (39) Ellis interview, Jan 12, 1982.
- (40) Ellis, sermon series, April and May, 1942, notes taken by Miss Norma Cuthbertson, in Cuthbertson papers.
- (41) W. J. Scott, (North Vancouver) to W. Ellis, Dec. 27, 1933. In V. B. T. S., Council Minutes, Jan. 3, 1934.
- (42) V. B. T. S., Council Minutes, Sept 11, 1923.
- (43) Gordon Carlson, Seventy-five Years History of the Columbia Baptist Conference, (Seattle: Columbia Baptist Conference, 1964), p. 236-38.
- (44) V. B. T. S., Principal's Reports, Council Minutes, 1918-1955.
- (45) J. E. Harris, Diary, Sept. 30, 1947, in Harris papers.
- (46) Mrs. A. E. Ellis to Mr. Carlson, Jan. 10, 1964, copy in Ellis papers.
- (47) Gerald E. Knoff, The World Sunday School Movement, (New York: Seabury Press, 1979), pp. 2, 35, 41, 64-68, 103.
- (48) For histories of the division, see Gordon h. Poussett, "The History of the Regular Baptists in B. C.", B. Div. Thesis, McMaster Divinity College, Hamilton, 1956 and John B. Richards, "Baptists in British Columbia - A Struggle to Maintain "Sectarianism"", M. A. Thesis, U. B. C., 1964.
- (49) Ellis, Sermon, June 13, 1943, notes taken by N. Cuthbertson, in Cuthbertson papers.
- (50) Interview with Mrs. Grace Robinson, (Maple Ridge, B. C.) Mar. 4, 1982. Ellis interview, Jan. 12, 1982 and Cuthbertson interview, Feb. 11, 1982.
- (52) Harris diary, 1944-1948.
- (53) J. E. Harris to E. I. McPhee, Oct. 4, 1953, in historical file, V. B. T. S.
- (54) Marsden, Fundamentalism, p. 98.
- (55) J. Hudson Taylor, A Retrospect, (Philadelphia: The China Inland Mission, c. 1910), inside cover.
- (56) Ellis interview, Jan 12, 1982.

(57) Interview with Mr. L Street, Feb. 9, 1982.

(58) Frances, W. M., Rev Walter Ellis, M. A., B. D. A Memorial, A Tribute, 1925. In Ellis papers.

(59) Mrs. A. E. Ellis to Mr. Carlson, Jan. 10, 1964, copy in Ellis papers. Cuthbertson interview, Feb. 11, 1982.

(60) Ian Seller, "Keswick Conventions", New International Dictionary of the Christian Church, J. D. Douglas, ed., (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), p. 220.

(61) Marsden, Fundamentalism, p. 97.

(62) Francis, Rev. Walter Ellis, p. 4.

(63) Marsden, Fundamentalism, p. 99 & 246.

(64) See John S. Moir, Enduring Witness: A History of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, (bryant Press, n.d.)

(65) Fairview Presbyterian Church, Minutes of Session and Minutes of Congregational Meetings, Nov., 1924.

(66) Ellis interview, Jan. 11, 1982.

(67) Compiled from Fairview Presbyterian Church, Membership Rolls, and The Wrigley - Henderson British Columbia Directory, 1924-1926, and The British Columbia and Yukon Directory, 1943 - 1945.

(68) From list compiled by Mrs. A. E. Ellis with assistance from members of Fairview Presbyterian Church.

(69) Statistical Reports, Acts and Proceedings of the General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, 1926-1974.

(70) He died four days after a brain operation. He left a family of five boys, ranging in age from nine years to over twenty.

(71) See Donald Goertz, "The Development of a Bible Belt: The Socio-Religious Interaction in Alberta between 1925 and 1938", (M. C. S. Thesis, Regent College, Vancouver, 1980). J. E. Harris to E. I. McPhee, Oct. 4, 1953, letter in historical file, V. B. T. S.

(72) A detailed history is available in David Phillips, "The History of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship in Western Canada", (M. C. S. Thesis, Regent College, Vancouver, 1976).

(73) Ibid., p. 110.

(74) Ibid., p. 56, Ellis interview, Jan. 12, 1982 and Harris Diary, Oct. 5, 1948.

(75) Ian S. Rennie (Toronto) to author, Feb. 10, 1982.

- (76) Regent College, Registrar's Reports, 1971-72 to 1980-81).
- (77) Ian S. Rennie (Toronto) to author, Feb. 10, 1982.