NORTH AMERICAN WESLEYAN-HOLINESS CHURCHES IN AUSTRALIA

Submitted by

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E. E. Zachary with koala. Photo: Nazarene Archives, Kansas City, Missouri.
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Summary

This thesis examines the emergence of a number of North American Wesleyan-Holiness denominations in Australia, beginning in the years following the Second World War. They are the Church of God (Anderson), the Church of God (Cleveland), the Church of the Nazarene, and the Wesleyan Methodist Church. It will trace the manner in which some of these churches moved from being despised and marginalised sects to established denominations while others remained small and isolated, experiencing little growth.

The thesis demonstrates that the movement along the church-sect continuum is by no means a smooth and inevitable one. Immigrant dislocation may lead to a slowing down of change to preserve a sense of identity. A particular group may be found to be positioned toward the church end of the continuum in its place of origin and be positioned toward the sect end in its mission areas, or the reverse may be true. A particular movement may be seen as a ‘sect’ when compared to one group and a ‘church’ when compared to another.

The theme of Americanisation and anti-Americanism will be examined, as the explicitly American origins of these churches was both the cause of their exclusion and at the same time a mechanism for their survival. The emergence of the Wesleyan-Holiness denominations in Australia is not an example of American cultural and religious imperialism. Rather it has been a creative partnership between like-minded evangelical Christians from two modern nations sharing a general cultural and social similarity and a common set of religious convictions.

The Wesleyan-Holiness churches saw increased growth from the late 1970s by welcoming into their membership a new wave of refugees from more liberal Protestant denominations. They are shown to be both a new religious movement,
emerging out of the post-war context of greater engagement between Australians and Americans and at the same time a continuation of the long-standing ‘holiness’ and ‘revivalist’ strain within Australian evangelicalism.
Statement of Authorship

Except where reference is made in the text of the thesis, this thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma.

No other person’s work has been used without due acknowledgement in the main text of the thesis.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institution.

All research procedures reported in the thesis were approved by the relevant Ethics Committee or authorised officer.

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Glen Ashley O’Brien

31st March 2005
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Chapter One

Introduction

There exists in this country a number of evangelical churches in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition, having their organizational headquarters in the United States. This thesis will seek to gain an understanding of the historical forces that gave rise to the emergence of such groups in Australia, and the manner in which Wesleyan perfectionism of the American variety was received in and/or adapted itself to the Australian religious scene. Religious ‘outsiders’ have become the central interest of American religious historians over the past twenty years, indeed, according to Stout and Hart, ‘the language of outsiders-become-insiders, and peripheries-become-centers, is now a commonplace in the literature on religion in America.’¹ Jon Butler has described an ‘evangelical paradigm’ as ‘the single most powerful explanatory device adopted by academic historians to account for the distinctive features of American society, culture, and identity.’² One result of this new interest has been that formerly marginalized groups, such as Pentecostals, Fundamentalists, and Evangelicals have taken centre stage.³

This thesis will describe the process of accommodation that took place in Wesleyan-Holiness churches, with their headquarters in North America, to gain entrance to the existing ‘evangelical club,’ whose roots were in Great Britain. Those Wesleyan-Holiness churches who have moved from ‘outsider’ to ‘insider’ status have done so because of two broad developments. They demonstrated an ability to reflect those broader aspects of Americanization that had been integrated into Australian evangelicalism, and to minimize those that had not, and they were willing to sacrifice certain distinctive features of their belief and practice, which propelled them along the sect-church continuum toward greater acceptance.

The history of Australian Methodism has been well served, from early efforts such as that of Irving Benson on Victorian Methodism, to Wright and Clancy’s more recent treatment of Methodism in New South Wales. However, the story of those smaller denominations and movements, who also identify their roots in John Wesley and in early Methodism, has not been told. Ward and Humphrey’s Religious Bodies in Australia lists six churches as belonging to the ‘Holiness tradition’ under the larger

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6 The Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia, founded in 1946, is the only one of the Wesleyan-Holiness churches in Australia to have produced a denominational history. Don Hardgrave’s For Such a Time: A History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia (Brisbane, A Pleasant Surprise, 1988) is written with the conviction that God has raised up this particular denomination to usher in a spiritual awakening akin to that experienced in eighteenth century England under the Wesleys, giving the work a somewhat triumphalist tone. An official biography of Kingsley Ridgway, the founder of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia, was published in 1996 as part of the Church’s Jubilee celebrations. This work included under the same cover a reprint of Ridgway’s autobiographical work, Feet Upon the Mountains: A History of the First Five Years of the Wesleyan Missionary Work in Papua New Guinea (Marion, Indiana, The Wesleyan Church Corporation, 1976), and excerpts from an earlier autobiographical work, In Search of God: An Account of Ministerial Labours in Australia and the Islands of the Sea (Brockville, Ontario, Standard Publishing House, n.d.). See Glen O’Brien and Kingsley M. Ridgway, Kingsley Ridgway: Pioneer with a Passion, His Life and Legacy (Melbourne, Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia, 1996).
Five of these six have their roots in North America. In addition, Ward and Humphreys list two denominations as ‘Holiness stream’ under the title of ‘Pentecostal.’ These also have their roots in the North American Holiness movement. The former are all characterised by the distinctive doctrine of ‘entire sanctification’ understood as a second work of grace subsequent to conversion, whereby one is cleansed from sin and filled with perfect love for God and neighbour. The ‘Pentecostal-Holiness’ groups also teach ‘entire sanctification,’ but posit a ‘third blessing’ of the ‘enduement of power’ evidenced by ‘speaking in tongues.’

All of these groups find the impetus for their teachings in the life and theology of John Wesley, the eighteenth century Anglican priest who founded the Methodist movement after his heart was ‘strangely warmed’ by a profound sense of religious assurance in 1738. That John Wesley taught the kind of ‘second experience’ held by today’s Wesleyan-Holiness churches is well established. Since the 1970s, however, Wesleyan theologians have sought to demonstrate that in the recovery of this neglected aspect of John Wesley’s teaching by the American Holiness movement of the nineteenth century, elements of imbalance were introduced that may be seen as

7 These are listed in Rowland Ward and Robert Humphreys, Religious Bodies in Australia: A Comprehensive Guide. 3rd ed. rev. (Melbourne, New Melbourne Press, 1995), pp. 135-42.
8 These are Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia, Association of the Church of God in Australia, Church of the Nazarene, Christian and Missionary Alliance, and Apostolic Christian Church (Nazarean). The exception is the Salvation Army, founded in England by William Booth, a former Methodist minister. Reasons for the non-inclusion in this research of the Apostolic Christian Church (Nazarean) and the Christian and Missionary Alliance are given in Appendix A and Appendix B respectively.
9 These are the New Testament Church of God (Church of God, Cleveland), and the Church of God of Prophecy, Ward and Humphries, pp. 182-5.
11 Though it is clear that the glossalalia (‘tongues speaking’) practiced among the ‘Pentecostal-Holiness’ churches was not a feature of Wesley’s teaching or practice.

O’Brien, North American Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Australia 3
aberrational. The classic treatment of the American Holiness movement, especially in its relationship to mainstream Methodism remains John Peters’ *Christian Perfection and American Methodism*. Donald Dayton has traced the theological roots of Pentecostalism in the Holiness movement, and Vinson Synan has done the same in his study of the Pentecostal-Holiness churches. It will not be the purpose of this thesis to enter extensively into the theological elements of this discussion, other than where such discussion is pertinent to the historical task.

Pentecostalism has attracted more scholarly interest in Australia than has its near cousin the Holiness movement. Barry Chant has traced the influence of Wesleyan revivalism on the rise of Australian Pentecostalism, though he does this with only passing reference to the American Holiness movement, and indeed, is concerned to show that Australian Pentecostalism was not an American import. Stuart Piggin asserts that Australian revivals stemmed more from the Holiness movement wing of Australian Methodism, rather than from Pentecostalism, and that

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this wing of Methodism was aligned with British influences.\footnote{Stuart Piggin, ‘The History of Revival in Australia,’ in Mark Hutchinson, and Edmund Campion, eds. Re-Visioning Australian Colonial Christianity: New Essays in the Australian Christian Experience 1788-1900 (Sydney, Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, 1994), p. 187.} An extensive treatment of the influence of Wesley’s doctrine of ‘entire sanctification’ on Australian Methodism has not been written. This thesis will attempt to document a trajectory which sees ‘Holiness’ teaching reaching its peak in late-nineteenth-century revivalism, and then declining to the point of dropping out of sight almost entirely by the mid-1940s, when the American Holiness churches emerged in Australia. The story of these churches has yet to be written, and it is hoped that this thesis will contribute to the telling of that story.

The Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Historical Context

The doctrine of ‘entire sanctification,’ to be experienced as a definite work of grace subsequent to conversion, was a characteristic teaching of John Wesley. When Methodism was planted in America with the formation of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784, Wesley’s \textit{Plain Account of Christian Perfection}, was included in its entirety in the first \textit{Discipline} of that body. American Methodist preachers generally included in their preaching, the calling of sinners to salvation and the calling of believers to sanctification. At the heart of this sanctifying experience was a negative cleansing from sinful motives and attitudes (sinful behaviours were already thought to have been dealt with at conversion) and a positive filling with love for God and neighbour. By the 1860s however this doctrine had fallen into neglect. Methodism had become more fashionable, more middle-class and respectable, and thus much less given to religious ideals such as perfectionism. The Methodist Episcopal Church had moved significantly toward the ‘church’ end of the church-sect continuum. There were many reform-minded people in Episcopal Methodism, such as Nathan Bangs...
and Bishop Jesse Peck, who issued an *ad fontes* call back to Wesley’s original teachings. However, in 1867, the formation of the National Camp-Meeting Association for the Promotion of Christian holiness in Vineland, New Jersey, gave organizational clout to a strong group of radicals, many of whom were ready to break ranks with mainstream Methodism, and form their own churches and associations.¹⁸ This movement, a precursor of Pentecostalism, which emerged from Methodism’s more radical wing in the late nineteenth century, came to be known as ‘the Holiness movement.’

The Wesleyan Methodist Church (originally ‘Connexion’) of America was an active participant in this new Holiness movement, though it had already separated from the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1843 over the issue of slavery.¹⁹ Radical abolitionists such as Luther Lee and Orange Scott organized the new church in Utica, New York on a platform of anti-slavery and anti-episcopacy. Though not originally formed around the ‘Holiness’ issue, it saw itself as calling Methodists back to John Wesley’s original apostolic fire, and was the first Methodist denomination to formulate an explicit doctrinal statement on ‘entire sanctification.’²⁰

The earliest Church of the Nazarene was formed in Los Angeles under the leadership of the former Methodist minister Phineas F. Bresee, and the physician Joseph P. Widney, in October 1895. There followed numerous mergers between a number of independent Holiness organizations all of whom had their origins among

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Methodist ‘come-outers.’ The date of the organization of the Church differs in various sources. Ahlstrom cites 1908, when Bresee’s group merged with other Holiness groups at Pilot Point, as the year of establishment, and this is the denomination’s official starting date, even though it is clear that Bresee’s earlier urban mission work in Los Angeles formed ‘the nucleus of the later Church of the Nazarene.’ Winthrop Hudson cites 1895 as the founding date and an ‘enlargement’ by mergers in 1907 and 1908. Both the Wesleyan Methodists and Nazarenes commenced work in Australia in the post-war years, with the first contacts between Australian evangelical leaders and American denominational officials beginning in 1945.

The Church of God, with its headquarters in Anderson, Indiana, was formed in 1881 under the leadership of Daniel S. Warner. An attempt was made to introduce this group to Australia by E. P. May in the years 1917-1927, with little result. An American missionary couple, Carl and Lova Swart, recommenced work in Sydney’s

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21 Peters, p. 149.
23 Winthrop S. Hudson, Religion in America (New York: Scribners, 1965), p. 345. However, in the fourth edition of this work (New York: Macmillan, 1987), no mention is made of the 1907 and 1908 mergers. The official starting date of the Church of the Nazarene is October 1908, which is the Second General Assembly. The resultant group was designated ‘The Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene.’ The Church will celebrate its Centenary in 2008. In 1919 the Church officially became The Church of the Nazarene, dropping ‘Pentecostal’ to avoid confusion with tongues-speaking groups. Of course, the three main groups that formed the Church of the Nazarene precede that date. The Western Group (founded by Bresee and Widney in October 1895) was called ‘The Church of the Nazarene.’ The other groups, ‘The Association of Pentecostal Churches of America’ (December 1895) and ‘The Holiness Church of Christ’ (November 1904) have antecedent congregations that date from 1887 but no earlier. A contrary position is that of Ernest R. (‘Bud’) Camfield who argues that the Western group founded by Bresee and Widney is the mother body and that other groups merged with it (see Camfield’s document: ‘A Short History of the International Church of the Nazarene,’ available from the author at 3800 Carman Dr. SW #c-334, Lake Oswego, OR 97035). I am grateful to the Rev. Steve Walsh, formerly lecturer in church history at the Nazarene Theological College in Brisbane for clarifying this debate for me.
Canley Heights in 1960. The Association of the Church of God in Australia (as the Church of God, Anderson is officially known here) is the least successful of the Wesleyan-Holiness groups in Australia. It has tended to remain aloof from other Christians and has thus found it difficult to find the resources to sustain itself in an unfriendly environment. Barry Callen has cited a similar isolationist stance as having been the cause of problems in the American church. In 1995 there were 6 small churches in Australia and about 200 adherents, the same number as a decade earlier. The website currently list 3 churches and 1 ‘fellowship.’

A number of Holiness groups in the Southern states, whose Appalachian expression of religion was markedly more frantic than in the North, adopted the practice of ‘tongues speaking’ as a sign of a special ‘baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire,’ subsequent both to conversion and entire sanctification. Of these ‘Pentecostal-Holiness’ groups, two have work in Australia. The Church of God in Australia, formerly known in this country as the New Testament Church of God, is a branch of the movement founded as ‘The Church of God’ in Cleveland, Tennessee in 1902. Bill and Winnie McAlpin came to Australia from the United States in 1973, and commenced work in Sydney’s Horsley Park. The church has grown to include 35 congregations with a great ethnic diversity. In good ‘come-outer’ fashion, the

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25 Ward and Humphreys, *Religious Bodies in Australia*, pp. 136-7; The identity of the couple was provided in an interview with Judy and Malcolm Hughes, Anderson, Indiana, 13 July 2001, and through consulting correspondence at the Church of God archives at Anderson University. This process is traced elsewhere in this thesis Chapter 5, pp. 165-178.
27 Ward and Humphreys, p. 138.
30 Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland, Tennessee, 29 June, 2001; http://www.cogaus.com/nzaus.html

O’Brien, *North American Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Australia*
original Church of God, Cleveland underwent several schisms in its early days. One third of the original Church of God people formed a breakaway group under the leadership of A. J. Tomlinson in 1923 and eventually became known as the Church of God of Prophecy, also with its headquarters in Cleveland, Tennessee. The first Australian church was formed in 1956 in Redfern, NSW, and in 1995 there was a total of seven churches and 231 members.32

Moving Along the Church-Sect Continuum

The demographics of today’s Wesleyan-Holiness churches fit Bouma and Dixon’s ‘Right Wing Protestant’ typology. Members are theologically conservative, have strict behavioural expectations, demonstrate high rates of church attendance, and practice personal religious disciplines.33 Over the period covered in this thesis (1945 to the present), the Holiness movement churches have moved from a more ‘ecstatic’ to a more rational ‘mode of transcendence,’ another indicator of movement to the church end of the church-sect continuum.34 The findings of the National Church Life Survey of 1996 also confirm this trend.35

In the early part of the twentieth century, visiting Holiness evangelists from North America were often looked upon by other evangelicals as ‘holy rollers’ and ‘sinless perfectionists,’ purveyors of a brand of religion thought to be populist, coarse, and theologically suspect. The doctrine of ‘entire sanctification’ as a second work of grace to be received in a special ‘baptism’ of ‘perfect love’ was viewed as

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34 Bouma, Religion: Meaning, Transcendence and Community, pp. 68-73.
35 This survey was a joint project of the Uniting Church Board of Mission and Anglicare, Diocese of Sydney. Detailed findings of the NCLS are given in Peter Kaldor, et al. Build My Church: Trends and Possibilities for Australian Churches (Adelaide, Open Book, 1999).
theologically heterodox and destructive to the peace of the church. The emergence of denominations whose purpose it was to propagate such beliefs met with deep suspicion and even outright hostility on the part of other evangelicals. Australian evangelicalism has its colonial roots in English Calvinism mediated through the likes of Samuel Marsden and Richard Johnson. Though this eighteenth century Anglican evangelicalism was ‘Methodistical’ in its piety, its theology was decidedly anti-Methodist. Its stress on human depravity and inability made the Wesleyan claim to ‘Christian perfection’ seem a hopeless pipe dream, and more than this, a dangerous heresy. Sydney Anglicanism to this day has remained a bastion of Reformed (Calvinist) evangelicalism, and the evangelicalism of the Bible College and ‘Convention’ movements is dominated by a moderate Reformed constituency.

The Melbourne Bible Institute (now the Bible College of Victoria) took a public stand of opposition to Wesleyan teaching in the 1940s, and a number of students were expelled because they assisted the despised Wesleyan Methodists in tent meetings. Members of the Church of the Nazarene were not permitted to serve as ‘counsellors’ at the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade because they were considered a dangerous sect of ‘sinless perfectionists.’ Nazarenes have needed to publicly identify themselves as ‘a Church in the Methodist tradition’ in order to overcome the ambiguity of a name well known in the United States but not here. Kingsley Ridgway, later to be the founder of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia, left Queen’s College in the early 1920s to join up with the ‘holy rollers’ gathered in Coburg under the preaching of the Canadian Holiness evangelist A. B. Carson. His colleagues at Queen’s thought he had been hypnotized, since they could find no other

36 Hardgrave, For Such A Time, p. 68.
reason why the career of such a promising candidate for the Methodist ministry should be thrown away in order to associate with such people.  

What was the basis of resistance to the Wesleyan-Holiness groups in Australia on the part of fellow evangelicals? The North American Holiness groups began their existence in this country very much as ‘outsiders.’ What were the reasons for this exclusion? To what extent were the first visiting American Holiness evangelists seen to be purveyors of ‘strange doctrine’? That the doctrine of entire sanctification was still adhered to by at least some Australian Methodists in the 1920s is clear. The Methodist Local Preachers Association held an annual ‘Holiness Convention.’ In reporting on a sermon on holiness by visiting evangelist Norman Dunning, H. G. Secomb was able to refer to the topic as ‘this distinctive doctrine of Methodism.’ To what extent was there a broad affirmation of entire sanctification as a distinctive doctrine to be treasured by Australian Methodists of the period and an experience to be entered into by the faithful?

In spite of the less than warm reception in its early days, when the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the denomination Ridgway founded, held its fiftieth anniversary celebrations in 1996, representatives of almost all of the mainline Protestant and evangelical denominations were present to convey their congratulations. This movement from ‘outsider’ to ‘insider’ status took place over a fifty-year period, and is a movement that has only been moderately successful in the case of three of the five denominations under discussion here. Why did the Wesleyan-Holiness churches want to join the ‘evangelical club’ and what had to happen, on both sides of the discussion, before this could take place? Which factors contributed to isolation and
which to inclusion? It is hoped that an understanding of the response of evangelicals to the ‘sinless perfectionists’ – their marginalization as well as their ‘coming of age’ – will contribute to the understanding of this relatively neglected religious tradition.

**Americanisation and Anti-Americanism**

The contrasts between the Australian and American religious experience and their differing expressions of Christianity will be given attention in this thesis, along with a consideration of such dynamics in the particular case of Wesleyan-Holiness churches as they arrive in the early part of the twentieth century and encounter a religious landscape significantly different from that at home. An important theme that emerges in this research is the broad question of Americanisation, and anti-American sentiment on the part of Australian evangelicals, and Australians generally.

Brouwer, Gifford and Rose have asserted in *Exporting the American Gospel: Global Christian Fundamentalism* that, along with business and media culture, America’s religious culture has been successfully exported through its enmeshment in the processes of modernisation and globalisation.42

For Christian fundamentalism in particular, the universalizing of the faith is intertwined with the homogenizing influences of consumerism, mass communication, and production in ways that are compatible with the creation of an international market culture by global capitalist institutions.43

The influence of American evangelicalism on Protestantism in Queensland has been traced by Neville Buch in his doctoral thesis, ‘American Influence on Protestantism in Queensland since 1945.’44 David Parker has examined the American religious phenomenon of fundamentalism and its influence in Australia

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43 Brouwer, Gifford, and Rose, p. 3.
between 1920 and 1980. Philip Bell and Roger Bell have examined Americanization in their *Implicated: The United States in Australia*, and the discussion has continued in the publishing of a number of responses to that work, in *Americanization and Australia*. Unfortunately, in neither of these last two works does the influence of America on religion in Australia have any place. The second of these two is wide ranging in its interests, including contributions on language, popular culture, suburbia, ethnicity, politics, industrial relations, feminism, sport, film and television, literature, and art, but has no discussion of religion. Similarly Salter and Taylor’s *The American Century: Consensus and Coercion in the Projection of American Power*, while dealing with economics, politics, and popular culture, fails to discuss religion. This seems an unfortunate omission, since the influence of American Christianity, and especially evangelicalism, in Australia, has been significant.

The success of Methodist revivals in the latter half of the nineteenth century, with its consequent gains in membership through that period, gained its early impetus from American evangelists such as William ‘California’ Taylor, who arrived in Melbourne in 1863 and before he left in 1866 had held successful campaigns in all of the Eastern colonies. The visits of later American revivalists such as Rueben A. Torrey (1902) and J. Wilbur Chapman (1909 and 1912) added further to the

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47 Philip Bell and Roger Bell, eds. *Americanization and Australia* (Sydney, University of New South Wales Press, 1998).  
American ‘stylization’ of Australian evangelicalism.  

Billy Graham’s successful campaign in 1959, and the following of his practice since that time of securing ‘decisions for Christ’ has become so much a part of Australian evangelicalism that few, of the laity at least, would be aware of its origins in nineteenth century America’s ‘second great awakening.’

As well as the doctrinal objections as a reason for keeping the Holiness groups at arm’s length, a frequently heard objection to the new Wesleyan-Holiness churches that emerged in the post war years was that they were ‘American’ groups. Differences in religious style would lead to much misunderstanding. A generalized anti-Americanism did not help. This climate has changed due to the theology and ethos of wider American evangelicalism affecting the Australian denominational scene. There has been an Americanization of Australian evangelicalism broadly and this has contributed to the move from ‘outsider’ to insider’ status on the part of the Wesleyan-Holiness churches.

Declaration of Researcher’s Position

After presenting my thesis statement at a postgraduate seminar, I was described by my postgraduate coordinator as a ‘reflexive insider,’ and was also encouraged to make explicit my personal relationship to the subject matter. As an ordained minister in the Wesleyan Methodist Church, with both local church responsibilities and a teaching position at the denominational theological college, I certainly belong to one of the groups that form the subject of my research. Every

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historian, consciously or unconsciously, works within the context of a particular community of discourse, and as such, is accountable to that community.\textsuperscript{52} Pure objectivity in any kind of research may be seen as a modernist myth, since all discourse is carried out from a particular perspective. Faithfulness to a religious, ethical, or philosophical community and its tradition may be variously defined. For some, it means a mere retelling of past findings, such that to depart from past convictions in the slightest manner is to be unfaithful to the tradition. For others, faithfulness is not possible without a positive critique of the past in order to inform the present.

When the researcher belongs to that community which is the subject of his or her research, he or she may be said, in one sense, to have a distinct advantage over a pure ‘outsider.’ Yet, the historian who belongs to that community which forms the subject of his or her research, is open to certain temptations. There may be a tendency to ‘canonise’ one’s subjects or take a triumphalist approach in the recounting of events and their significance in the ‘scheme of things.’ The histories of Methodism, for example, demonstrate that our ‘fathers’\textsuperscript{53} were more prone to triumphalism and romanticism than are contemporary church historians.\textsuperscript{54} Whilst conceding that pure objectivity is not possible, nor even perhaps desirable, in historical writing, it remains true that the historian must be harnessed to the discipline of accuracy. One must strive for enough objectivity to prohibit illegitimate distortion of the material for one’s own ends. Bias may be admitted, so long as it is not allowed to obscure the authenticity of the record.

\textsuperscript{52} This, and the next paragraph, are drawn from O’Brien and Ridgway, Pioneer with a Passion, pp. 10-11.

\textsuperscript{53} For earlier church historians were male.

\textsuperscript{54} One need only compare an older type of history such as Abel Stevens, The History of the Religious Movement of the Eighteenth Century Called Methodism (New York, Carlton and Porter, 1858) with the more recent four volume set by Rupert Davies et al, A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain, (London, Epworth, 1983) to see the difference noted here.
Alfred Schutz faces this challenge by proposing the idea of ‘finite provinces’ in his paper ‘On Multiple Realities,’ a concept explained well by Stephen J. Gould in his wonderfully titled book on science and religion, *Rocks of Ages*. ‘Each domain of inquiry frames its own rules and admissible questions, and sets its own criteria for judgment and resolution.’ Since every finite province has its own set of rules there can be no translating and referring between them. Instead one must ‘leap’ back and forth by ‘suspending’ or placing in the background one province while operating within the other. How does the historian of faith inhabit the ‘finite province’ of historical research without ‘leaping’ into the ‘finite province’ of his or her religious beliefs?

Some historians, who are also persons of faith, have argued for an ‘alternation’ or ‘two spheres’ approach to history. In this approach the historian alternates between the realm of subjective faith and the realm of objective history. It has been argued that while one may believe God is active in history and is permitted to say so, this admission should only be made in the introductions and conclusions of monographs and articles. If God is allowed into their work at all, God should only ‘peek in from the interpretive margins.’ D. G. Hart has argued, based on the idea of the ‘unencumbered self,’ that historians of faith should be ‘unencumbered evangelicals’ playing by the rules of the academy and keeping their faith private.

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57 Schutz, pp. 6-7.
The work of Mark A. Noll, George M. Marsden, and Harry S. Stout might be seen as typifying this ‘alternations’ approach. Bradley N. Seeman offers a powerful critique of this approach as placing too heavy a burden on the scholar and resting on a ‘questionable understanding of the self and what it can accomplish.’ Such a model places a great deal of stress on a researcher who must see things in his or her research as relevant to one sphere but entirely irrelevant to another. Is the historian to believe in the idea of God acting in history on the way to work, and then suspend that belief during office hours? Is the historian of faith to see only social, psychological, and historical forces at work when writing about the way Methodists worship, and then when offering up a hallelujah on Sunday morning see primarily divine forces at work?

The religious sociologist, Peter Berger, who is also a person of faith, seems content to have a frequent change of hat.

The sociologist qua sociologist always stays in the role of reporter… As soon as he ventures an opinion on whether the belief [of his subjects] is finally justified, he is jumping out of the role of sociologist. There is nothing wrong with this role change, and I intend to perform it myself in a little while. But one should be clear about what one is doing when.”

This ‘dual citizenship’ approach has been followed by many of the best historians of evangelicalism who also happen themselves to be evangelical historians. Drawing on Berger, Noll reminds us that ‘the atheism of Marx and Freud was principal. For more self-critical social scientists it has become procedural, a difference of great importance.’ A social scientist may not be an atheist, yet he or she must proceed with atheist assumptions. Noll makes a distinction between ‘lower-

61 Seeman, p. 96.
order falsifiable explanations and higher-order dogmatic reflections. The lower order falsifiable explanations are the stuff of history writing; the higher-order dogmatic reflections belong elsewhere, presumably in the writing of theology.

Harry Stout’s award winning biography of George Whitefield, *The Divine Dramatist*, seeks to avoid a hagiographical approach, believing that hagiography belongs to the community of faith but not to the community of scholars. Christian historians must either play by the rules of the academy by boycotting hagiography and theology or consign themselves to ‘separatist ghettos.’ George Marsden also operates within the alternation model and advocates in *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* what he calls ‘methodological secularization.’ This is not ‘methodological atheism,’ however, because it does not deny the existence of God. ‘It just means that for the moment we will be keeping that dimension in the background.’

The claim that the alternation approach is built on a skewed understanding of the self is at the heart of Bradley Seeman’s rejection of it. ‘The alternation approach rests on an unrealistic picture of human beings. No one could actually perform this leap.’ According to John Rawls’ theory of justice, from where the concept is derived, the unencumbered self ‘can rise up out of its own history and stand apart from its private values and interests, which have no place in one’s ‘public identity.’ As a private individual ‘any number of values, beliefs, and stories, may grip me.’

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65 Noll, ‘The Lion Shall Lie Down with the Lamb,’ p. 20.
69 Seeman, p. 110.
However, ‘as a public citizen…I hold in abeyance the values, beliefs, and stories of my private identity’ as irrelevant to my function in the public square. According to Rawls, ‘while we may be thickly constituted selves in private, we must be wholly unencumbered selves in public.’

But can the Christian in the academy be so easily ‘unencumbered’? Dual citizenship is one thing; multiple personality disorder is quite another. Seeman maintains that however valuable the idea of writing history as an ‘unencumbered self’ may appear to some to be, people do not generally do a very good job at it. ‘The fact we actually believe things to be true betrays the alternation approach at its very core.’

Nor is it simply that one must shift between a supernaturalist worldview and a non-supernaturalist worldview, or between a religious and a non-religious one. There are also a bewildering variety of Christian beliefs some of which the Christian historian can believe and others he or she cannot. I do not share the Pentecostal belief that glossolalia is evidence of the Holy Spirit at work in one’s life, but I do believe the Holy Spirit works in lives. When I place the word ‘tongues’ in quotation marks in my thesis, I am betraying the fact that my ‘self’ is indeed encumbered, encumbered with certain beliefs which I cannot simply switch off. I state in chapter four that Australian evangelicalism ‘cannot be understood as something “floating above” or “suspended over” the cultural, political, and social forces that shaped Australia broadly during [the mid-1940s], or any historical period.’ In the same way, no historian is ‘floating above’ or ‘suspended over’ his or her subject matter or

71 Seeman, p. 111.
73 Seeman, p. 113.
74 Seeman, p. 113.
75 Chapter Four, p. 136.
methodology. One cannot simply lay aside who one is in order to arrive at ‘objective’ history. The attempt to do so would in fact be the act of an ‘encumbered’ self. The idea suffers from what philosophers call ‘self-referential incoherence.’ When the idea is applied to itself it disproves its own validity, much as when a person says ‘it is absolutely true that there are no absolute truths.’ The moment a person seeks to be ‘unencumbered,’ he or she becomes ‘encumbered’ with the attempt to do so. The problem with the unencumbered self, then, is that it doesn’t exist. Seeman maintains that ‘strictly speaking, there is no alternation approach, for no one can pull off the kind of bracketing needed to suspend one’s historical situatedness.’

Does God ‘peep in from the margins’ anywhere in this thesis? How unencumbered is this particular piece of writing? For the most part, the thesis maintains an objective reporting style from which a reader probably would not discern any particular faith commitment. Yet, in selecting material, I have been informed by a set of beliefs. When I describe by way of contrast the ‘gum chewing doughboys’ and the ‘sanctified soldier boys’ in wartime Australia, I have to admit that I enjoyed the comparison because I admire the latter more than the former. The reason I admire them is because I believe I see the grace of God at work in their lives. God has leaped out of my introduction and intruded upon my historical narrative. When describing the spiritual impact of the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade, I know that as much as the written style is ‘reporting’ (other than in the direct quotes), I also harbour a conviction that something did happen that year that had its origins in God.

The New Religious History

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76 Seeman, p. 121.
77 Chapter Four, pp. 117.
78 Chapter Five, p. 164-5.
All of this needs to be placed in the context of the state of religious history writing, which currently is dominated, especially in America, by persons of faith, many of whom are evangelical Christians. Earlier historians of religion in America such as Perry Miller, Sydney Ahlstrom and Sidney Mead wrote religious history as intellectual history. Then the New Social History, beginning around 1970, saw religious historians begin to read sociology and sociologists begin to read history. Historians looked to sociologists for theory and methodology and sociologists looked to historians for historical context. This trend also heralded a shift for religious history out from a divinity-school-based ‘church history’ approach to a university-based ‘history of religion’ approach. Undoubtedly the social science concern for statistics threatened to narrow the scope of religious history and led to a certain reductionism as though religious behaviours could be explained in terms of human social behaviour alone. What role could the historical theologian play in the writing of religious history if his or her special concerns could not be allowed to intrude upon the telling of the story? At home in the church-based divinity school, the theologian became orphaned in the shift to the university religion department.

Meanwhile historians migrated out of the divinity school and into the university in large numbers. And those who did brought their religious beliefs with them. Religion scholars in the United States who responded to a 1993 survey conducted by Stout and Taylor registered a strong religious faith, which contrasted with the broader academic community. 78% classified themselves either as ‘very religious’ (47%) or ‘quite religious’ (31%). Only 6%...classified themselves as ‘not
very religious.’79 ‘Related to this is an apparent decrease in academics who profess a “liberal Protestant” faith.’80

Stout and Taylor express concern at the relativism and fragmentation that have entered the field as a result of the New Religious History.

[M]any religious historians have separated themselves from the ‘enlightenment objective’ foundations of the American historical profession. Citing their own personal Christian epistemology with its critique of modernism and faith in reason, they join forces (at least implicitly) with postmodern criticism in denigrating the whole idea of scientific history and the consequent search for a unified history of the American past ‘as it really was.’ By blurring the lines between their personal faith commitments as Christians and their salaried careers as professional historians, they have separated themselves from their origins in social science even as the profession first slighted them. And by distancing themselves from ‘naturalistic world views’ originating in the Enlightenment, they have also distanced themselves from any obligation to relate their scholarship to some professional ‘field’ concerned with ‘scientific objectivity.’ Undergirding postmodern and ‘providentialist’ Christian research agendas is an implicit assumption that one’s self interest is at once one’s scholarly, academic, and professional legitimation. Freed from all commitments to science or professionalism, they, like postmodernists, are freed to be left with themselves.’81

Whether these newer approaches result in the kind of unfettered freedom Stout and Hart suggest is questionable. The New Religious History still utilises social science methodologies and disciplines; it is still interested in establishing an accurate and factual record of events. However, it is not very interested in questions of overarching theory. Where the religious historians of the 1970s used the methodologies of the New Social History to examine mainline denominations, the New Religious History has sought out the little known, the quirky, the particular, the peculiar, and the marginalized - Fundamentalism, Pentecostalism, Mormonism, cults, sects, and religious configurations of all types. Religious historians and sociologists

80 Stout and Taylor, p. 22.
81 Stout and Taylor, pp. 31-2.
alike have given up on grand explanatory devices and have settled for no broader methodologies and theories than those required to investigate the particular communities upon which they focus.

In ‘coming of age,’ leaving the relative safety of the divinity school, and entering the broader world of the university, some evangelical historians have adopted a methodology (the alternation approach) that cannot be borne without the fracturing of the self. Historians who are also persons of faith should be able to tell their stories about the past without needing to consign the metaphysical to prefaces, appendices, and other entirely separate pieces of writing known as ‘theology.’ After all, since none of us physically live in the past we research, any creative account of it that goes beyond the mere chronological recitation of events, involves a kind of metaphysics as we imaginatively visit times and places we do not physically inhabit. It may not be belief in God that encumbers the historian, but he or she will surely be encumbered with something because the complete divorcing of our private and public selves is in the final analysis not possible. It is true that facts are stubborn things. Equally stubborn are beliefs.

Spatial and Temporal Boundaries

Since all the groups under consideration operate overwhelmingly in Eastern Australia, attention will focus on these areas. Wesleyan Methodists are strongest in Queensland, then Victoria, followed by NSW. One church exists in Tasmania, two in South Australia, and there are only two churches in Western Australia. The Church of God (Anderson) is confined to Queensland and NSW with, again, a single church in Tasmania. The 1991 census showed 1,532 persons as members of the Church of
the Nazarene, 846 of these in Queensland.\textsuperscript{82} In 2004, the Church of the Nazarene website listed 31 churches, 18 of these in Queensland.\textsuperscript{83} The Church of God (Cleveland) shows a similar pattern with churches predominantly in the Eastern states, with the single exception of an Indonesian congregation in Perth. NSW and Queensland form the limits of the Church of God of Prophecy.\textsuperscript{84}

The temporal boundaries of the subject are of greater interest, though I have chosen to organise the thesis more thematically than chronologically. Though the thesis will span a century, it seems to divide up best into the following time periods.

\textbf{1900-1945}

The period 1900-1945 saw the arrival of a number of independent Holiness evangelists from North America, but there was no formation of denominational structures. Holiness teaching still formed a part of the ethos of the Methodist Church of Australasia, and had not yet become completely marginalized, though its influence was waning. E. E. Shellhamer, of God’s Bible School in Cincinnati, Ohio, visited Australia in 1936 and declared it ‘a beautiful virgin country ready for a revival of Bible Holiness.’\textsuperscript{85} Canadian Holiness evangelist A. B. Carson tried to establish a Holiness work at the Temperance Hall in Coburg (VIC) in the 1920s with 26 charter members. He held tent meetings in Bayswater and Moondarrah (VIC) and later served the Methodist Church as a Home Missioner on the Gosford and Wyong

\textsuperscript{82} Ward and Humphreys, p. 138.
\textsuperscript{83} In addition to the 18 churches in Queensland, there are 3 churches and 2 ‘preaching posts’ in Western Australia, 5 churches in NSW, 3 in Victoria and 3 in South Australia. http://www.nazarene.org.au/index.html
\textsuperscript{84} Ward and Humphreys, p. 185.
\textsuperscript{85} K. M. Ridgway, \textit{In Search of God}, p. 122.
(NSW) circuits. Sadly, Carson was killed in May 1933, along with his Australian-born son, Asa, then only thirteen, when their car was struck by a train at a level-crossing in Ontario, ending his plans to return to Australia and nurture the infant Holiness work there. In September 1907, the Rev. R. L. Wertheim, a woman evangelist from the Methodist Episcopal Church in Denver, USA came to Wyee (NSW) and preached up quite a storm. Arising partly out of this work, Elliot John Rien would establish the Bethshan Holiness Mission in 1908. The attempt by E. P. May to establish the Church of God (Anderson) in Sydney in the 1920s has already been mentioned.

1945-1958

The two largest of the Holiness churches in Australia, the Church of the Nazarene and the Wesleyan Methodist Church, saw their formative years during the period 1945-1958. Kingsley Ridgway, an Australian RAAF chaplain who had worked with A. B. Carson in the 1920s, and had in fact married his daughter Dorcas, perceived a need for a Holiness work in Australia. He wrote from the Pacific island of Morotai at the close of the war to his friend Wesley Nussey.

I am deeply interested in post-war work, and do see that this is the psychological time to establish a holiness church in Australia…I do believe the time is ripe for launching…There is a nucleus in the Methodist Church in Australia which is ready to sever from the parent church, and a sane and balanced discipline would appeal to them…I have saved a little money since being in the chaplaincy and I am ready to work and preach too to build up a cause that shall be independent; but when another church [the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America] has the funds to launch a strong work, a doctrine and discipline which has proved efficacious in getting people ready for Heaven, and a readiness to back up my labours, should I not count the...

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89 See p. 7.
salvation of souls as of more value than the mere building of a [new] denomination?…Melbourne with a population of a million and a quarter, Sydney with a million and a half, and other capital cities, should have a strong holiness work, and I pray God I may have some part in establishing it.90

Ridgway saw the growth of theological modernism in the mainline Methodist Church as an opportunity to capitalize upon the dissent of more conservative members of that body.91 His evaluation of the situation was to prove to be inaccurate. Only a very few would break ranks with Methodism to join the new group and the following years would prove to be extremely difficult for Wesleyan Methodist pioneering. Disaffected Methodists did not always prove the best kind of people upon which to build a movement and a ‘whispering campaign’ against the Wesleyans as ‘sinless perfectionists’ kept other evangelicals cool and distant.92 Coupled with this was a resentment on the part of some toward American control of the infant church.93

Just as was the case with the Wesleyan Methodists, it was the witness of an American serviceman during WWII that sparked interest in the Church of the Nazarene commencing work down under.94 Meredith T. (Ted) Hollingsworth, a British-born licensed minister from Little Rock, Arkansas contracted a tropical disease while serving with the US Army Medical Corps in New Guinea. Though his orders were that he be sent directly home, he was taken instead to a military hospital in Townsville and then on to Brisbane. After two months recovering he was back on

93 Hardgrave, For Such a Time, p. 65.
94 E. E. Shellhamer, a Free Methodist, had visited Australia in 1936, and written to Nazarene headquarters urging them to consider sending workers. In 1938 Nazarene missionaries to India, Prescott and Bessie Beals had spent two months in Australia on their way home for furlough, and recorded interest. Nothing had come of these earlier connections, however. W. T. Purkiser, Called Unto Holiness: Vol.2 The Second Twenty-five Years, 1933-1958 (Kansas City, Nazarene Publishing House, 1983), p. 180; P. L. Beals, ‘Report to the Board of General Superintendents,’ (9 January 1939), Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives.
his feet and searching around for a place to worship. He came into contact, through
the Gospel Book Depot in downtown Brisbane, with the Mount Pleasant Gospel Hall
(Plymouth Brethren). Here he met 35 year old Australian Army officer, Albert
Anthony Eriksen Berg, and Mr. and Mrs. Hubert Kilvert who were attracted by
Hollingsworth’s testimony to entire sanctification.

Hollingsworth returned to the US, arriving home in June 1944, to attend
Bethany-Peniel College in completion of his ministerial studies. He wrote to Dr. J. B.
Chapman, General Superintendent of the Church of the Nazarene, about the
opportunity to commence work in Australia. In the General Board meeting of
January 1945, Hollingsworth’s report, entitled ‘The Evangelization of Australia and
New Zealand’ was read with enthusiasm, and the opening of the work in Australia,
officially authorized.

1959-1977

In many ways, the involvement by the Wesleyan Methodist Church of
Australia in the Billy Graham Crusade of 1959 was a watershed moment in the
history of that church. In refusing to boycott Graham, it positioned itself more fully
in the ‘evangelical club’ over against an older ‘fundamentalism.’ The Wesleyans had
been the only denominational member of the Fellowship of Evangelical Churches, a
fundamentalist conglomerate of small independent churches, which followed Carl
MacIntyre’s lead in boycotting Graham’s ministry. In breaking ranks with the FEC,
the Wesleyan Methodists in a sense, ‘came of age,’ choosing to throw their lot in with
mainstream evangelicalism, over against reactionary fundamentalism. The year 1960
marked the emergence of a third Wesleyan-Holiness player, the Church of God
(Anderson). The first Pentecostal-Holiness group to arrive in Australia was the
Church of God of Prophecy, in 1956, followed later, in 1973, by the Church of God (Cleveland).

1977—the Present

The formation of the Uniting Church on 22 June 1977 was soon followed by considerable growth in the Wesleyan Methodist Church. The nature of the constituent bodies engaged in the merger which formed the Uniting Church meant that, while there were ‘continuing’ Presbyterian churches and ‘continuing’ Congregationalist churches, who chose not to enter the union, there were no ‘continuing’ Methodists, since Methodism’s system of government was much more centralized. Smaller groups with a Methodist orientation thus benefited from an infusion of former Methodist people after this time. It was around this time that it became strategic for the Church of the Nazarene to begin to advertise itself as ‘a church in the Methodist tradition’ in order to make its theological orientation clear to the public. In 1974 the Wesleyan Methodist Church had four churches in Melbourne and one in Sydney, though it had been operating in the country for over twenty-five years. Wesleyan work opened and developed in Queensland at a rapid rate corresponding with a period of considerable tension in the Uniting Church. The 1980s and 90s saw the Uniting Church embroiled in considerable discussion over the validity or otherwise of homosexual practice. The 1985 Assembly forbade rebaptism of those baptized as infants, a controversial decision which led to the

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95 Recent material on the Uniting Church includes W. and K. Abetz, Swimming Between the Flags: Reflections on the Basis of Union (Bendigo, Middle Earth Press, 2002); Andrew Dutney, Where Did the Joy Come From?: Revisiting the Basis of Union (Melbourne: Uniting Church Press, 2001); William W. Emilsen and Susan Emilsen, eds. The Uniting Church in Australia: The First 25 Years (Melbourne: Circa, 2003).
96 Hardgrave, For Such a Time, p. 11.
withdrawal from the denomination of a number of larger Uniting Church
congregations. Of course, an infusion of disaffected former Methodists is only one
part of the story of this period. Every mainline denomination has suffered a degree
of decline in the last twenty years, yet theologically more conservative groups, such
as the Assemblies of God, have shown significant growth.

Outlining the Field

The story of the Wesleyan-Holiness groups seems to be largely absent from
the historiography of Australian religion. This makes it difficult to demonstrate my
own stance in regard to ‘the field.’ Sociological approaches such as the classic work
of Hans Mol tend to deal exclusively with the mainline churches. Much attention
has been given to the earlier colonial period, to the sectarian debates of the
nineteenth century, and to the church’s engagement in social reform. Apart
from important observations about the ‘Holiness impetus’ within early Methodism,
much of this material predates the emergence of my subjects.

Hilary Carey’s work takes a ‘cultural history’ approach, which includes a brief
treatment of Pentecostalism and evangelicalism. Marjorie Newton’s Southern
Cross Saints details the impressive growth of Mormonism in Australia following the

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98 Breward, p. 381.
100 M. Hutchinson and E. Campion, eds. Re-Visioning Australian Colonial Christianity: New Essays in the Australian Christian Experience 1788-1900 (Sydney, Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, 1994); Iain H. Murray, Australian Christian Life from 1788: An Introduction and Anthology (Edinburgh, Banner of Truth Trust, 1988); Allan M. Grocott, Convicts, Clergymen and Churches: Attitudes of Convicts and Ex-Convicts toward the Churches and Clergy in New South Wales from 1788 to 1851 (Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1980).
101 Broome, pp. 95-125.
103 Carey does not distinguish between ‘fundamentalism’ and ‘evangelicalism.’ Hilary M. Carey, Believing in Australia: A Cultural History of Religions (Sydney: Allen and Unwin, 1996).
Second World War and expresses the hope that ‘comparative religious histories may offer insights into the similarities and differences between the history of the Mormon Church and other American churches in Australia.’

Barry Chant has written on the history of Pentecostalism, but in discussing its origins underestimates the extent of American influence, even though the largest and, in many ways, the most influential Pentecostal groups, such as the Assemblies of God and the Full Gospel Church, have explicitly American origins. Stuart Piggin sees Pentecostalism as an offshoot of Australian Methodism’s Holiness revivalism which aligned itself with the British Holiness movement. Yet this British movement was itself a product of American influences. The Keswick Convention movement, for example, was heavily influenced by the American Holiness movement, one of its most prominent American influences being the Philadelphia glass manufacturer, Robert Pearsall Smith, with his ‘Higher Life’ message. The success of ‘Keswick’ in Australia was partly due to the fact that its moderately Reformed constituency made its message of ‘victorious living’ more accessible than the more radical Wesleyan terminology. Nonetheless its roots were decidedly American. If Chant and Piggin are mistaken about the extent of American influence on Pentecostalism, and if, as I suspect, both Pentecostal and Holiness churches in Australia share a common set of influences in the American Holiness movement, it is interesting to note that the Pentecostal churches have far

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outstripped their near-cousins in the Wesleyan-Holiness churches in growth and influence.

Piggin’s *Evangelical Christianity in Australia: Spirit, Word and World*\(^ {108} \) has focused primarily on Sydney Anglicanism, a form of evangelicalism which, in some respects, is poles apart from the Wesleyan-Arminianism of the Holiness churches. In this definitive study he tells the story of aberrational groups within Anglicanism, which adopted a radical version of Wesleyan spirituality. David Millikan has examined in detail the Tinker Tailor cult of sinless perfectionists that emerged out of Sydney Anglicanism during the Second World War.\(^ {109} \) The story of the Wesleyan-Holiness groups and their attempt to define themselves as distinct from such extremists, and at the same time as distinct from Reformed evangelicals, yet orthodox in their own right, is yet to be told. This thesis is at least one attempt to tell that story.


Chapter Two


It’s a long way from ‘God’s Bible School’ in Cincinnati, Ohio, to the twisted gums and red tile roofs of Australia. When E. E. Shellhamer made the journey in 1936, he declared that he had found, ‘a sincere and hungry set of people. Already I have more calls than I can fill. O, that some of our holiness evangelists would come this way, instead of huddling together and trying to create a blaze on burnt-over territory. This is a beautiful virgin country ready for a revival of Bible Holiness.’\(^1\)

As things turned out, this ‘beautiful virgin country’ was not quite ready to be ravished.

Missionary minded from its inception, the American Holiness movement had now cast its eye on the antipodes. Its representatives would not be warmly received. In order for the Wesleyan-Holiness churches to gain entrance to the existing ‘evangelical club,’ whose roots were in Great Britain, and so move from ‘outsider’ to ‘insider’ status, they would have to negotiate difficult and unfriendly territory.

Early ‘Holiness’ Movements in Australia

The Keswick Convention Movement

The Keswick Convention movement began in England, when a tent was erected on the grounds of St. John’s Vicarage, Keswick in 1875, in order to hold meetings for the ‘deepening of the spiritual life.’\(^2\) A British expression of American Holiness movement teaching, its terminology was adopted to Reformed convictions, though its spirituality and ethos were very similar to the Holiness movement. Where

\(^1\) K. M. Ridgway, *In Search of God*, p. 122.

the Wesleyans spoke of the ‘eradication’ and ‘destruction’ of sin, Keswickians preferred to speak of its ‘counteraction’ and ‘suppression.’ The leading Keswick teacher, Robert Pearsall Smith, was an American visitor to Keswick whose teaching bordered on antinomianism, as he seemed to teach effortless victory over all sin, as a result of the Holy Spirit’s infilling. He was caught in an immoral act with a young woman during the conference at Brighton, England in May 1875, after which time he fell out of favour with the Keswick crowd. As Keswick developed in England, and later also in Australia, the American emphasis on sin’s eradication was further toned down.3

In 1869 the prominent Baptist minister, Silas Mead, influenced by Pearsall Smith, was leading a Holiness movement in Adelaide.4 A Holiness rally was held in Melbourne in January 1875 under the leadership of Hussey Burgh Macartney of St. Mary’s Church of England in Caulfield, a Keswick advocate who had travelled to England to speak at the convention there in 1878.5 The paper he established in 1873, The Missionary at Home and Abroad, had a Holiness emphasis. Methodists held Holiness conventions in the 1880s and formed a Methodist Holiness Association in the middle part of that decade.6 Methodists in New South Wales published a

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3 B. B. Warfield’s influential critique of Wesleyan perfectionism was based on the erroneous assumption that Pearsall Smith’s teachings were a sample of Wesleyan perfectionism. See Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, Studies in Perfectionism (Phillipsburg, Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1958), pp. 247-311. However, such typically Wesleyan teachings as the profound depth of human inability, necessitating an absolute dependence on God’s grace, and the need for practicing rigorous self denial, while availing oneself of all of the appointed means of grace, were conspicuously absent from Pearsall Smith’s ‘higher life’ teaching.


Holiness paper, as did the Salvation Army, who had held Holiness Meetings as their main Sunday morning service since they first arrived in Australia in 1880.  

The Geelong ‘Christian Convention’ was organized by Macartney along Keswick lines in 1891, followed by another in Sydney which drew nearly 2500 people to a meeting at the Centenary Hall, and another thousand in ‘overflow meetings.’ An equally successful convention was held in Launceston attracting another 2500 people. According to Jackson, ‘Thereafter hopes of a national revival with holiness conventions as the chief instrument began to fade. Holiness conventions that continued to be held into this century...maintained a Keswick piety in an evangelical pocket. But there was no significant outreach to the bulk of churchgoers much less the unchurched.’ Periodically there were Pentecostal-type behaviours at these conventions, such as ‘tongues speaking’ at the Belgrave, Victoria convention in 1910, and some emphasis on faith healing through the laying on of hands, but these were exceptional and often caused controversy. According to Breward, the convention movement in Melbourne, and especially the teaching of C. H. Nash on relationship to Christ and holiness ‘widened the appeal of Evangelicalism [as] every year hundreds gathered to hear the Bible expounded…and calls to discipleship and holiness [were] made. Similar conventions in Katoomba in the Blue Mountains were also influential in sustaining Sydney’s Evangelical networks.’

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7 Phillips, p. 81.
8 Jackson, p. 64.
9 Jackson, p. 64.
10 Jackson, p. 65.
11 Breward, p. 257.
The Holiness Impetus in Mainline Methodism

According to Stuart Piggin, ‘no gap in the history of Australian revivalism is as vast as the half century before the 1959 Billy Graham Crusades.’ One aspect of this forgotten history is the Holiness impetus within Australian Methodism. How did Australian Methodists of the 1920s understand the doctrine of holiness and what was the style of Holiness preaching with which they were familiar? This was the period which saw Kingsley Ridgway, who would go on to be the founder of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia in 1945, leave Queen’s College and the Methodist Church to link up with the Canadian Holiness evangelist A. B. Carson. Ridgway’s autobiography recounts his own version of the negative response to the Holiness message on the part of Methodists, but how did Methodists themselves understand such matters?

The 1928 Norman Dunning Campaign

Norman Dunning’s campaign opened in Perth on Sunday March 11th, 1928. It serves as a sample case of the type of ‘Holiness evangelism’ with which Australian Methodists of the 1920s felt comfortable. Dunning came from England with the warm recommendation of Holiness preacher Samuel Chadwick of Cliff College. An MA of Cambridge and a trained lawyer, ‘He preaches,’ said Chadwick, ‘the Old Gospel of the grace in Christ...which saves to the uttermost all them that come to God by Him. Above all, it is manifest that the power is not of Norman G. Dunning, but of

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God.'\textsuperscript{13} ‘One of our brightest Cliff men...He is the joy of my heart, and the pride of my life, though I should not say that to his face.’\textsuperscript{14}

A glowing telegram from the Home Mission Secretary of Western Australia reported, ‘Dunning Captured Conference. Crusade Commenced Yesterday. One Hundred Decisions.’\textsuperscript{15} The idea of referring to such an event as a ‘crusade’ was apparently quite a novelty. A letter from the Rev. Eric Nye, secretary of Dunning’s Western Australian campaign, gives the interesting aside, ‘By the way, he likes his mission to be called a “Crusade”; he uses the word constantly.’\textsuperscript{16}

It is clear that the Australian Methodists of the period favoured rational sobriety over emotional excitement. One gets the feeling of a sigh of relief from the Rev. Eric Nye’s report of the Perth crusade, the inaugural event of the whole campaign.

Those who are making decisions in this Crusade will know exactly what they are doing. They will certainly not be able to say they were swept into decision on a wave of popular sentiment...Not that there is lack of emotion in his presentation of Christian truth. There is a deep feeling in the audience, almost a strained feeling (as if we had been led to a place from which there was no escape ‘without violation of one’s own reason,’ to quite [sic] one of his own phrases); but one is conscious all the time that the mind is master - and the whole audience appears to share the same experience.\textsuperscript{17}

An anonymous ‘Hearer’ at the Kent Town, Adelaide, Crusade was similarly impressed. ‘The [Sunday] evening service was not characterised by any appeal through the emotions. Throughout, the appeal was reasoned out, and...there was no play on the emotional side of the members of the audience.’\textsuperscript{18} The Adelaide

\textsuperscript{13} The Spectator and Methodist Chronicle, vol. LIV, no. 9 (29 February 1928), p. 207.
\textsuperscript{14} Spectator, vol. LIV, no. 14 (4 April 1928) p. 335.
\textsuperscript{17} Spectator (21 March 1928), p. 287.
\textsuperscript{18} ‘Sunday at Kent Town, Adelaide, with Norman Dunning by a Hearer,’ Spectator, vol. LIV, no. 18 (2 May 1928), p. 419.
campaign was held from 23 June to 3 July, with meetings in over 50 churches. The final meeting at the Exhibition Hall would draw 3,200 people.

Dunning was certainly a crowd pleaser. In Adelaide, he led 50 preachers through the city streets in a procession led by a brass band and a banner. He introduced his 50 preachers to the crowd as ‘50 of the happiest men in Adelaide,’ and then told them to take off their hats, face their audience and prove it to them. They did so with beaming smiles and faces that blushed red when Dunning then challenged the crowd ‘to find 50 men in Adelaide of greater intelligence.’ When a policeman saw a crowd of Dunning’s Christian men processing through Adelaide, he declared that at first he thought it was the unemployed, but smilingly added, ‘I found out it was the idle rich.’

Dunning moved east to Victoria and Tasmania for an extended series of meetings from 14 July to 17 December. After the Bendigo Crusade, H. G. Secomb, who, by his own admission, was cautious in regard to the evangelistic methods in vogue at the time, found himself able to say, ‘I have nothing but the most cordial approval of the lines upon which Mr. Dunning proceeds, and the spirit of his service is beautiful beyond my powers to record…God…will use this cultured and devoted Crusader in bringing the breath of a new life to our Church.’

Dunning doubtless won further support from Methodist traditionalists through his use of the Hymn Book. He made it clear that he had a decided preference for the use of the *Methodist Hymn Book*, followed by the *Crusader Hymnal* and the *Abridged Hymn Sheet*, and in that order. H. G. Secomb reported approvingly on the Bendigo

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Crusade, ‘We have used the Hymn Book at all services and meetings conducted by
Mr. Dunning.’\textsuperscript{22}

Referring to earlier evangelists such as Torrey, Alexander, Chapman, and
Gipsy Smith, Rev. R. B. McConchie sees Dunning as ‘cast in a different mold.’ He
‘resorts to no artifices or devices in order to secure an unfair advantage’ and ‘he
resorts to no pulpit pyrotechnics or thunderous roar to compel a verdict…He is a
splendid example of the truth of the utterance that it is not necessary to shout and roar
in order to be heard in the largest building.’\textsuperscript{23}

It is clear that Australian Methodists of the period favoured a type of
evangelistic effort which was clear, rational, and intellectually, rather than
emotionally, persuasive. This contrasted to some extent with North American
varieties of revivalism, given to more emotional expression.

\textbf{The Blurring of the Concept of ‘Definiteness’ in Conversion and
Sanctification}

North American Wesleyan-Holiness evangelists struck a note of ‘definiteness’
in their preaching, which was often interpreted as a kind of American ‘brashness’ by
Australians used to a more muted sort of piety. Such a note of certainty about things
religious was often absent from the Methodist piety of the day. The influence of the
Cliff College brand of Holiness teaching is evident in the testimony of William C. H.
Brenton, given at the Annual Conference of 1928. ‘I have known no great moment of
conversion [but] I was intensified by a period in Cliff College...The Revs. Thos. Cook
and Samuel Chadwick had a great influence on my life.’\textsuperscript{24}

But it is the first part of this testimony, more than the second, which strikes
the interest of the historian of Methodist piety. The admission of having known ‘no
great moment of conversion’ is typical of the published testimonies from the
Conference, which appear in *The Methodist Spectator*. For Edwin Gordon Harris it
was ‘the earliest influences of [his] home [which] made for a real belief in Christ.’
Ralph G. Hunt could speak only of ‘a deepened sense of call to be an ambassador for
Jesus.’ ‘There was a call for Home Missionaries,’ recalled Philip H. James, ‘and the
thought came insistently to me: “Why should I not offer?”’ Arthur G. Jewell’s
testimony is certainly no ‘Damascus Road experience’ when he professes, ‘I am the
product of the quiet routine work of our Methodist Church.’ Similarly, Herbert W. R.
Malseed is able to say, ‘My Christian experience is a story of progression through the
various departments of our Sunday School and Church.’ George A. Osmond makes
the origin of his sense of calling clear. ‘I had the privilege of being brought up in a
Christian home. My call to preach came rather through the need for men, than by a
direct call of the Spirit.’

There were some, such as W. Russell Maltby, who were concerned at this lack
of definiteness in Methodist testimony. In an essay entitled *The Gradual Christian*,
while recognising that a gradual conversion was as genuine as a striking and
instantaneous one, Maltby nonetheless expresses concern at the tendency toward the
loss of the note of certainty in Methodist conversions.

We were not wrong in saying that some conversions might be more
gradual than others, but we were wrong if we thought they could be
arranged to take place unconsciously or automatically. In making
conversion less dramatic, we ought not to have made it less divine; in
seeing it as more of a process, it should not have been less of a
miracle...We never intended to substitute acquiescence in a Christian
environment for the personal experience of the power of God, but this
is what it has come to, with thousands of church-going people today.

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And it is a poor exchange, if, instead of the ladder let down from heaven, whose foot was on the earth and top in the skies, you have only an escalator with its foot in the Sunday School and its top in Church membership.26

That the doctrine of entire sanctification was still adhered to by at least some Australian Methodists in the 1920s is clear. Edward Sugden, Master of Queen’s College, was able to include ‘entire sanctification’ as one of ‘the doctrines emphasised by John Wesley’ at a lunch-time address given to ministers entitled Our Doctrines.27 On Anzac Sunday 1928, at the Central Mission, the President of the Conference, the Rev. J. H. Cain, preached on The Blessing of a Clean Heart. The substance of the sermon, based on Psalm 51,28 was published in the Spectator.

He defined what he believed to be the meaning of the clean heart, showed that notwithstanding much modern unbelief and suspicion it is possible in this great Vanity Fair to know the experience, showed that the blessing came not as a result of our self effort, but as the outcome of the creative energy of the Holy Spirit, and gave some reasons why this prayer should be the constant prayer of our lives.29

Holiness Conventions

The most significant forum for the preaching of a distinctive Holiness message in the Australian Methodism of the 1920s was the ‘Holiness Convention’ designed specifically for that purpose, and held annually by The Methodist Local Preachers’ Association. The 1928 Convention was held at the Brunswick Street Methodist Mission in Fitzroy. Attendance at the Saturday night meeting was 450. Fourteen to fifteen hundred people sat down to the free meal provided at the Fitzroy Town Hall. ‘Our convention stands for holiness,’ read the report on the proceedings. ‘Because God commands us to be holy, and sanctification means instantaneous deliverance from depravity

28 ‘Create in me a clean heart, O God.’ Psalm 51:1.
(see John Wesley), our Convention messages are vibrant with such teachings.’30 Glowing testimonies to a definite experience of entire sanctification were remembered. ‘Some of our brethren entered into the life of purity at our first Convention under the ministry of our late beloved brother Bro. A. B. Miller. Others have since been delivered from indwelling sin, and are today rejoicing in the fulness of the Gospel of Christ.’ There was no ‘gradualism’ set forth in the reports of this Conference. A ‘wonderful spiritual hilarity combined with great heart searching before God’ characterised the meetings. There were ‘many clear cases of regeneration’ for which to thank God. ‘Boys and girls, young men and young women experienced the quickening power of the Holy Spirit, and received a perfect pardon written in blood. We are praying that they may go on to perfection…We thank God for the precious outpouring of the Holy Spirit. To many it was pentecostal.’31

An anonymous ‘outsider’ was similarly impressed in his evaluation of the proceedings.

Though there were many addresses delivered, there was no preaching, as that word is generally understood. The speeches seemed more like simple messages inculcating anew the obligations of the Christian life. At first this aspect seemed like preaching total abstinence to teetotallers, but I subsequently learned that the basic idea of the Holiness Convention was consecration of life and service to the Kingdom of God, and even to strangers that object was unquestionably achieved...One of the most outstanding features of the services was the periods of silent prayer when, in an assembly of hundreds of people, each one individually approached the Heavenly Father in prayer. The building seemed to be converted into a holy place, and the solemn hush was awe-inspiring.32

Banners placed around the walls announced the heart of the Convention’s message:

31 ‘Local Preachers Holiness Convention,’ Spectator, p. 567.
What he claims – I yield.
What I yield – He accepts.
What He accepts – He fills.
What He fills – He uses.\textsuperscript{33}

Norman Dunning was a Holiness preacher as well as an evangelist. On the first Wednesday night of his Perth campaign, Dunning preached on the topic, ‘Assurance of the Possibility of Christian Perfection,’\textsuperscript{34} and on the same topic in Bendigo.\textsuperscript{35} In reporting on this sermon, H. G. Secomb referred to entire sanctification as the ‘distinctive doctrine of Methodism.’\textsuperscript{36}

*The Spectator* published an article on entire sanctification by the respected British Methodist, H. Maldwyn Hughes. After reminding readers that ‘perfect love’ was John Wesley’s favourite term for ‘entire sanctification,’ he went on to complain of some abuses. ‘It is very unfortunate that this doctrine has so often been perverted by well-meaning people. It cannot be stated more clearly that neither in the New Testament nor in Wesley’s exposition of it is it ever taught or implied that Christians can attain to a state of absolute perfection in this present life.’ He recounts how once, while a probationer, he had preached on the help that Christ gives in temptation. A man approached him afterwards and declared that he had no need of such help as he had already been made perfect. ‘I told him,’ quipped Hughes, ‘that I should like to hear what his wife had to say on the question.’\textsuperscript{37}

Much of this contrasts with Kingsley Ridgway’s account of Australian Methodism in the 1920s. Ridgway had come out of Gippsland to offer himself as a candidate for the Methodist ministry. After passing through a profound religious

\textsuperscript{33} ‘Impressions of an Outsider,’ p. 567.
\textsuperscript{34} *Spectator*, vol. LIV, no. 12 (21 March 1928), p. 287.
\textsuperscript{36} Secomb, ‘The Norman Dunning Crusade,’ p. 711.
crisis, under the influence of visiting Canadian evangelist, Alfred Benson Carson, he withdrew from the Methodist Church. For Ridgway, Methodism was entirely devoid of the original emphases of John Wesley. His autobiographical account, *In Search of God*, gives the impression of Methodism as an apostate church that could offer him no spiritual help, as he sought the assurance of salvation. In his own account, Ridgway’s Methodist Church of Australasia was Wesley’s Church of England, closed to the message of the new birth, considering Christian perfection an ‘enthusiast’s’ delusion.

Contemporary documents, such as the *Spectator*, do not reveal a church quite so apostate as all that. When representatives of the Wesleyan-Holiness churches begin to arrive in the early part of the twentieth century they encountered a Methodist Church still open to the old style revivalism, yet beginning to be somewhat apologetic, or even embarrassed about its revivalist past, and feeling the impact of theological modernism in its academies. However, by the time Holiness denominations such as the Church of the Nazarene and the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia were officially organized in the mid-1940s, the religious landscape had become significantly different. Holiness-style Christianity had by that time become a marginalized pocket of the evangelical movement. It seems Kingsley Ridgway may have been right about the modernist direction in the theological college, but less accurate about the presence of Holiness teaching in the church at large.

The Annual Holiness Convention for 1944, now in its 29th year, was held at South Richmond Methodist Church. Run, as were those throughout the 1920s and 30s, by the Methodist Local Preachers Association, it was now advertised as a time for ‘withdrawal from the incessant strain of modern life, and for heart searching and

prayer in a congenial environment.’ The description is certainly a tame one, lacking the distinctiveness and energy of earlier conventions.  

38 A. C. Chesson of the Sydney Free Evangelical Fellowship (later a Nazarene pastor) was one of the speakers.  

The lead article in the Spectator for 22 July 1944 speaks of ‘the essential need of holiness,’ as one of the ‘notes’ of Methodism. However, holiness is defined rather vaguely as ‘a man’s faith issuing in good works and pure life’ and as involving a ‘moral’ and ‘disciplined’ life.  

40 No second blessing holiness here!

In a commentary on Charles Wesley’s hymn All Things Are Possible, the term ‘Christian progress’ is suggested as a replacement for ‘Christian perfection.’ Using a series of rhetorical questions the author suggests that the doctrine of holiness is not very often sung about, spoken about, or taught, and that the older language connected with it is ‘outworn…not understood and not appreciated.’  

41 A correspondent known only as ‘Brother Dan’l’ sets out to ‘clarify the distinction between justification and entire sanctification’ by means of early Methodist testimonies to the experience.  

42 It is notable that, while these historic examples are given, there are no current testimonies, such as would be found in The Australian Nazarene, The Australian Wesleyan or The Wesleyan Messenger from the same period.

In the 20 years between Kingsley Ridgway’s departure from the Methodist Church and his formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Holiness witness in Victorian Methodism seems to have waned significantly. The Spectator of the 1920s ran several articles explicitly expounding entire sanctification as a distinctive doctrine.
of Methodism. By 1945, only a handful of enthusiasts, such as Walter Betts and Gilbert McLaren, through the agency of the Methodist Local Preacher’s Holiness Convention, were continuing to teach holiness in the old fashioned Methodist way. It was Holiness diehards such as these who would join up with the Wesleyans (McLaren was briefly President of the Wesleyan Conference) or Nazarenes (Chesson became a Nazarene pastor) or form their own independent churches (Betts would form the Melbourne Evangelical Fellowship, soon renamed, the People’s Church, at Kew in 1954). These men had become old time Methodists in a new world.

The Social Gospel

The leading socialist thinker in British Methodism in the late nineteenth century was Hugh Price Hughes, who gave eloquent voice to the thinking of B. F. Westcott and Christian Socialism.43 In 1891, Hughes’ colleague M. G. Pearse conveyed to Sydney audiences, his critique of contemporary Methodism. The gospel, he insisted, could not be confined to the saving of souls but must include the addressing of broader social ills.44 Some spoke approvingly of socialism as a war against class and class distinctions.45 But it was the salvation of individual souls that remained central to Methodism’s task. ‘Any scheme of reform which proposed to start by changing material conditions could seem a denial of Methodism, indeed of the divine order.’46 Australian Methodists were as much concerned for social reform as any other Protestant church, but they clung more resolutely than any other to the

44 Bollen, p. 28.
45 Weekly Advocate, 13 June 1891, in Bollen, p. 32.
46 Bollen, p. 32.
insistence that it was an explicitly Christian reform that was required, spearheaded by personal conversion, understood as the only valid catalyst for social change.

The ‘Central Mission’ concept, wherein practical relief was offered alongside gospel preaching, was introduced to Australia by the Rev. W. G. Taylor, who had visited London to observe first hand the programmes being run there under the influence of Hugh Price Hughes’ Christian socialism. Appointed by the Conference in 1883 to revive the flagging York Street Church in Sydney, Taylor returned from his English trip in 1887 to establish a programme with a combined focus on spiritual and material welfare. Conflicts between conservatives and radicals arose after 1890 and would continue well into the twentieth century. As the twentieth century opened and social gospel advocates at times stressed social reform seemingly to the exclusion of personal religion, revivalist elements in Methodism began to close ranks and prepare for militant opposition.

Doctrinal Indifferentism

Revivalism is sometimes blamed for contributing to a lack of interest in doctrine. However, lack of interest in doctrinal questions was widespread in the mainstream Protestant churches around the turn of the century.

By the 1920s Protestants who attended church regularly in Australia and New Zealand had crossed the threshold into a post-doctrinal age. They had become more like those outside the churches in the indefiniteness of their religious ideas. Doctrine continued to exist in the sense that ministers were still required to subscribe to doctrinal standards and that no denominations formally repudiated any early Christian creed. But, speaking generally, standards and creeds now provided at most a feeling of continuity with the past; the actual thinking of churchgoing Protestants about religion had become inexact, formless, and diverse.47

47 Jackson, p. 125.
Methodists, because of their stress on the ‘warmed heart’ of religious experience, were perhaps more vulnerable than other Protestants to doctrinal indifference. During the fundamentalist/modernist controversy in the United States in the early part of the twentieth century, the Methodist Church was the least affected of all the Protestant churches. Schisms in Methodism there were always over ethical issues, such as slavery, and polity issues such as the need for democratization of church government. Methodists have been as rent by schisms as any other church body, but there has been a significant absence of splits over doctrinal questions. Always divisions have related to the living of the Christian life, the operation of the church, and the application of the gospel to society.48

Kenneth Dempsey’s research on rural Methodists in an anonymous rural community in New South Wales in 1966 has shown that doctrinal indifferentism continued well into the twentieth century and, indeed, became even more acute. The Methodists he interviewed understood the role of the church in ‘fundamentally moralistic terms.’ Fewer than a dozen of the 109 people interviewed ascribed to the church a theological role. The bulk thought of it as a useful agency for teaching the young ‘the importance of such things as kindness, courtesy, frugality, and honesty, and the virtues of participation in family life.’49

Barbara Thiering describes her grandmother’s Unitarianism, in a manner that would equally describe mainstream liberal Protestantism, as ‘a no-nonsense kind of religion… “One God, no devil, and twenty shillings in the pound.”’50

50 Barbara Thiering, God’s Experiment: Australian Religion. The Ninth Walter Murdoch Lecture delivered at Murdoch University on 21 September 1982 (Perth, Murdoch University, 1982) no page numbers in the text.
Fervour was worked out in hymn singing and there was no great reliance on professional clergy, who tended to become organizers more than anything else. This kind of religion had almost no magic, little mystery, but a strong rational streak, even if it was not based on profound knowledge.\(^{51}\)

Jackson concludes, somewhat bleakly, that Protestants in the early part of the twentieth century had failed to ‘make a creative, and above all, distinctively Christian impact upon their own people, much less society as a whole.’ Neither Catholics nor Protestants seemed ‘prepared for the institutional church to lose itself for the sake of the Kingdom of God.’

It was as though [church leaders] had an unwritten agreement with their people: attend [church] regularly, support your parish school, give to the church funds - and we will not make any untoward moral demands upon you. Protestant and Catholic leaders alike were in the habit of defining the Christian faith in narrowly individualistic and moral terms. It was easier for everyone that way.\(^{52}\)

The First Rise of Independent Wesleyan Holiness Movements

Elliot John Rien and Bethshan Holiness Mission

Bethshan Holiness Mission, in Wyee NSW was founded in 1908 by Elliot John and Ethel Rien and Esther Wood.\(^{53}\) Rien was born near Lithgow (NSW) on 16 November 1866 to a railway worker, Martin Rien, and his wife. Brought up in the Presbyterian Church after a move to Windsor (NSW), he followed his father’s footsteps into employment in the Railways, before eventually entering the Hawkesbury Agricultural College at Richmond. During his time as a student there he began to attend both a Methodist Class Meeting and Salvation Army meetings,

\(^{51}\) Thiering, (no page numbers in the text).
\(^{52}\) Jackson, p. 173.
eventually joining the Methodist Church. He took charge of a silk farm in the tiny Hunter Valley township of Wyee in 1897, after marrying Ethel Taylor in February of that year. Rien was soon preaching in the district in his spare time, holding cottage meetings and running a Sunday School.

In September 1907, a visiting American Holiness evangelist from Denver, introduced the Riens to the doctrine and experience of entire sanctification. The Rev. R. L. Wertheim was a woman evangelist of the Methodist Episcopal Church who held a series of meetings at the Wyee Union Church during which the Riens and Esther Wood ‘experienced Holiness.’ According to his son, Elliot T. Rien, it was probably the preaching of Wertheim that ‘laid the foundation’ of his father’s ‘remarkable ability in the exegesis of the Bible.’

After running an Easter Holiness Convention in 1908, it was decided that a permanent Holiness Mission should be established at Wyee. It is interesting to note that even though Elliot Rien established the non-denominational Bethshan Holiness Mission, in order to promote the message of Holiness, he never withdrew from his membership in the Methodist Church, and did not exhibit a sectarian attitude toward the mainstream churches.

Mr. Rien strongly believed that Christians should not separate themselves from the various avenues of worship provided by the Evangelical Christian Denominations, and he always stood staunchly behind those churches whenever the opportunity presented itself...He did his utmost to further the work of [the Methodist Church] in the district in which he lived.

Bethshan has continued to operate to the present time as an independent Mission, with year-round camping and convention facilities, a retirement village, and

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54 Rien, p. 42.
55 Rien, p. 47.
nursing home all situated on a 100 acre property. It has had a close association with the Wesleyan Methodist Church for many years, with Wesleyan camps and conferences being regularly held there, a number of Wesleyan ministers serving as pastors of the Bethshan Church, and Wesleyan Methodist representation on the Mission’s board of management.

**E. P. May and the Church of God (Anderson)**

The first traceable contact between Australians and the Church of God (Anderson) is a letter to the 7 July 1898 issue of *The Gospel Trumpet*, from Annie Whitehead of Port Melbourne. By 1907 there were 112 Australian subscribers to the magazine. J. M. and Margaret Philpott returned to Sydney in 1908 after a 14-year absence during which they had come in contact with the Church of God in Lodi, California. Philpott was a full-time tradesman but dedicated his free time to door-to-door visitation and literature distribution from his home base in the Sydney suburb of Arncliffe. He established a circulating library of Church of God books and held Bible studies and prayer meetings in the homes of friends. Philpott reported 6 converts in *The Gospel Trumpet* in April 1909. The 4 November 1909 edition listed the Philpott’s mission as officially recognized by the movement. Early in 1910, *The Gospel Trumpet* published a long piece on the Philpotts’ observations of life in Australia. They noted that there was a widespread nominal allegiance to Christianity in Australia but a low degree of personal commitment and little regular church attendance. They noted a ‘commonality’ between Australians and Americans, citing the warm reception of a group of American missionaries from the Chapman-

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56 http://www.bethshanministries.com/camp.htm
57 Hughes, p. 5.
58 Hughes, p. 6.
Alexander Mission in Boston and of crew members on board visiting American warships.\textsuperscript{59}

The following two years saw little fruit for the labour expended and the Philpotts began to grow disheartened. E. M. and Lillian Beebe arrived in Sydney on Christmas Day 1911, staying for a few days with the Philpotts but later moved to Queensland. The Philpotts did not consider themselves ministers but simply lay people trying to be faithful in their witness. They felt their greatest need was for a minister to be sent to them. The call for a minister was answered by E. P. May, who, interestingly, had been born in Australia (in Goulburn, NSW) in 1887. He had emigrated with his parents four years later, first to England, and then to Canada, where he grew up. May was converted in 1905 after moving from Canada to Ansonia, Connecticut. He became a Salvation Army officer, and while stationed in Pittsfield, Massachusetts, came in contact with the Church of God (Anderson). In 1915 he began to work at The Gospel Trumpet Company, and was also engaged in travelling evangelism. In 1917 he wrote a series of articles on Australia and gave an appeal for missionaries in the issue of 25 January.

On 21 August 1917, May left Anderson, Indiana, as the Church of God’s first accredited missionary to Australia. Along with his wife he traveled overland, holding meetings along the way, and then sailed from Vancouver, British Columbia aboard S. S. Niagara for Sydney. On approaching Australia they detoured to Auckland, New Zealand to elude detection by a German warship patrolling the area. Between Fiji and New Zealand they sailed “blacked out on a zig-zag course and…far from the usual shipping lanes.”\textsuperscript{60} By January 1918, the Mays were holding three regular weekly meetings in homes around Campsie and preaching in Sydney’s Domain. May

\textsuperscript{59} Hughes, pp. 6-7.
\textsuperscript{60} Hughes, p. 13.
wrote ‘…it has proved a great help to be able to qualify as an Australian, for the prejudice against religious teaching by Americans runs high because of so many heresies from America flourishing here to the distaste of the English mind…but they are very much inclined to spiritual things, and readily respond to the truth.’61

The first edition of The Australian Gospel Trumpet was published in February 1918 and on 1 June 1918 the ‘Unity Mission’ commenced its work in a four-storey rented building at 630 George Street, a few blocks from the Sydney Town Hall, with a seating capacity of 160. People began to join the ranks of the Church of God from various church backgrounds – Baptist, Methodist, Presbyterian, and independent. In October or November 1918, Church of God ministers F. G. Smith and E. A. Reardon came from the US and spent several weeks encouraging the workers in Sydney. An advertising campaign saw billboards erected at Central Station and large newspaper ads. A series of meetings was held to which many of Sydney’s prominent ministers were invited in order that they might learn more about Church of God beliefs.62 By June 1921, the monthly Australian Gospel Trumpet boasted more than 400 subscribers. The 1922 Yearbook of the Church of God listed the ex-Methodist preacher J. H. Adams and his wife as ministers in Queensland, E. P. May as missionary and William Sutherland as missionary to Fiji along with 6 Fijian assistants.

Around 1920, Harold Chilver, a 15-year old boy on an isolated farm in Gippsland, Victoria grew interested in the theme of Christian unity. He read a book by E. P. May on ‘The Lure of the Dance,’ which contained ‘an appendage of some length to conform more closely to Australian conditions.’ He had received the book from the Gospel Trumpet Company in Sydney, and it had arrived wrapped in a

61 Hughes, p. 15.
62 Hughes, p. 18.
portion of *The Australian Gospel Trumpet*. As it turned out, this wrapping proved of greater interest to Chilvers than the book itself. The twin themes of the spiritual unity of the Church and of the experience of Holiness greatly interested him and he subscribed to the paper for seven shillings per year. E. P. May visited Chilver’s home and stayed for a few days during which Chilver and others were baptized by him in a dam on the family property.⁶³

Letters from the Mays to Anderson became less and less frequent until the 1926 Yearbook gave ‘the last public mention of the work in Australia for twenty six years.’⁶⁴ Hughes suggests that May was experiencing burn out, ‘the strain of so many years of hard work…finally taking its toll.’⁶⁵ His wife had also experienced illness. Carl Swart who restarted Church of God work in the late 1950s reports that May had encountered financial difficulties, a fire had destroyed the uninsured printing equipment and supplies and May had had a falling out with American church leaders, all of which conspired together to lead to the abandonment of the work.⁶⁶ May came out of obscurity to preach at a Church of God camp meeting in 1966, after the Swarts had recommenced work in Sydney.⁶⁷ May’s grandson, Peter Breen, who is today a Wesleyan Methodist minister in Brisbane has recounted the family history of the collapse of May’s faith, his marital infidelities, and his eventual return to the faith before his death in the 1980s.⁶⁸

**A. B. Carson and the Holiness Movement Church**

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⁶⁴ Hughes, p. 22.
⁶⁵ Hughes, p. 22.
⁶⁶ Hughes, p. 22.
⁶⁷ Clyde E. Goin, ‘How Swift the Year,’ *Church of God Missions*, vol. 31, no. 3 (November 1966), p. 3.
⁶⁸ In a phone conversation with the author on 9th February 2005.
Around 1919, the Rev Alfred Benson Carson arrived in Sydney from the Holiness Movement Church in Canada, with his wife and six children to pioneer a Holiness work in Australia. They worshipped with the Salvation Army at Junee, NSW, for a time, and then relocated to Melbourne, first in Brunswick and finally in Coburg, where they began to hold meetings in the Temperance Hall. Carson was born in Carsonby, Ontario, on 28 July 1877. He was converted in Melfort, Saskatchewan in 1905 under the preaching of the Revs. George Paul and S. Wesley Caswell. He was assisting the two evangelists in the construction of a church building when he grew offended at their implication that he was not truly converted. He was a religious and clean living young man, of whom all thought well, but their questions plagued him until one night, in the building he had helped to construct, he underwent a conversion experience. ‘The night I was converted,’ he remembered, ‘it seemed to me the bottom must have fallen out of heaven.’ 69 A few days later he testified to a definite experience of entire sanctification. He married another convert, Miss Ida Conley, and entered into a preaching ministry. He completed two years of training at Annesley College in Ottawa, and served Holiness Movement churches in Manitoba, Calgary, and British Columbia, from where he received a call to Australia.

While singing in the choir at the Melbourne Town Hall during a meeting of the flamboyant American Pentecostal evangelist Aimee Semple McPherson, 70 Kingsley Ridgway met a member of Carson’s flock. The stranger invited Ridgway to come and meet his pastor, reassuring him that Carson was ‘a real old time

69 K. Ridgway, In Search of God, p. 53.
Methodist.⁷¹ Ridgway, a ministerial student at Queen’s College, was persuaded by Carson to remove himself from its modernist influence.⁷² As he came under the influence of Carson’s preaching, his sense of unfitness for the ministry began to grow more intense. He lacked assurance of his salvation, and the high standards of holiness set forth by Carson only increased his sense of despair. He informed his theology tutor at Queen’s that he was unconverted and thus not fit for the ministry. ‘He was very unsympathetic,’ remembered Ridgway, ‘ “You will be alright. I have had other students who felt as you do, but they got over it after a while.” He advised me to let the church be the judge as to whether or not I was fitted for the work of the ministry.’⁷³ Ridgway would later marry Carson’s daughter, Dorcas. The young couple honeymooned at theological seminary in Canada, while Ridgway trained for the ordained ministry in the Standard Church of America, a Canadian holiness denomination.⁷⁴

In 1920, the Holiness Movement Church of Canada to which Carson belonged had undergone a schism, leading to the formation of the Standard Church of America, under the leadership of Ralph Clifford Horner, who had also originally founded the Holiness Movement Church.⁷⁵ Later, in 1959, Kingsley Ridgway would write to the

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⁷² O’Brien and Ridgway, *Pioneer with a Passion*, p. 27.
⁷⁴ O’Brien and Ridgway. *Pioneer with a Passion*, p. 27. According to Women’s Missionary Society materials of 1973, only after he met an American serviceman in the Pacific during the war did Kingsley Ridgway ‘believe God for his own sanctification’ and be ‘baptized with the Holy Spirit.’ Women’s Missionary Society program materials (November 1973), p. 13. This is very wide of the mark for he had enjoyed the experience of sanctification since the 1920s when he first became associated with A. B. Carson.
⁷⁵ In 1920, the Holiness Movement Church of Canada to which Carson belonged underwent a schism, leading to the formation of the Standard Church of America, under the leadership of Ralph Clifford Horner, who had also originally founded the Holiness Movement Church. O’Brien and Ridgway, *Pioneer with a Passion*, p. 32. In 1983 the Standard Church reported 25 churches in North America, 21 churches in Egypt and a Bible College and Headquarters in Brockville, Ontario. See Rev. Earl Connley, *A Synopsis of the History of the Standard Church of America, Its Present Fields of Activities [sic] and Forward Look* (information sent to the author, dated 27 October 1983).
President of the Standard Church in response to what he felt was ‘a veiled attack upon the Wesleyan Church.’

The Editor, ‘The Christian Standard’,

Dear Brother Brown

I enclose $2.00 for a renewal of my subscription to the ‘Standard’, and I thank you for your good articles therein. I observe, however, that in the issue of December 1st, just to hand, there are some errors in the editorial comments on the article ‘Australia Bound’, reprinted from the ‘Wesleyan Missionary.’

Rev. A. B. Carson, under whom I was converted in 1922, came as a missionary to Australia in 1919 from the Holiness Movement Church, not from the Standard Church as stated. In 1924 he organized a Holiness Movement Church in Australia; but none of its members except my wife and myself have ever been members of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia.

There has never been a Standard Church organized in Australia. When I came from Egypt to Australia in 1940 I did labour to establish a Standard Church; but as I wrote to Rev. J. B. Pring and to Rev. E. H. Thompson, the people here simply would not face up to wearing the distinctive uniform which was required of the members, and I was unable to form a membership. None of these people contacted in that period ever became members of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. Indeed the Wesleyan Methodist Church has actually broken entirely new ground here, and none of its members (except my own family, of course,) even knew me whilst I represented the Standard Church. It is hardly accurate, therefore, to comment editorially, ‘This holiness work in Australia had its origins in the Standard Church.’

I owe much to my Standard brethren; I esteem them very highly in love; and I look forward to rich fellowship with them during my visit to America this year. But I do humbly ask that these corrections be made, lest, if uncorrected, they might do harm.

Your brother in the Lord,

Kingsley Ridgway.

Clearly, Ridgway valued his relationship with A. B. Carson, and his formative years in the Standard Church, very highly but wanted to make it clear that none of these constituted the formal beginnings of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of

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Australia. Interestingly, in 2004, the Standard Church of America merged with the Wesleyan Church in Canada and became part of the latter’s Atlantic District, bringing with it mission fields in Egypt, Mexico, and Ghana.  

What kind of piety existed at Queen’s College at the time that Kingsley Ridgway was a ministerial student there? What was the religious scene to which he was exposed, and which he apparently found so unsatisfying? Queen’s College had been established as the central theological institution of Australian Wesleyan Methodism in 1897. Its first Master, Edward Sugden, established the foundation for what Owen Parnaby calls a creative partnership between ‘the Christian evangelism of John Wesley and the liberal humanist tradition of a university.’ Sugden was an evangelical liberal, who was profoundly influenced by his father’s ‘glowing evangelical zeal for the salvation of souls.’ Believing it to be the preacher’s first business ‘to bring men to a definite decision for Christ,’ he considered himself to be ‘at heart, first and foremost, a Methodist preacher.’ His broad-ranging interests are indicated by his two passionate loves – ‘John Wesley and the history of Methodism, and the Elizabethan and early seventeenth-century dramatists, especially Shakespeare.’ The Wesleyan class meeting was at the core of his spirituality. He first joined a Methodist class meeting when he was converted at the age of 11, and he never gave up the practice of meeting together with like-minded believers for mutual encouragement and accountability. Upon coming to Australia from England, however, he found the practice of the class meeting to be in a state of decline.

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81 Parnaby, 32. Sugden was a collector of early editions of Wesley’s *Works* and he donated his collection to the College. When to this was added by W. H. Fitchett, T. E. Brigden’s early collection, the Queen’s collection became ‘one of the four best collections in the world.’ Parnaby, p. 102.
To some the term ‘evangelical liberal’ may sound like an oxymoron. In the early twenties, however, many were appropriating the findings of the higher criticism, without jettisoning their evangelical convictions. They thought it possible to accept the canons of biblical criticism whilst preserving a passion for soul winning. A. E. Albiston was appointed principal of the Theological Hall and professor of theology in 1920. He had graduated with honours in natural sciences in 1888, the year that Queen’s College opened. His appointment as principal of the Theological Hall came after serving 27 years in active circuit ministry and in 1919, as President of the Victorian and Tasmanian Conference. A description of him as ‘a liberal Protestant, a humanist, and an evangelical,’ reflects his closeness to the spirit of Sugden.82

Some considered the liberal humanism of Queen’s College to be a threat to the evangelical vitality of Methodism. Certain delegates at the Conference of 1898 launched an attack on Sugden’s ‘latitudinarianism.’ His students quickly rose to his defence, but after the Conference ‘a concerned Methodist’ from Fitzroy wrote to the President of the Council, William Quick that ‘some of the young men that go in there [Queen’s] are full of love and zeal for the advancement of Christ’s Kingdom but when they leave they have lost all ardour and become mere talking machines…”83

Sugden was often attacked for holding to the ‘higher criticism’ of the Bible, and for his liberal views on social questions, such as dancing on church property, which Methodist law forbade. But in 1923 Sugden had gained enough respect to be elected President of the General Conference. When the Sports and Social Club approached the Master in that same year for permission to hold a dance, he gave permission ‘with a twinkle in his eye,’ by declaring the common room, for this

82 Minutes, Queen’s College Council (15 June 1900), in Parnaby, p. 147.
occasion, not to be deemed church property. As President of the Conference he had
the power to authorise such a legal ruling, but it was a decision not likely to meet with
approval if placed before the Conference. At the 1926 Conference in Brisbane a
motion was put to forbid dancing on church property, and Sugden spoke against it.
He had no particular desire to champion dancing as such but saw no reason why it
should be prohibited any more than any other activity involving ‘the mingling of the
sexes.’ Card playing, theatre going, and attendance at the cinema held such risks, but
then so did the Sunday School picnic. A member of the Bendigo synod raised the
issue again in 1929 and this time the focus of the concern was back on Queen’s. The
Chairman of the Synod, the Rev. W. H. Frederick, spoke in defense of the practice,
reminding delegates that not all the students were Methodists and that the Master was
‘put in a difficult position when the students asked, “Can we have a hop?”’

The common room dances finally gained acceptance and were held once or twice a term
as determined by the general meeting. Such behaviour was held to be a sign almost
of apostasy to ‘old time Methodists’ such as Carson and those he gathered around
him.

A storm of controversy broke out at Queens over the use of Arthur S. Peake’s
Commentary on the Bible, first published in 1919. Peake was a layman, the ‘doyen’
of Primitive Methodist theologians in England, and held primary responsibility for
that Church’s ministerial training. He championed the new ‘historical-critical’
approach to Scripture and was committed to what he considered to be a more
‘scientific’ doctrine of inspiration than the Church traditionally held. The Victorian

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84 Parnaby, p. 136.
85 Newspaper cutting, The Sugden Papers, in Parnaby, p. 137.
87 In spite of his reputation as a modernist, Peake accepted the historicity of both the Virgin Birth and
the Resurrection. See William Strawson, ‘Methodist Theology 1850-1950,’ in Rupert Davies, A
Raymond George and Gordon Rupp, eds. A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain: Volume
Conference placed his *Commentary* on the list of books used for the training of probationers, and this was to become the eye of a storm of controversy. In 1922, Dr. W. H. Fitchett, a respected leader in the Methodist Church, published at his own expense a booklet entitled *A Tattered Bible and a Mutilated Christ*. Fitchett, the founder and principal of Methodist Ladies College, had also founded an evangelical paper, *The Southern Cross*, which contained ‘some of the most judicious writing on controversial issues.’\(^8\) Fitchett moved that the Victorian Conference remove Peake’s *Commentary* from use.

Nothing so profoundly affects the character and very life of a Christian Church as the place held in its faith and life by one Book, the Bible and one divine figure, Jesus Christ. For either the church or the individual no tragedy can be greater than to have a Bible robbed of its certainty and a Christ stripped of his divine completeness and authority. Nothing can compensate for such a disaster – not money nor scholarship nor social position. Now the Methodist Church is in real danger of this calamity. Here is a fact only half known and less than half understood: that for the past four years all the probationers in the ministry of this church have been required to study both Christ and the Bible from a book that presents the spectacle of a Bible robbed of its certainty and of quite another Christ than that of the great ages of the great creeds that lie behind us. And if that view of the Bible and of Christ gets into the pulpit and saturates its teaching, gets into the Sunday Schools and is filtered into the minds of its children, gets into the religious experience of its members, that will be for the Methodist Church a disaster, deep, far reaching and enduring, which it will scarcely survive.\(^9\)

In spite of such appeals, Peake’s *Commentary* was retained by a vote of 82 for and 107 against its removal. Ian Beward gives a good summary of the ethos that prevailed in Melbourne at this time.

> [L]iberal clergy were…influential…among a considerable body of Presbyterians and Methodists…Principal Arthur Albiston [at Queen’s] and Sir Irving Benson of Wesley Church, Melbourne, were interesting combinations of evangelical heritage and modernizing tendencies. Liberal impact was

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\(^8\) *Breward, History of the Churches in Australasia*, p. 196.

moderated by the warm-hearted piety which was still dominant. It was possible to sing Wesley’s hymns and still appreciate their spiritual power, while being open to the restatement of theological ideas, when there was no confessional heritage enforced to act as a yardstick of orthodoxy. The attempts of Dr. Fitchett to uphold the historic doctrine of Methodism in the 1920s failed, and Principal Albiston’s revisionist liberalism dominated the Victorian Conference.90

It was in the midst of this combative atmosphere that Ridgway withdrew to join Carson’s Holiness tabernacle at Coburg. He did so, much to the consternation of his peers at theological college who considered Carson to be a fool and a fanatic. The report circulated that Ridgway had been hypnotized by Carson and become a spiritualist. No other explanation could be provided for such strange behaviour. After all who, in his or her right mind, would leave the security of the Methodist Church to join Carson’s ‘obscure congregation…who could offer…nothing but poverty.’91

Forerunners of the Church of the Nazarene in Australia

David McEwan has identified the need to research the ‘religious, social, and political situation in Australia’ during the years that immediately preceded the emergence of the Church of the Nazarene in this country. He bemoans the absence of any thorough biographies of early Nazarenes such as Albert Berg, and sees the need for the doctrinal development of these Australian leaders to be traced, both their precedent theological influences and the way those influenced were shaped by American Nazarenes.92

90 Breward, History of the Churches in Australasia, p. 258.
91 K. Ridgway, Search for God, p. 64.
92 David B. McEwan, ‘An Examination of the Correspondence (1944-48) relating to the founding of the Church of the Nazarene in Australia.’ A paper submitted to Professor Raser in partial fulfilment of the course requirements for History and Polity of the Church of the Nazarene (Kansas City, Nazarene Theological Seminary, 1984), p. 1.
E. E. Shellhamer’s meetings in Australia in 1936 were mostly held in Baptist churches. He wrote to the Nazarenes encouraging them to establish a work in Australia. Why he did not contact his own Free Methodist Church is uncertain.93

Ron Gibbins remembers Shellhamer’s meetings at Islington, near Newcastle (NSW) where Gibbins’ father was the Baptist pastor of ‘one of the larger churches in the district.’

He brought with him two large suitcases with his books and publications…I can picture him his snow white hair and his buttoned-up waistcoat…This was in the era of the so-called liberal (really unbelieving) theology. He determined in his heart that he would not go down that track…As he preached, quite often the tears would run down his cheeks, and then he would extend an invitation to people to walk down the aisle and receive Jesus…It would be impossible for me to get away from the profound effect he had on me.94

The Nazarene preacher, Prescott L. Beals and his wife visited Australia and submitted a report to the Board of General Superintendents, dated 9 January 1939. He wrote, ‘There are sufficient churches in Australia such as they are. But there is not one distinctively holiness church in all of Australia…All with whom we came in contact said we were the first “specimens” from [the Church of the Nazarene] which they had ever seen.’95 He urged the General Superintendents to establish the Church of the Nazarene in Australia as soon as possible, by sending a missionary couple.

They should be people of good common sense and not the type who would sing jazzy songs, or do sensational or merely the story type of preaching. Otherwise they would not be acceptable. And yet they must not think they should take the formal route or else there would be no use in their going. And they should be the type who would not, even in a joking way, make light of the ways and speech in which the Australians differ from us. Nor should the work there ever be referred to either by the ones who go in or in our own

93 Prescott Beals, ‘Australia: A Report to the Board of General Superintendents, 9 January 1939,’ Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives.
94 In 1967, Gibbins, now chaplain at the University of Newcastle, NSW was lecturing at the University of Illinois and met the son of E. E. Shellhamer who was then medical superintendent of the University Hospital. Ron Gibbins, letter to the author, 4 July 2003.
95 Beals, pp. 1-2.
records and papers as a ‘foreign mission field,’ but rather as ‘home mission work.’

Beales met with leaders of the Methodist Church who seemed to have some interest in the Church of the Nazarene, and worshipped in churches of several denominations, where he found some ‘holiness sympathizers,’ especially in Baptist churches where Shellhamer had held most of his meetings. Australia did not feel at all like a mission field to Beals, except in that it was far distant from home. A Holiness preacher from the Immanuel Church (a splinter group from the US-based Pilgrim Holiness Church) was preaching in Sydney and Beals saw this as an indication of Holiness groups ‘bidding for the people of Australia.’ A colporteur from Bethsham Holiness Mission wrote to Beals, eager to see the Nazarenes commence a work in Australia, and Beals urges the Church of the Nazarene to do just this.

When the Holiness churches finally did get a foothold in the years following the Second World War, they believed themselves to be providing an unmet need in the Australian community – the message of Holiness as a distinct second blessing. The idea of a ‘second work of grace’ or ‘Baptism of the Holy Spirit’ experienced subsequent to conversion was not taught outside of Pentecostalism and the earlier Keswick movement had lost momentum. The widely-read and quoted Scofield Reference Bible held the view that the age of spiritual gifts and miracles had ceased with the death of the apostles, and so special manifestations and distinct ‘blessings’ of the Holy Spirit were no longer available in the current ‘dispensation.’ Such ideas were very influential in Australian evangelicalism. Early Nazarene leader Alfred Chesson described Scofield’s influence as ‘the dead hand of fatalistic, pessimistic, no more revival dispensationalism [which] has done untold harm in Australia.’ Its views

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96 He then goes on to recommend a couple called ‘the Teasdales,’ Beals, p. 4.
‘are almost universally accepted in Australia and they stultify any hope of revival…’

Holiness leaders saw Australian evangelicalism as dominated by Calvinism, with its insistence on the irresistibility of grace and a ‘once-saved-always-saved’ position, so at odds with Wesleyan-Arminian insistence on free will and the possibility of falling from grace. It could be argued that this Reformed theology has historically been the most influential element in Australian evangelical Christianity. It is the theology of the influential Sydney Anglican Diocese, of many Baptists, of most of the Brethren Assemblies, as well as of the more conservative evangelicals in the Presbyterian Church. The fact that Holiness people were often thought of as ‘Pentecostal,’ did little to help them, as this was certainly not a well-received designation among Australian evangelicals in the 1940s.

Chesson believed, in 1946, that the ‘old Arminians’ (presumably evangelical Methodists) had largely disappeared or become modernist and that where the older British Methodist denominations (Wesleyan Methodist, Primitive Methodist, and Bible Christian - interestingly described by Chesson as having been among ‘the five holiness bodies’ in Australia), had once held the doctrine of Holiness, mainline Methodism had now ‘lost the old message on Christian Perfection.’

In such a context, the American Holiness churches believed themselves to be functioning in a strategic role. While modernists laughed at them, more evangelical Methodists saw them as recovering the original fire of ‘primitive’ Methodism, even if they weren’t often ready to break ranks with the older church and join up with the newcomers. Australian evangelicals in the post-war period looked back to the age of

97 Alfred Chesson to Ted Hollingsworth, 23 March 1946, Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives.
98 Albert Berg to Ted Hollingsworth, 19 September 1944, Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives.
99 Alfred Chesson to Ted Hollingsworth, 23 March 1946 Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives.
revivals as a kind of ‘golden age’ and were influenced by the theological controversy surrounding the inerrancy of scripture in the United States. Unlike their more mainstream co-religionists they were interested in theological questions, at least in so far as they related to biblical authority and religious experience. The doctrinal indifferentism that had emerged in mainstream Methodism left some evangelical Methodists looking for an alternative. It was hoped that the North American holiness movements might provide that alternative. Not yet ready to be ravished, ‘the beautiful virgin’ was at least beginning to be wooed.
Chapter Three
Singing a Hallelujah Song Under the Southern Cross:
The Post-War Emergence of Wesleyan-Holiness Churches

Both the Church of the Nazarene and the Wesleyan Methodist Church gained their initial impetus in Australia through contact with American service personnel during the Second World War. Australian Christian leaders with a desire to see Wesleyan-holiness work commence in Australia provided the earliest leadership after contact with Americans who sparked off the interest. The Wesleyan Methodist Church of America began work in Australia in 1945, when Kingsley Ridgway, at that time a Royal Australian Air Force chaplain, after meeting a Wesleyan Methodist serviceman in the Pacific, offered himself as a ‘field representative’ for the Australian work.¹ In a similar way, ex-serviceman, Albert Berg came into contact with the Church of the Nazarene through Ted Hollingsworth, an American serviceman recovering in a Brisbane hospital after service in New Guinea. This handsome young zealot promoted Holiness teaching wherever he could gain a hearing. The preached on holiness at the Mount Pleasant Gospel Hall, urging the people there ‘not to rest short of…the sure knowledge of a personal Pentecost.’² Berg had in fact now met three different American servicemen who were members of the Church of the

¹ This meeting did not take place in Melbourne as recorded in Ira Ford McLeister and Roy S. Nicholson, Conscience and Commitment: The History of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America (Marion, Indiana, The Wesley Press, 1976), p. 436. The exact identity of this serviceman is unknown. A certain Theron Colgrove was one American Wesleyan who had met Kingsley Ridgway in the Pacific at this time. Colgrove later migrated to Australia where he became part of the fledgling Wesleyan work there for a time. He eventually settled in Queensland, adopting a ‘British-Israelite’ theology and taking the Hebrew name of Abraham Kol. He died in April 1992. Letter from Allen Hall to Miss H. Colgrove, 25 April, 1992. See chapter 2 for background on Kingsley Ridgway. Also, O’Brien and Ridgway, Pioneer with a Passion and K. Ridgway, In Search of God for background and biographical detail on Kingsley Ridgway.

Nazarene, though the identity of the others is unknown. Hollingsworth had gained a sense of purpose.

Late that night, walking back to the hospital with the southern cross bright overhead, my heart singing a ‘hallelujah song.’ Here at last was the answer to the ‘why’ of the long voyage to the south west Pacific, the weeks in hospital and my being sent home via Australia. There was little sleeping done…These people needed a revival of Holy Ghost religion and Holiness churches needed to be organized and established.

![Meredith (Ted) Hollingsworth](photo: Nazarene Archives, Kansas City, Missouri)

When Hollingsworth returned to America, after being discharged from the Army, he enrolled at Bethany-Peniel College, but did not forget his time in Australia. He prepared a report for presentation to the Board of General Superintendents, who enthusiastically approved the idea of establishing a Nazarene presence in Australia. Meanwhile, independent of these actions, the June 1944 Convention of the Nazarene

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3 Ralph Earle, *Fields Afar: Nazarene Missions in the Far East, India, and the South Pacific* (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Publishing House, 1969), p. 120.

Young People’s Society (NYPS) adopted a resolution to raise $50,000 over a four year period ‘for the evangelization of Australia and New Zealand.’

Australian Holiness pioneers were disaffected evangelicals, marginalized from more ‘orthodox’ believers in their Holiness radicalism. They would not only have to find their place in the sun, in the face of opposition from mainline Christian churches, but would also have to defend themselves against opposition from more conservative evangelicals. According to the Wesleyan Women’s Missionary Society in 1973, church life in Australia in the 1940s was ‘formal and dignified.’

Most people were quite satisfied with the status quo. But now there was a man [Kingsley Ridgway] who definitely was not satisfied with it. Rev. Ridgway’s eyes and the eyes of his wife and young family were opened and they gave themselves to God’s work…The energy and zeal of Mr. Ridgway alarmed ministers of other denominations. His introduction of a new church seemed unnecessary. Why couldn’t God work through existing organizations? It was the opinion of Mr. Ridgway that a work of the Holy Spirit in their churches would embarrass them. The Spirit would surely be quenched.

This description of the situation is perhaps naive, but it does express the Holiness movement conviction that the forms of Christianity existing in Australia in the post-war years were not adequate to the task of evangelising the country. They believed that in their own pioneer leadership existed the passion to get the job done, even in the face of opposition from fellow Christians.

American ‘Home Missions’ in Australia

Neither the Wesleyan Methodist nor the Nazarene works in Australia were perceived as foreign mission fields. Perhaps because of the similarity that existed between the two cultures, the new work ‘down under’ came under the jurisdiction of

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the ‘Home’ rather than ‘Foreign’ Missions departments. Church of God (Anderson) missionary, Carl Swart, could not convince the Foreign Missions Board in Anderson to see Australia as a mission field. Part of their refusal officially to authorize and financially support the Australian work was because Australia was not seen as a foreign mission field ‘any more than the United States is a mission field.’

Only six delegates were present, and a kind of reverse paternalism pervaded the proceedings at the first Annual Conference of ‘the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America in Australia.’ It was not so much that American Church officials took overt control of the infant work, but rather that the Australians insisted on deferring to the ‘parent’ body. The conference was held in Melbourne, and overseen by the Rev. J. R Swauger, visiting Secretary of Home Missions in 1947. Kingsley Ridgway had been welcomed by Wesleyan headquarters in Syracuse, New York, as field representative for the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America in Australia in 1945, and Australian Wesleyans had met in an unofficial Conference in 1946. Now at the first official Conference, Ridgway referred to Swauger’s coming as ‘a great blessing to the Wesleyan cause in Australia…we are assured the interests of Australia will be well represented by him in the councils of the home church.’ It seems strange that the Church in America should be referred to as the ‘home church’ when nobody at the Conference, apart from the visitor Swauger, could call America ‘home.’ Ridgway was also able to refer to the American Church as ‘the parent church’ and the Committee on Resolutions even spoke of the ‘Mother Church.’

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7 Lester A. Crose to Carl L. Swart, 14 February 1958, Anderson, Indiana, Church of God Archives.
8 A photocopy of Swauger’s written account of the visit, taken from travel journal entries, was made available to the author by his grandson, the Rev. Joseph Dongell.
This conference places on record the interest and love of the people of our Mother Church in America. Their unfailing love and sympathy in our problems, and their willingness to assist in a practical way inspires us greatly. We in Australia will do our best to be worthy of the trust and confidence our brethren have in us, and pray God’s blessing upon our work together.11

Nazarenes were similarly indebted to American sponsorship. The first unofficial assembly of the Church of the Nazarene in Australia was held in Sydney in October of 1946, when four Australians and one American stood in the shadows of the Sydney Harbour Bridge pylons, as the traffic flowed above them. The Rev. E E. Zachary, superintendent of the Church’s Kansas District, had just arrived to serve as director of the infant Australian work. By mutual agreement, the preachers were assigned to their various fields: Albert Berg to Brisbane, Arthur Clarke to Sydney, Alfred Chesson to Adelaide, and Doug Pinch to conduct an investigative tour for the purpose of establishing a base for missionary work among the Aboriginal people, wherever a door of opportunity should open. The young ‘soldier boy,’12 Ted Hollingsworth, who had been Berg’s first contact with the Nazarenes, had kept Berg well-supplied with Holiness and Nazarene literature, which was distributed among Berg’s friends and contacts. These included Alfred C. Chesson, who co-pastored an independent holiness church in Sydney, with his son Ralph and Harold Madder, a young Methodist home missionary.13 Chesson’s group had fasted and prayed for a denomination to be formed in Australia with a distinctive Holiness creed. In December, Berg conducted a series of Holiness meetings for the Sydney group, where he met Arthur A. Clarke who would join the church in April 1946. As there was no Church of the Nazarene in Australia for people like Berg to join, in April 1945 he had

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13 Chesson had been the pastor of the Free Evangelical Fellowship but had resigned his position after he had come into contact with the Nazarenes. Mendell Taylor, pp. 71-2.
became a member *in absentia* of the Warren, Pennsylvania church, and was granted a ministerial license by the Pittsburgh District.\(^{14}\)

Albert Berg is a towering figure in the history of the Church of the Nazarene in Australia. He served virtually unchallenged and unopposed as Superintendent of the Australia District from 1948 until his death in 1979. General Superintendent, Dr. H.V. Miller, visiting from the United States, made it clear at the 1948 Conference that the time had arrived that an Australian should be elected as District Superintendent and then nominated Berg who was elected with 34 votes out of a total 35 cast.\(^{15}\) This pattern of a near-unanimous vote with a single dissenting vote continued annually until 1954 when, for the first time, Berg received a unanimous vote. Interestingly, A. A. Clarke had resigned after the 1953 Assembly.\(^{16}\) Was his then the one dissenting vote until 1954? Four ‘no’ votes (out of 81) were given against Berg in 1971. His virtually unchallenged reign did not begin to face serious opposition until this time, 23 years after he was first elected to the position.\(^{17}\)

Berg was a single-minded autocrat with a certain purity of intention that was so focused on one passionate objective that it was inevitable he would offend some of his co-workers. Though he never himself completed the Ministerial Study Course before being ordained, he insisted that others follow Nazarene regulations to the letter. One Nazarene minister told me that he did not believe that he himself would have been ordained here in Australia without Berg’s support and returned to Great Britain.\(^{18}\)

\(^{14}\) Soon after this, Berg was met by a friend with the greeting, ‘Good morning, Brother Berg, how is the Church of the Nazarene this morning? Is he well?’ He heartily and good-naturedly concurred that the whole of the Church of the Nazarene in Australia was indeed under his hat, and that, under that piece of apparel, the Church was enjoying 100 percent attendance at all meetings. Parker. *Mission to the World*, p. 587; Earle, p. 120.

\(^{15}\) *Second Annual Assembly Journal Australia District Church of the Nazarene* (1948), p. 18.

\(^{16}\) *Seventh Assembly Journal* (1954), p. 17.

\(^{17}\) A vote, in 1971, to extend his call from 1 year to 4 years was passed 76 for and 5 against. *Twenty-Third Annual Assembly Journal of the Australia District Church of the Nazarene Held at Margate, Queensland, March 11-16, 1971* (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Publishing House, 1971), pp. 24-25.
Britain where he obtained ordination in the British Church of the Nazarene before returning to Australia.

Berg’s annual reports to the District Assembly show him to have been a driven person. Never satisfied with gains in membership, always the church could have done better if it had only prayed and fasted more. He urged the people to ‘prove the Lord…in a manner that is worthy of Calvary.’ If increases did not come the blame must lie with the Church. ‘[I]t will be because we possibly are not in dead earnest with God.’18 ‘As we review the past we can consider what might have been accomplished had we all been more aggressive and more aware of our opportunities and responsibilities.’19 There is a 12% increase in membership,’ but we must pause and consider what our membership might have been.’20 After a 9.25% annual increase in membership in 1961, Berg reported, ‘We have nothing but praise to God for increase and expansion, but all of us know in our hearts that with such amazing spiritual resources we should have done better.’21 A decline in membership of 5 was recorded in 1966, the first membership decline in the history of the Church up to that time. Berg wore this heavily and took personal responsibility for the decline, small though it was. In his District Superintendent’s Report that year he wrote, ‘No leader can absolve himself when there is a loss, and I humbly apologise to members of this assembly for this state of affairs. I have asked the Lord to forgive me and ask you to do the same…’22 The next year would see a membership increase of 2.8%,23 but still,

for Berg, the outlook is bleak. ‘I am persuaded that the increases we have reported are small indeed in comparison to what might have been done and ought to have been done had we prayed and witnessed and worked as we know in our hearts we should have done.’ After some years of little or no gain a membership increase of 43 was reported for 1974. Yet Berg can only say, ‘we should have done much better.’

Berg, in surveying the previous 30 years of Nazarene work in Australia, during the 1971 Conference, demonstrates his deeply held conviction that Nazarene growth hinged entirely upon its Holiness witness.

In 1946 we had one Nazarene; in 1948, we had 128 Nazarenes, and in 1951, 193 [In 1970, there were 567]. In the beginning years of our work we had an aggressive band of witnessing people. They testified with holy contagion to their friends and contacts, and also to Anglicans, Baptists, Methodist, Presbyterians, Brethren, and others, that they were in the personal enjoyment of second blessing holiness. It was a stigma to be a Nazarene in those days. Some people maligned us, others were sorry for us, others ignored us, but some were awakened and prayed through to ‘heart holiness.’ Some of these are here today, still rejoicing in God’s establishment grace. Perhaps our approach back there was not as discreet as it should be [sic], and our ethics not all they were supposed to be, but I do not think it just a coincidence that our rate of growth was at its highest when our holiness witness was at its brightest.

A ‘love offering’ was taken for the Bergs in virtually every Assembly throughout his term in office, which no doubt helped supplement his fairly meagre income. This remarkable display of support, plus his virtually unanimous re-election to the office of District Superintendent in the entire first four decades of the

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27 This annual ‘love offering’ for the Bergs is recorded in every copy of the Assembly Minutes I consulted from 1948 to 1977.
Church’s existence, shows that even though some found it hard to work with Berg and left the Church, those who stayed in had confidence in his leadership.

The same year that Berg was elected as the first Australian Nazarene District Superintendent, the 1948 Wesleyan Conference, elected an American, Professor Leo G. Cox to the equivalent role of Conference President. 28 In his outgoing President’s Report, Kingsley Ridgway informed the Conference that the equipping and staffing of the ‘Wesleyan Methodist Bible College of Melbourne’ was ‘the direct result of the giving of the Wesleyans in America, who have contributed in the neighbourhood of one dollar (six shillings) per member over the whole connexion for the work in Australia.’ 29

Reliance on American money seems to have been abused by some Wesleyans who took it into their own hands to correspond with the ‘parent’ body in order to solicit funds. The Committee on Resolutions, in 1950, had forbidden any approach to the American Church ‘in regard to any business or publication matter…except through the Conference President or the American representative.’ 30 By 1951 Standing Rule 10 was in place making it clear that ‘no direct approach to the American Church for money or gifts be made’ except through the above-stated channels. 31 Nazarenes, while grateful for American resources, including finances and personnel, would also experience troubles over both aspects of the American-Australian relationship. David McEwan’s reading of early Nazarene correspondence observed frequent miscommunication between Berg, Hollingsworth, and Nazarene headquarters, which resulted in ‘too much reliance on Hollingsworth’s interpretation

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28 The official title of this gathering reveals its American orientation. It was ‘The Australian Mission Annual Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America.’
29 ‘Conference President’s Report,’ Minutes 1948.
31 Conference Standing Rule No. 10 in Minutes of the Australian Mission Annual Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America, 1951. This rule would remain in place throughout the decade.
of events [and which] was to have unfortunate consequences for the Australians.  

For example, Hollingsworth was effusive in his reports to Berg about the Nazarene leadership’s willingness to grant him ministerial credentials. But in fact, General Superintendent H. V. Miller had serious misgivings about Berg’s understanding, and experience, of entire sanctification. Under Nazarene regulations, he could not be granted a ministerial license without a clear testimony to a second work of grace. Hollingsworth continued to advocate for Berg, supporting his application in letters to Miller, and even suggesting that he [Berg] receive a $100 per month stipend, from the US. Eventually Miller must have become convinced because Berg was licensed as a member of the Pittsburgh District on 26 April 1945.  

Whenever the newspapers announced the arrival of a ship from the US, Berg would write to Doug Pinch and, like two excited schoolboys, they would meet under the post office clock, ready to search the lucky dip in Box 783 GPO Brisbane. They were ‘waiting for directives from America as to procedures [to be] adopt[ed]’ in setting up Nazarene work in Australia. When Berg requested, through Miller, via Hollingsworth, that a typewriter be purchased to help him in his correspondence, S. T. Ludwig, at Nazarene headquarters, had had enough. This was ‘the straw that broke the camel’s back.’ The problems were ‘…occasioned by the rather loose way official requests have come to this office. Part of them have been written from Berg to you Hollingsworth, and you have relayed them to Miller, who in turn has sent them to me.’ This wasting of valuable time should be ended; all official requests from Berg

32 David B. McEwan, “An Examination of the Correspondence (1944-48) Relating to the Founding of the Church of the Nazarene in Australia.” An unpublished paper submitted to Professor Raser in partial fulfilment of the course requirements for History and Polity of the Church of the Nazarene (Kansas City, Nazarene Theological Seminary, 1984), p. 15.
33 McEwan, ‘Correspondence,’ p. 16.
34 Mendell Taylor, p. 23.
were now to go directly to either Miller or Ludwig. This effectively cut Hollingsworth out of the ‘middle man’ position.

When the administration of the funds for the Australian Nazarene work was shifted from the Home Missions to the Foreign Missions department, communication began to break down again. Berg informed Miller, in March 1946, that no money had arrived since December, no literature had arrived, the situation regarding Doug Pinch’s licensing was still not clarified, and no response had been given to a request for a tent for Chesson’s evangelistic work. On 1 April 1946 they were informed that Berg, Chesson, and Clarke, all licensed ministers, would receive remuneration of $US 25 per week until local funds could absorb the support.

In addition to these problems, there was a concern about the administration of the sacraments. The Nazarene Manual would not permit the administration of Holy Communion by any but ordained clergy. How could the Australian Nazarenes appoint pastors to the churches but not give them the authority to do all that was necessary to shepherd their flocks? The arrival of the Kansas District Superintendent, E. E. Zachary, was expected to help iron out some of these communication and polity problems.

Berg set forth a strategy of establishing an organized church in each of the population centres of Brisbane, Sydney, and Melbourne. He saw Brisbane as ‘almost if not the hardest place in the Commonwealth as far as spiritual values are concerned.’ He wanted to see Sydney be given ‘number one priority,’ and was

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35 Ludwig to Hollingsworth, 25 October 1945 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
36 Berg to Hollingsworth, 21 March 1946, (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
keen to have an American pastor be sent to take charge of the Sydney work.\textsuperscript{38} His request for ‘five [American] brethren’ to work in these cities is perhaps a little ambitious. So also, perhaps, is his suggestion that some of these stay permanently and ‘apply for naturalization as Australian citizens.’\textsuperscript{39} A strategy of holding evangelistic campaigns in the city centres, followed by longer campaigns in suburban town halls was put forward.

Zachary had received over 300 applicants for the Australian work, but again Berg advises caution, since ‘only a certain type will do best here.’\textsuperscript{40} Ludwig wrote to encourage Zachary:

\begin{quote}
I think it is one of the greatest opportunities the Church of the Nazarene has had in all of her years of denominational history. I hope we take full advantage of it and capitalize on the rising tide of national sentiment by establishing a strong organized Church of the Nazarene in the great continent of Australia.\textsuperscript{41}
\end{quote}

The relative pros and cons of being an American in pioneer church work in Australia were presented by the Rev. Joseph Gray in a memorandum to the General Board. The English-born pastor of First Church of the Nazarene in Casper, Wyoming, with extensive Canadian and American experience, believed any Nazarene working in Australia should have both British and American training, because a man with no British background will find that his work is hindered. On the other hand, anyone entirely British will lack ‘the peculiar swing that Americans possess’ and put into pioneer work. He should have at least one college degree, because ‘Britishers set much more store by degrees than the average American.’ He should not be too young, since ‘a certain touch of maturity is almost a necessity for successful leadership in British territory.’ He should have American citizenship to enable him to

\begin{footnotesize}
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  \item \textsuperscript{38} Appendix 3 in McEwan, p. 58.
  \item \textsuperscript{39} Appendix 3 in McEwan, p. 59.
  \item \textsuperscript{40} Berg to Hollingsworth, 6 June 1946, (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
  \item \textsuperscript{41} Ludwig to Zachary, 22 August 1946, (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
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move in and out more freely than if he holds British citizenship. Clearly, Australia is seen by Gray as British territory, yet at the same time ‘more receptive to Americans and American ideas and customs than to the English.’

In Berg’s first report to the General Boards in the USA he is clearly pro-American in sentiment. ‘I have endeavoured, wherever I have been to get the folk used to the idea of Americans coming across to help get the work started and the response has been excellent. In the main Australians appear to fraternise with Americans in preference to the English.’ The General Board did not want to appoint Ted Hollingsworth to the Australian work, but wanted him to stay at Bethany-Peniel College where he had gone to complete his ministerial training. Nor did they want Berg to come to America, ‘because they saw him as the key man in the Australian work.’

H. V. Miller saw it as imperative to send American personnel to Australia, ‘to assist them in properly organizing and evangelizing,’ but this number should be limited to no more than one or two, others going for shorter periods.

Nazarene headquarters was desirous of sending a denominational official to tour the country but Berg did not support the idea. Hollingsworth informed Miller that Berg’s position was ‘based upon the fact that you cannot rush the Australians too fast. Their confidence is won gradually or not at all.’ When Alan Cunningham, who had been involved in the Mount Pleasant congregation left the armed forces and was hoping to return to Brisbane from the States with a team of Americans, Berg was...

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42 The material in this paragraph is drawn from a letter from Gray to Ludwig, 30 December 1944, (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
43 McEwan, Appendix 3.
45 Miller to Chapman, 4 June 1945 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
46 Hollingsworth to Miller, 8 January 1946 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
again cautious. ‘He would need to be very careful in his selection,’ he wrote to Hollingsworth, ‘as the Australian mind needs handling aright…’

It was not so much being American that was seen as giving the American Nazarenes expertise, but being Nazarene. Clarke, for example, felt that the Rockdale church would not see much progress until Zachary arrived ‘to interpret and implement the spirit and the authority of the church and the Manual.’ When Zachary arrived in early October he attended a conference of the preachers in Sydney and a policy of partnership between American and Australian leadership was agreed upon. The presence of American leadership was welcomed but it was felt that ‘an American and an Australian pastor should be located as close together as possible…so they can learn from each other and in a combination of both…the best ways and means’ could be selected. Overall there seems to have been an absence of any real paternalism and a desire to see Australian leadership emerge as soon as possible.

After holding revival services in the Sydney suburb of Campsie, Zachary organized the Sydney group into the first Australian Church of the Nazarene, on November 3, 1946, with 20 charter members. A. A. Clarke was appointed pastor. Zachary carried out a tireless work of organization, until his departure for the United States in December 1948, attempting to bring to this somewhat disparate and far-flung set of pioneers, among other things, ‘training in Nazarene techniques of administration,’ a phrase that suggests a certain ‘by-the-book’ approach to church government.

47 Berg to Hollingsworth, early March 1946, (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
48 Clarke to Ludwig, 6 September 1946, (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
49 McEwan, ‘Correspondence,’ p. 30.
Albert Berg was convinced that Australians must not only be won to Christ and lead into the experience of holiness.

We must [also] make Nazarenes of them. That is a rather indefinable process, and yet we all recognize it when it is present. It expresses itself in some of our methods and certainly always in our spirit and vision. It has come to be known for want of a better term as ‘the Nazarene stamp.’ It is not American for it does not characterize the other churches in America, and it is not British for it does not characterize the other churches in Britain. It is Nazarene and is our peculiar heritage and characterizes our people around the world.\(^{51}\)

Zachary was equally as impressed with the Australians as they seemed to have been with him. They were seen as ‘men…of the finest type,’ and the work in Sydney ‘comparable to any new work…seen in the States.’ But Zachary was nonetheless experiencing some degree of culture shock. There was an acute housing shortage, which left him still without permanent accommodation. In many ways Australia seemed to him ‘25-75 years behind the times…’\(^{52}\) and this view was reflected also in an article in Conquest the magazine of the Nazarene Young People’s Society, compiled from the Australian News and Information Bureau and the American War Department. Though Australians are ‘an outdoors kind of people…very democratic

\(^{51}\) Hardy C. Powers, letter to Albert Berg, 28 February 1955 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).

\(^{52}\) Zachary to Ludwig, 12 December 1946, (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
and breezy’ and ‘a generation closer to their pioneering ancestors than...Americans
are,’ this pioneering proximity has its downside. ‘A lot of things in Australia
(particularly things like personal comfort) are still in the horse and buggy stage...At
all events many of these things seem pretty crude to Americans who come from a
country with the highest standard of comfort in the world.’ The Americans admired
the ‘lively sense of independence and rugged individualism’ of Australians which did
not seem to clash with a corresponding ‘strong sense of co-operation.’ The worst
thing an Australian could say about another person was that he had let his ‘cobbers’
down.54

‘It is hard to conceive,’ wrote Zachary, ‘how poor the average Australian is,’
high taxes and a high cost of living leaving the average person ‘barely eking out a
living.’ In spite of these hard realities, the Americans continued to be very
optimistic about the prospects for Nazarene work in Australia, and some of the
Australians tended to see American involvement as solving all of their problems, and
even initiating a nation wide spiritual awakening. McEwan observed ‘a note of
unreality’ in all of this.

The Americans failed to realise that Australia was a ‘foreign’ country and not
just a ‘poor version of America’; the cultural differences were not appreciated.
The effects of the Depression and the War were not taken seriously by Church
leaders who had been ‘isolated’ in a thriving American economy. Likewise,
the vast differences in religious outlook between the two nations was totally
ignored. The following year was to considerably dampen their enthusiasm.56

In January of 1947 Zachary and Berg left Brisbane for a five week
evangelistic tour of the Eastern states, during which they would receive news from
the Australian immigration authorities that would disrupt all of their plans. Under his

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54 ‘Let’s Go Down Under,’ p. 29.
55 Zachary to Miller, 26 December 1946, (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
56 McEwan, p. 33.
current visa status Zachary could not stay in Australia longer than six months at a
time, and he would not be granted permanent residency status. He was required to
submit his finances to the taxation department which would have led to a tax bill of
$US 1744 for the year, an amount that, if paid, would not have enabled him to
provide for his family. 57 Without permanent residency he was not allowed to
purchase property, and the Australian church would have found it difficult to
purchase a parsonage for him, given the acute housing shortage which was expected
to continue another three or four years. Zachary wired Miller and laid out the
situation in a detailed letter. He considered the government’s position to be ‘anti-
American’ and advised that no other American preachers should be sent over under
such circumstances. Philosophical about the government’s attitude, Zachary wanted
to see the bright side of the situation. ‘Australian men will be much cheaper to
support in the long run than American men here…If we are careful we can get a lot
done with $15,000 by using Australian men.’ 58 Zachary chaired the first Australian
District Assembly and left Australia at the end of 1948 when his visa expired,
returning occasionally thereafter for shorter periods. 59

57 He was earning $US 60 per week plus housing allowance and expenses. The Australians were
earning $US 25 per week with no expenses. ‘Australian Receipts 1946,’ (Kansas City, Missouri,
Nazarene Archives).
58 Zachary to Miller, 19 February 1947, (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
59 *Journal of the first District Assembly of the Australian District of the Church of the Nazarene, 1-4
The early Wesleyan Methodist Conferences were always presided over by American personnel. Dr. Reisdorph, General Conference Sunday School Secretary, presided in 1952. Along with his wife, he was said to have been led by God ‘to lead some of the students into clear and definite experiences of entire sanctification.’ In 1953, another American, the Rev. Robert Mattke, was elected President of the Conference.

Yet the obvious American influence does not seem to have been exerted in an overly controlling sense. From the beginning the need to indigenize was encouraged and pursued. The *Australian Wesleyan* was founded as ‘the official organ’ of the Church at a Special Session of the 1947 Conference, with Kingsley Ridgway as editor. This was followed by the *Wesleyan Witness*, later to be discontinued in favour of the American publication the *Wesleyan Methodist*, which was sent to subscribers only, and initially drew a poor response.

In 1949, after thanking the American Church for its generosity toward the Wesleyan Methodist Bible College, Kingsley Ridgway asserted the need for a self-

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60 Kingsley Ridgway, ‘Education Secretary’s Report,’ Minutes, 1952, p. 45.
61 Minutes, 1947, p. 15. Unfortunately, it then seems to drop out of the record until much later.
62 ‘Literature Secretary’s Report,’ Minutes 1953, p. 66.
supporting work to emerge. ‘We cannot expect…that financial help on such a munificent scale will continue. Let it be our earnest endeavour to make our work self-supporting; and that as readily as possible.’

Professor Leo Cox, Principal of the Wesleyan Methodist Bible College, set a goal in 1952 of increasing efforts ‘to extend the message of holiness in Melbourne and country areas by printing and evangelistic means, and if possible by radio.’ The *Light and Life* radio programme was in use in 1954. This was ‘canned’ material from the Free Methodist Church, a sister Holiness body in the United States, and so the public voice of the Church was also an American one. This quarter-hour programme was broadcast each Sunday morning at 8.30 on 3XY. Conference President Mattke’s praise of the material is somewhat faint.

> [E]ven though the program isn’t all that we would desire yet it has been of definite benefit to us. If we as a Conference desire a radio ministry of our own we shall need the facilities and equipment necessary to produce a creditable program. We shall, however, always be grateful to the Life and Light staff for supplying us their programs without cost.

The radio contract was discontinued the following year. Alternative arrangements must have been found however, as Brother Mattke’s American tones are heard on the radio again in 1956, when he reports having given three radio addresses. By 1964, the Church of God (Anderson) was broadcasting W. Dale Oldham’s *Christian Brotherhood Hour* in Australia.

Similarly, the Nazarenes sought to indigenize their church work as soon as possible. A publication called the *Australian Nazarene* was launched in the early

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63 ‘Conference President’s Report,’ Minutes, 1949.
64 ‘Conference President’s Report,’ Minutes, 1952, p. 37.
66 ‘Conference President’s Report, Minutes 1954, p. 95.
68 ‘President’s Report,’ Minutes 1956, p. 178.
days of the church. This was an eight page monthly, edited by Berg, but containing mostly American material.\(^{70}\) Berg stressed the importance of Australian material in a letter to G. B. Williamson, Nazarene General Superintendent. ‘[A]rticles written [for the pages of *The Australian Nazarene*) by American or any other Nazarenes are well accepted. But I am working on a greater percentage of articles written by Australian Nazarenes and appreciate your understanding attitude in this connection.’\(^{71}\) Berg wants a periodical that presents the Nazarene message ‘in a true Australian fashion,’ presenting everything ‘in a way that is just peculiar to Australians.’\(^{72}\)

Auxiliary organizations were quickly established, and from the beginning these sought to indigenize. For example, the *Caravan* programme, introduced in 1953 (a kind of Nazarene version of scouts and guides), adopted Australian motifs and awards to substitute for the American ones. The *Showers of Blessing* radio programme began to give the Church of the Nazarene a public presence. The Third District Assembly, held 4-8 January, 1950 reported the programme being aired on six stations around Australia.\(^{73}\) In Brisbane and on the Darling Downs it went to air at 8am on Sunday mornings, and was seen as breaking down prejudicial attitudes toward the new church. In Tweed Heads, the leading publican reportedly declared that he never missed the programme.\(^{74}\) However, as with the Wesleyan Methodist equivalent, the broadcasts were made in the United States (in the case of the Nazarenes, canned in Kansas City), and shipped over for replay here, so the public

\(^{70}\) Mendell Taylor, pp. 76-7.
\(^{71}\) Albert Berg to G. B. Williamson, 7 June 1949 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
\(^{72}\) Albert Berg to Ted Hollingsworth, 25 January 1946 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives), p. 3.
\(^{73}\) In 1947, these included 4BK Brisbane, 4AK Darling Downs, and 2MW Murwillumbah. Pinch, 38.
\(^{74}\) Pinch, p. 40.
‘voice’ of the church, at least on the airwaves, was an American one.  

‘Of course,’ wrote Berg, ‘we have to omit references to the U. S. in any material we publish and often are not able to broadcast a “Showers of Blessing” programme in so far as it directly concerns the American nation and this would sound very strange to Australian people.’  

According to Richard Taylor, however, ‘there has been no desire to “Americanize” the Australian work but to “Nazarenize” it.’  

An American church leader’s reflections on the young Wesleyan Methodist movement in Australia can be gained from Roy S. Nicholson who visited in late 1954. Nicholson was General Conference President and ‘the dominant figure’ of the period 1935-1968, in the history of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America. He had come to encourage the young church in the antipodes, to chair the Annual Conference, and to spend five and a half weeks touring the churches. In the midst of ‘a brilliant career of service,’ when he arrived in Australia, he had risen from simple beginnings to the ‘genteel poverty’ of the clergyman. He once stated that he had no consciousness of the fact that he was economically disadvantaged until he was fifty years old.  

His integrity, patience, open mindedness and giftedness as a communicator, contributed significantly to the development of Wesleyan Methodism in America from a ‘sect’ into a ‘denomination.’ In identifying four distinct types of people either as reactionaries, conservatives, radicals, or realists, he recommended the

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75 In 1947 a certain ‘Dr. Reed,’ by 1950 the voice was that of the Rev. Dr. Russel V. De Long. “Radio Secretary’s Report,” Third District Assembly Journal (January 4th – 8th Northmead, NSW, 1950); Pinch, p. 39.  
76 Albert Berg to G. B. Williamson, 7 June 1949 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).  
77 Richard Taylor, Our Pacific Outposts (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1956), pp. 107-8. Explicit anti-American sentiment as the basis of opposition to the Holiness churches will be discussed in detail in chapter four.  
80 Leon O. Hynson, ‘They Confessed Themselves Pilgrims’ in Caldwell, Reformers, p. 246.
latter as a model. It is the realists who ‘with honest hearts and open minds carefully weigh new ideas before adopting, adapting, or rejecting them…They show the patience of self-control, the generosity of tolerance, and the steadfastness of faith.’\textsuperscript{81} Nicholson was one such person, though he would not perhaps have readily included himself among them. When the church threatened to steer a path of legalism, Nicholson’s sane interpretation of church law directed it instead to evangelism – an orientation which was \textit{for} rather than \textit{against} the world.\textsuperscript{82}

When Nicholson stepped onto the tarmac at Mascot airport in December of 1954, he was struck by the heat of an Australian summer. It was to be his first Christmas away from home in thirty years. He was met by a fellow American, Robert Mattke, though it was Mattke’s faith, rather than his nationality, which cheered him. ‘How thankful I was to see a fellow Wesleyan in this large and strange land!’\textsuperscript{83} There were no Wesleyan Methodists in Sydney in 1953, but there were Nazarenes, and Nicholson’s first preaching appointment was at the Nazarene Bible College, where Richard S. Taylor, later to become a stern Holiness statesman, was then pastor and president. After preaching in a suburban Nazarene church on Sunday evening, he flew on the next day, accompanied by Mattke, to Melbourne. Landing at Essendon Airport, he was met enthusiastically by the Wesleyan Methodist Bible College ministers and students, before whom he would preach at the graduation service.

\textsuperscript{82} Lee M. Haines and Paul William Thomas, \textit{An Outline History of the Wesleyan Church} (Marion, Wesley Press, Third revised edition, 1985), pp. 94-6.
Nicholson was concerned for the Aboriginal people and also insisted that the challenge of ‘new Australians’ [European immigrants] must be met.\textsuperscript{84} He also noted the ‘menace’ of communism, which ‘seizes upon every point it can to raise contention, confuse thinking, agitate the public mind and create mistrust in the government of the country.’\textsuperscript{85}

Australia is a vast field with a great spiritual need. It is a meeting place for the peoples of many countries. It occupies a place of strategic importance in the world program, for it is at the doorstep of Asia. It is in the eyes of the world powers who might like it for their overcrowded millions. One of the contributions which our Church can make to this important continent is to help it recover its appreciation for moral and spiritual values, and thereby be fortified against whatever the future may hold for it in its strategic relation to both the Orient and the Occident. Pray for the success of our effort in this great land.\textsuperscript{86}

On Saturday afternoon at the Balwyn Sunday School, where ‘Brother and Sister Favalora’ were in charge, Nicholson had to learn how different were some of the Sunday School customs in Australia, ‘many of which,’ he thought, ‘we would do well to use in America.’ It is difficult to say what these ‘customs’ were, though perhaps holding ‘Sunday’ School on a Saturday may have been one of the innovations! Sunshine also held its Sunday School on a Saturday. In fact, the greater part of Wesleyan work in these days was among children, ‘Sunday School’ attendances being consistently higher than adult church attendance. ‘Unfortunately,’ mused Nicholson, ‘most of the adults in Australia do not attend Sunday School, evidently not having been trained to feel that it is for them.’\textsuperscript{87}

The picture that emerges from the early source material is not one of aggressive American missionary effort or paternalistic control, but of churches with Australian leaders looking to much stronger and well established American ‘big-sister’ churches for the resources needed to succeed in their mission of spreading the Holiness evangel down under.

‘Dark Days and Long Hard Pulls’: Opposition on Theological Grounds

Among fellow evangelicals, the Holiness churches were seen as theologically suspect. A major element within Australian evangelicalism, with its colonial roots in English Calvinism, was decidedly anti-Methodist in its theology. Calvinism’s stress on human depravity and inability made the Wesleyan claim to ‘Christian perfection’ seem a hopeless pipe dream, and more than this, a dangerous heresy. In order for the Wesleyan-Holiness churches to gain acceptance they would have to negotiate this difficult and unfriendly territory.

American Holiness movement churches saw Australia almost as a pagan country, without any history of revivalism and without any witness to ‘Holiness’ before their own arrival. Where they might have hoped to find support from like-minded evangelicals, similarly concerned to evangelize Australia, they often found opposition instead.

The nature of the opposition that early Holiness leaders thought of themselves as facing was almost always characterised as ‘Calvinist.’ Objection to Wesleyan teaching was usually put down to a Calvinistic hegemony among evangelicals. There was certainly some truth in this, as Australian evangelicalism in its earliest colonial

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88 I use the term ‘evangelical’ rather than ‘fundamentalist,’ because the latter term has now taken on a very different meaning, with overtones of extremism and social threat. I define the term ‘evangelical’ for the purposes of this thesis as ‘a conservative Christian stance which looks to the Bible for its authority and actively seeks the conversion of others to the Christian faith.’
beginnings was of the low-church Anglican, moderate Reformed variety. Though ‘Arminian’ theology would arrive with the first Methodist class meeting in 1812, and the first Methodist preacher, the Rev. Samuel Leigh, in 1815, Sydney Anglicanism’s ‘puritan’ theology would dominate Australian evangelicalism. When Doug Pinch refers to Australia as ‘a Calvinistic country,’ however, he is certainly overstating the strength of the opposition.

Percy Dawson, Albert Berg’s brother-in-law, had attempted to spread Holiness teaching in a series of articles in interdenominational papers, but ‘bitter opposition’ to these soon arose. The Brethren publication *The Testimony* warned against the Church of the Nazarene as ‘a modern heresy’ alleging a motivation of financial greed, and attacking its theological stance. The Brethren staunchly held to the doctrine of ‘perseverance,’ often popularly expressed as ‘once saved, always saved,’ and could not abide the Wesleyan belief in the possibility of falling from grace.

This cult which is making itself felt in Australia, wholly and solely by the wealth behind it, needs to be examined and exposed in order to preserve the steps of the saints…With the unscriptural name that designates them, we can expect further error and none other than the falling away doctrine. This is not new, but is taught in Methodism, Pentecostalism and the Salvation Army. Where there is lack of knowledge of the finished work of Christ…there can be no real settled peace in the heart…

A letter to Albert Berg from H. W. Bragg, a disgruntled recipient of Nazarene literature, gives further indication of the strength of feeling associated with rejection of the Nazarenes.

On several occasions I have received periodicals of the Nazarene doctrine. I am unaware as to who is so foolish as to send such rubbish to me, but as you

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91 J. C. Russell, “Modern Heresies,” a clipping from *The Testimony* (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives), no date, no publishing details.
are a principal in the propagation of such doctrine I write to ask a cessation of these postings…All correspondence received to present date has been consigned to the rubbish bin – a place worthy of it. I am, without any apologies, H. W. Bragg.\(^{92}\)

Melbourne was the site of the sixth Nazarene congregation, where Erle Spratt, then a young Melbourne Bible Institute graduate, became pastor, after, in his turn, winning over his fellow student, the lay preacher Stanley Simmons and his wife. Simmons had at first opposed the Nazarene doctrine as heretical. Yet there was something appealing in this ‘heresy.’ Simmons began to pray, ‘Lord, we want you to save Erle from getting into heresy; but we feel he has something we haven’t got, and if it is the truth we want You to give it to us.’\(^{93}\) Simmons and his wife began a close study of the Greek New Testament, focusing on Romans chapters 6 through 8, and after much reflection concluded, ‘Well…there is no use fooling around; we are wrong and [Spratt] is right. It is clear to me that all this talk about “sinless perfection” is humbug.’\(^{94}\)

Spratt, who had been converted to the cause by Berg, and previously served as pioneer pastor in Melbourne, took over in Adelaide and served sacrificially in the face of much opposition. ‘People were afraid to attend their services, for they had been warned against their spurious doctrines. Prejudice against the message of holiness was deeply entrenched and openly encouraged.’\(^{95}\)

Several of Berg’s family and friends had been excommunicated from Brethren assemblies in Brisbane and Berg was publicly denounced in Brethren circles. Berg wrote to Hollingsworth, ‘The whole “Brethren” movement in Queensland has received a severe shock…One of their leading men said that they may even lose the

\(^{92}\) H. W. Bragg to Albert Berg, 9 September 1947, (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
\(^{93}\) Richard Taylor, p. 102.
\(^{94}\) Richard Taylor, p. 102.
\(^{95}\) Richard Taylor, p. 76.
cream of their “assemblies” to the Nazarene Church…For folk to take their stand for Holiness here now will cost much.”

Roy Nicholson noted the divisive spirit that persisted among some Australian evangelicals. These differences existed not only over theology, but also over a fear of organization, and a preference for a more ‘spiritual’ church. The Wesleyan and Nazarene penchant for rules and a definite church polity, as represented, respectively, by their *Discipline* and *Manual* would not have appealed to these more ‘spiritual’ evangelicals.

There are many churches here, and also great division of spirit and contentions over minor matters between certain groups; as well as a definite fear of organization on the part of many who desire a genuinely spiritual ministry and message. There is much apathy toward religion by the masses of the Australian people. From the outset our [Wesleyan Methodist] Church has encountered many hurdles, and some formidable barriers were erected by those who should have welcomed us as colleagues. Gradually much of that is being overcome and the religious public is looking with more favor upon our work.

One event which might have contributed to this more favourable view was Wesleyan involvement, in 1955, with Melbourne’s largest non-denominational youth rally, *This is Life*, sponsored by Crusaders for Christ. Nicholson preached and the Wesleyan Methodist Bible College choir was ‘honoured with an invitation to sing.’

‘Best of all,’ remembered Nicholson, ‘God met with us and gave souls!’ A Leaders Conference was held in the evenings of the second week of Nicholson’s visit which ‘was planned, primarily, to create a better understanding of [the Wesleyan Methodist] Church, its origin, organization, doctrine, departmental activities, and plans for the

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96 Berg to Hollingsworth, no date, probably late October 1946 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
97 Berg to Hollingsworth, no date, probably late October 1946, p. 3.
99 Nicholson, ‘News from Australia,’ p. 3.
future.\textsuperscript{100} The members of this Leaders Conference formed the listening audience and assisted in the music of the Tuesday night ‘Crusaders For Christ’ radio programme, also called \textit{This is Life}. The large studio auditorium was packed as Nicholson preached. The visiting American was glad to co-operate with what he called a ‘worthy group of Bible-loving Christians who are fervently evangelistic.’\textsuperscript{101} Nicholson also preached at the Noone Street Mission in Clifton Hill, where Gilbert McLaren still exercised leadership, maintaining fraternal, though not formal, links with the church that had once, albeit for a brief tenure, elected him as its Conference President.\textsuperscript{102}

Nicholson and Ridgway took an exploratory trip to Tasmania.\textsuperscript{103} Boarding a plane at Essendon, they flew over Bass Strait, feeling the cold air, and warming the cabin with enthusiastic talk of the prospects for the work. Nicholson knew that Ridgway was the principal catalyst of the work.

Few people know more of the cost of getting Wesleyan Methodism established here than he who has been intimately associated with it since the first days. His faithful and loyal support of the work deserves much of the credit for what we have today. He is held high in high esteem by all the evangelicals in Australia, particularly those who are sympathetic with the Wesleyan emphasis. Surely we are on the verge of reaping on our Australian investment if we can remain faithful awhile longer. There have been dark days and long, hard, pulls, but my sincere belief is that better days lie ahead.\textsuperscript{104}

The evangelicals he met in Tasmania were seen as ‘the Lord’s dear people who bear a different denominational label from ours, nevertheless love the Lord, and are devoted to Wesleyan principles.’\textsuperscript{105} Letters arrived regularly at the Australian

\begin{footnotes}
\item[100] Nicholson, ‘The Second Week in Australia,’ p. 3.
\item[101] Nicholson, ‘The Second Week in Australia,’ p. 3. Wesleyans also sponsored their own radio spot on Thursday morning to be broadcast that Sunday.
\item[102] O’Brien and Ridgway, \textit{Pioneer with a Passion}, pp. 74-76.
\item[104] Nicholson, ‘The Trip to Tasmania,’ p. 3.
\item[105] Nicholson, ‘The Trip to Tasmania,’ p. 3.
\end{footnotes}
Wesleyan headquarters asking how the Wesleyans differed from the Methodist Church. Nicholson felt that since many desired ‘a spiritual and evangelistic message and are tired of the drift toward Modernism in their groups’ that the Wesleyans had a name, a message, and a form of church government that ought to appeal to them.

They met an evangelical in Hobart who had been evicted from his church when he testified to the new birth and began to teach both it and ‘the second blessing.’ Other joined him and formed a fellowship. The doctrine of entire sanctification ‘seems particularly distasteful to many in Australia.’ Yet the group here in Tasmania had received it ‘most cordially.’

Tasmania is a rich and fertile field in more ways than one. Their prejudices seem less deep and their attitude more cordial [than those on the mainland]. Old-time Methodist principles are still treasured by many who are not now served by the Church. In fact, many places where Methodism once thrived are now said to be without its message. What a lesson to us: Keep the Wesleyan message vital, relevant and aglow!

At a rented hall in Mole Creek, west of Launceston, they met with a group of enthusiastic evangelicals. The meeting place stood on the exhibition grounds and was packed with participants. One of the members of the congregation, a sheep farmer, invited the preachers to his station where they were ‘royally entertained’ and presented with a ‘considerable gift’ for radio broadcasts in northern Tasmania. A Wednesday evening service in Launceston was also well attended. Yet again, Nicholson notes a reticence to be involved with an organized denomination. ‘Some of them have been so disappointed at organized religion that they shrink from it in fear, and suspect that organizations aim to throttle the very message we have to

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106 Nicholson, ‘The Trip to Tasmania,’ p. 3. Nicholson says, ‘a denomination whose name is somewhat similar to our own’ – almost certainly the Methodist Church of Australasia.
107 Nicholson, ‘The Trip to Tasmania,’ p. 3.
deliver.’ Yet they themselves were threatened with disunity due to their having ‘diverse views about many matters.’  

As Nicholson sat in Melbourne’s Botanical Gardens during Christmas week, the mercury rose to 100 degrees, and a strong hot breeze was blowing. Christmas Day and the day following were also very hot. The winter snows of Indiana must have seemed a long way off. In his final report from Australia, he gave his summary conclusions.

This continent needs the Wesleyan message of full deliverance from sin…Formal religion is in evidence everywhere, and those with a spiritual hunger seem to suspect the denominational programs, many of which are shot through with theological liberalism and worldliness. That fact has encouraged hundreds of independent groups who hold ‘fellowship’ meetings apart from all denominational contacts…God had vindicated us and those who feared our intentions (which had been misrepresented to them) have discovered that instead of being heretics out to spread error, we are earnest Christians seeking the lost. Some of them welcome us as ‘fellow helpers to the truth,’ but, of course, with some others there is no fellowship or co-operation, because our views or essential doctrines and principles are so far apart. In Australia, as in many other lands, it costs one something to separate from an older church group and affiliate with a definitely holiness group. It is doubly costly to unite with one having the ties to American leadership that our Church has. We are gaining favour, however, with those who have become well enough acquainted with us to appreciate our principles, purposes and practices.

Leo Cox, Principal of the Wesleyan Methodist Bible College in Melbourne also recognized that he had quite a job on his hands. The evangelical Bible ‘Institutes’ in Australia at the time were ‘strongly Calvinistic and…quite opposed to the Wesleyan position. All of them would place entire sanctification in the same controversial realm as mode of Baptism, forms of church government or Millenial

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[sic] theories. Because these are controversial, discussion of them is not permitted.\textsuperscript{111} Cox listed the following problems for the College.

No other denomination in Australia would want any of their youth to come to this school, nor would they receive any of our graduates for work in their churches, as yet….Most undenominational Foreign Missionary Boards in this country would not let their missionary prospects come to us, nor would they use our graduates. Because we emphasize holiness and are a denomination they fear us…Those who do come realize they are pretty much confined to our church for their future…there is no demand for them elsewhere.\textsuperscript{112}

His successor as Principal, Robert Mattke found the same difficulty. ‘It seems to me that it costs these students something more by way of reproach in following after the deeper things of God than is born [sic] by the average student in America.’\textsuperscript{113} Clearly graduates would have to serve ‘in-house’ Wesleyan Methodist needs rather than find opportunities in the wider evangelical scene.

One of our men students who will be graduating is planning to join the Wesleyan Methodist Church and we are expecting to assign him work in the conference for the coming year. It would appear that another one of our men students who has but one more term of college work to complete will also be joining us in the work. It is gratifying to see the work of the college producing laborers for the Lord and that there is a pull to serve Him through the channels of the Wesleyan Methodist Church.\textsuperscript{114}

Nazarene leaders were as convinced as Wesleyans that they were viewed as heretics by other evangelicals, and that growth was going to be a hard-won and difficult task.\textsuperscript{115}

The Australians, though friendly, are conservative and suspicious of ‘foreign religions.’ Older denominations oppose because they fear a militant new church; while Calvinistic teachers, who dominate the evangelical scene, brand Wesleyanism as dangerous heresy. Many of them not only oppose but are bitterly hostile. All of these obstacles make Nazarene soul winning in

\textsuperscript{112} Cox, ‘Bible Training in Australia,’ p. 18.
\textsuperscript{115} Much of this material was published as ‘“A Dogged Inch-by-Inch Affair”: The Church of the Nazarene in Australia 1945-1958,’ \textit{Journal of Religious History}, vol.27, no. 2 (June 2003), pp. 215-33.
Australia a dogged, inch-by-inch affair. Any holiness preacher who comes to Australia expecting to find trees loaded with ripe fruit just waiting to be plucked will be sadly disillusioned.116

Albert Berg was aware of the ‘anti-denominational’ spirit that was a feature of Australian evangelicalism at the time. He pledges to General Superintendent H. V. Miller his allegiance to go ‘all the way’ with the Church of the Nazarene, but feels ‘loth to press the claims of denominationalism first, rather do I press God’s call to holiness and separation and bring in the church as a God owned means to further and establish his work.’117

Berg sent his first official report on the Australian work to Dr. Miller, in December 1945.118 He urges Miller to ensure that premillennial views of Christ’s second coming not be promoted in Australia by visiting American preachers. Several of the co-workers in Australia had left the dispensational form of this teaching, as taught by J. N. Derby and popular among the Plymouth Brethren, as it was thought to be ‘not helpful to the cause of holiness’ and had adopted the ‘Historical’ position as taught by Philip Mauro. Dispensational Premillennialism did not ‘harmonize with a promised outpouring of the Holy Ghost in the last days’ and, therefore, should not be promoted. He urges Miller ‘not to press any particular [eschatological] point of view.’ ‘I think freedom on this question is a good thing and will undoubtedly make for harmony.’119

The Holiness leaders were aware of their doctrinal distinctives, and knew full well that some other evangelicals opposed them. However, they did not seem interested in doctrinal disputes for their own sake. Where they could co-operate with

116 Richard Taylor, p. 110.
117 Berg to Miller, 11 July 1945 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
118 Appendix 3 in McEwan, pp. 56-61.
119 Appendix 3 in McEwan, p. 56.
fellow evangelicals they were more than happy to do so. While they would not compromise on their own message, they saw no point in introducing to their young churches controversial doctrines, not central to Wesleyan convictions, which might cause unnecessary division. Essentially they were engaged in a mission of Holiness evangelism and did not welcome any sidetrack to that task.

'Australia: Land of Challenge': Nazarene Young People's Society 1945

(photo: Nazarene Archives, Kansas City, Missouri)
‘Their Sphere is Among the Wattles’: Establishing an Aboriginal Church

One short-lived, but for a time, fruitful, expression of the Nazarene sense of mission was church planting among Australia’s indigenous people. The Wesleyan Methodist, Roy S. Nicholson had been struck by the ‘pitiable plight’ of the Aborigines. His knowledge must have been second-hand as he does not seem to have spent any time in an Aboriginal community of any sort. He noted that ‘they are expert hunters and alert to all the things which are close to nature’s heart.’ Their treatment by the Australian government, he thought closely paralleled that of the American government toward the Native Americans, and he requested prayer that something might be done for ‘this great group in the interior who are said to follow the practices of “the Stone Age.”’

Despite this concern, Wesleyans did not establish any work among the first Australians.

The Nazarenes saw the establishment of city churches as the ‘backbone’ of their movement, with Sydney being preferred as a place for Zachary to settle, because of its larger population. Doug and Maysie Pinch, however, felt that ‘their sphere [was] among the wattles.’ The Pinches worked for the United Aborigines Mission among the Bandjalang people at Box Ridge in Coraki, about 30 kilometres south of Lismore, NSW. Pinch, a graduate of Sydney Missionary and Bible College, had had an experience of sanctification after reading Henry T. Smart’s *Thomas Cook’s Early Ministry*, and Berg, after meeting Hollingsworth, had begun to send Pinch Nazarene literature. The Pinches had been friends with Albert Berg for over 11

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120 *Wesleyan Methodist*, vol. 111, no. 43, p. 3.
121 Albert Berg, letter to Ted Hollingsworth, no date, but responding to a letter of Hollingsworth dated 6 June 1946 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives), p. 1. Chesson also felt called to be ‘among the wattles’ in rural, though not specifically Aboriginal, ministry.
years, and had first met with him on 2 May 1945 to discuss the Church of the Nazarene in detail.

The Pinches’ work at the Box Ridge Mission was terminated, however, when the Mission charged them with ‘heresy’ over their adoption of Nazarene teaching. The Bandjalang people, already marginalized from both white Australian society, and other Aboriginal groups, proved very open to the Nazarene message. However, the evangelical leadership of the United Aborigines Mission held Reformed doctrinal views that clashed significantly with the message of the Holiness preachers. The more liberal Methodist and Congregationalist withdrew from the UAM in the 1940s, leaving a more fundamentalist support base of Baptist, Church of Christ and Brethren assemblies with a dim view of Holiness and Pentecostal teachings. The Bandjalang had no such reservations, and seemed to receive the Nazarene message as enthusiastically as they would later receive Pentecostal influences.

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122 Heather McDonald, *Blood, Bones and Spirit: Aboriginal Christianity in an East Kimberley Town* (Melbourne, Melbourne University Press, 2001), p. 57. McDonald’s helpful study is focused on present adherents of the Assemblies of God and UAM churches (with some limited material on the Catholic Church) in the small East Kimberley town of Halls Creek, Western Australia. Focusing largely on the oral testimony of Gija, Jaru and Gooniyandi speakers, her central question is, ‘How did a land-based people who celebrate in ritual their embodied relationship to a fecund universe, embrace a Hellenistic Mediterranean religion of displaced peoples [i.e. Christianity]?’ Identifying herself as ‘post-Christian,’ McDonald takes a history of religions approach, anthropologising not only Aboriginal religion but the Western Christianity that displaced it, drawing on Foucault to limit the universal truth claims of Christianity (McDonald, pp. 2-4). She concludes her study by stating that “it is possible to trace a continuity of ideas and substance from locative (space-specific) religions to utopian religions [and] a marked disjunction between [them until] indigenous religions came to be read as shocking inversions of “true religion” (p. 183).’ The people of the East Kimberley, while influenced by Christianity have ‘not exchanged their local, kin-based polity and cosmology for a city-state one.’ The strict separation between heaven and earth in Christianity has not been fully embraced and ‘the earthly realm has maintained its traditional integrity [so that] East Kimberley people [continue to] see themselves as local-regional rather then universal beings.’ (p. 201)

Malcolm Calley has documented how, in the 1950s, the Bandjalang had developed stories which explained their own existence in terms of the biblical narrative. They were descendents of the Old Testament patriarch Jacob who had sailed from the Holy Land to the east coast of NSW on a tall ship and been shipwrecked. Twelve tribes descended from the survivors, and the Bandjalang are one of these ‘lost tribes of Israel.’ Twelve trees standing in a row in Bandjalang country indicted that Jesus had passed through this land long ago and these trees were his twelve apostles. To the Bandjalang, ‘Balugan-Christ’ was killed by white people at Kempsey, NSW, is buried on the Arakoon racecourse and will rise again and return to the Bandjalang who, like Christ are humble and poor, rejected by the wealthy and prosperous whites. White people are bound for hell while Aboriginal people are bound for heaven.

The little Nazarene chapel at Box Ridge was constructed of nine-foot galvanised iron sheets. The hot northern sun beat down upon these unlined walls in the summer. In the winter, these same walls provided no protection from the bitterly cold nights. Kerosene lanterns lit the place at night and a kerosene pressure lamp hung over the pulpit to give the preacher light. The mosquitoes bit voraciously and the old bush method of warding them off was applied – smoking cow manure in a kerosene tin. One man was appointed the task of periodically walking between the rows of seats and up and down the aisle ‘censing’ the bush cathedral with this strange

126 Calley, ‘Pentecostalism Among the Bandjalang,’ 52-3. Anthropologist Erich Kolig found similar stories among the people of the Kimberley region of Western Australia. Here Noah’s Ark had been incorporated into their cosmology, the flood being understood as God’s wrath against the white people and the Aboriginal people having been saved through the deluge by means of the ark. God had then given Australia to the black people until the time of Cook’s arrival. See Erich Kolig, ‘Noah’s Ark Revisited: on the Myth-Land Connection in Traditional Aboriginal Thought,’ Oceania, vol. 51, no. 2 (1980), pp. 123-25. On Cook see Erich Kolig, ‘Captain Cook in the Western Kimberleys,’ in R.M. and C.H. Berndt, eds. Aborigines of the West: Their Past and their Present (Perth: University of Western Australia, 1980).
incense. ‘It was, however,’ remembered Pinch, ‘the house of God to our dear coloured people.’

Pinch was convinced that ‘the best way to get native people saved and sanctified is by saved and sanctified native men and women.’ He tells of preaching a sermon at Tuncester, NSW, on 1 John 3:9, ‘Whoever is born of God does not commit sin.’ ‘From start to finish,’ he recalls, ‘the people hung on every word that was uttered.’ Pinch’s hearers soon took what they were hearing and themselves became able exponents of the Holiness message in terms familiar to their own indigenous culture and resonating with themes from their pre-Christian traditional beliefs.

The resilience of traditional Aboriginal religion has been argued by Kolig (who sees it as ‘more active and alive than ever’) to be the result of its ability to appropriate for its own uses the European influences, ideas and technologies, with which it has interacted. While he views traditional Aboriginal religion as still alive and well he conceded that its emphasis has changed from one of cosmic significance (‘an awesome tool used to prop up the universe’) to one of social relevance - ‘the vehicle of ethnic awareness in the wider Australian society.’ Some in the Aboriginal population of Fitzroy Crossing were viewed by Kolig in the 1970s as having ‘given up their cultural heritage to a great extent...[and] this loss was thinly

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127 Pinch, ‘Memoirs,’ p. 112.
128 Doug Pinch, ‘Report of Itinerant Fact-Finding Tour of Native Reservations of Inland New South Wales,’ 14th December, 1946 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
129 Doug Pinch, ‘Report of Intinerant Journey on Behalf of the Church of the Nazarene amongst the People of Northern N.S.W. and South Eastern Queensland – 2nd June, 1947, in Plymouth Car, Caravan.’ (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
131 Kolig, Silent Revolution, 177-83.
glossed over by what appeared to [Kolig] to be a hypocritical faced of Christian fundamentalism.¹³²

A more positive view of the appropriation of Christianity by Aboriginal people (this time in nineteenth century Victoria) is given by Richard Broome. Bain Attwood’s thesis that the adoption of Christianity by Aborigines placed the ‘seed of oppression…within Aborigines as well as without,’¹³³ is, according to Broome, over drawn.

Attwood underestimates the degree to which some Aboriginal people voluntarily embraced cultural enlargement and enrichment (not change). European ideas were often in order to assist Aboriginal emancipation in the face of new realities…Aborigines were not always creating oppressions ‘within’ by their actions, for their choices could sometimes liberate them. Schooling and Christianity, though shaped by European notions, produced literate Aborigines who petitioned Parliament for their rights and believed they were the equal of whites in the eyes of God and destined too for Heaven. Although Attwood sees Christianity as ‘violent’ and missions as ‘oppressive,’ Aboriginal people became Christians by choice. Something he only partially recognizes…To see these people as lured or badgered into Christianity is condescending to those who chose to become ‘settled down’ Christians, and yet still desired to remain Aboriginal.¹³⁴

Heather McDonald’s research in the East Kimberleys has described the way in which features of traditional Aboriginal religion were combined with the Christian message and how some features of the latter proved very difficult to convey in terms the Aborigines deemed important. Conversion to Halls Creek Aborigines is not so much a radically transforming experience of the soul as it is ‘following a way.’ One must cease following the old ways and begin to follow the new Christian ways. The concept of attaining moral perfection does not seem to appeal to Aboriginal Christians and sin is defined in terms of “breaking the law” rather than falling short of perfection. Aboriginal spirituality has “not developed a notion of perfectibility.

¹³² Kolig, Silent Revolution, 52.
¹³⁴ Broome, Aboriginal Victorians, 127.
Furthermore, it is not so much the truth of the Christian message but its efficacy – the ability to achieve desired results - that really counts. In Halls Creek, this focus on efficacy fits well into the Assembly of God (AOG) stress on the Holy Spirit’s power, evidenced by signs, wonders, and miracles. Since the UAM churches have less stress on such things they are considered powerless and ineffective by AOG adherents. Colonization is experienced as a loss of power and the provision of power through the Holy Spirit has a great appeal. Since UAM converts hold more positions of power in both white and Aboriginal bureaucracies, they sense less need for such power.\(^{135}\)

Blood (along with other bodily secretions such as urine, faeces, and semen) is a potent substance in traditional Aboriginal belief, as it contains and conveys ancestral life force.\(^{136}\) Yet the concept of redemption by means of blood sacrifice so central to the Christian story was foreign to the Halls Creek Aborigines. The blood of Jesus is not something that it seen as atoning for sin but rather something infused in a kind of spiritual blood transfusion which takes out the bad blood, leading to law breaking, and replaces it with good blood, leading to an ability to follow the correct way.\(^{137}\) All of this means, according to McDonald, that Aboriginal motives for coming forward to the altar do not fit missionary paradigms very neatly.

The people do not bring to the altar an individualised and psychologised soul burdened by guilt because of sins committed. They do not come to repent of sins and seek forgiveness and cleansing by the blood of the Lamb. What they require from God is not soul purification but the strengthening and enlivening of their life-force.\(^{138}\)

The themes of blood and purification are evidence in Doug Pinch’s account of a Bandjalang evangelist’s Holiness sermon, which shows that Aboriginal preachers presented Holiness in a manner that reflected their own culture and at the same time

\(^{135}\) McDonald, 100-105, 120.  
^{136}\) McDonald, 107-109.  
^{137}\) McDonald, 98, 110-11.  
^{138}\) McDonald, 178.
appropriated newer insights. Pinch had no problem with this, as is clear from his favourable comments on the following sermon, preached by a Bandjalang tribal elder and Nazarene evangelist.

You remember your initiation ceremony when you ‘became men.’ We asked of you just what God is asking of you in a spiritual way. Firstly, you were young men and your whole life lay before you. To be a worthy man you were sent deep into the woods – you were alone- the nights were dark and unknown. Noises terrified you, but you had to show no fear. You were presenting yourself completely to the Great Spirit. You had to divest yourself of all clothing, no matter how cold and dark the night might be. You had to endure all inconvenience no matter how great the cost. You were not allowed a fire to warm yourselves for you were there to prove your worthiness. You did not eat or drink for many days. And when you had yielded all your resources and were so physically weak that it seemed as if you must perish, you were to lie completely still and then you would feel the spirit of manhood entering in to you, first at the tip of your toes, and then gradually taking over every part of your body. But you were not to resist; no matter how powerfully you were being possessed you had to be completely abandoned to the Great Spirit that would fill every part of your being – thus would you grow to be a worthy candidate for manhood. Then into the sacred cave you had to go for cleansing. Blood would pour upon you from the roof of the cave until you were ceremonially clean…We do not follow heathen customs today but there is an Initiation Service whereby you can prove your spiritual manhood. You present your bodies a living sacrifice to God. You lay aside every weight and you receive without resistance the Holy Spirit. You are then cleansed through and through from all sin.139

Clearly this is a sermon about life-force, efficacy, empowerment, and initiation, all themes of traditional Aboriginal belief. At the same time it has engrafted the newer Christian concept of purification from sin, effected by the Holy Spirit of God. Though Pinch cannot accept the story of the blood dripping from the roof in the sacred cave, feeling that a more natural explanation is likely, he does not attack it directly, feeling it was not his prerogative to do so.

These Bunjalung [sic] people really believed in the blood coming from the roof of the cave and as it was a sacred rite it was not for us to question. We think that a natural explanation would be a spring water flowing through red ochre or something of that nature…We did not preach Holiness in the manner he did, but then we did not have a full knowledge of the ways and customs of

This attitude of willingness to allow Aboriginal preachers to employ
Aboriginal culture as a vehicle for proclaiming the Gospel may also have been a
cause of friction between Pinch and the United Aborigines Mission. According to
the anthropologist Malcolm Calley, UAM missionaries ‘were generally poorly
educated and unsophisticated and thought of aboriginal beliefs not as unfounded
superstitions, as many missionaries do, but as “doctrines of the Devil.”’ The later
Pentecostal influence on the Bandjalang is characterized by Calley as on the ‘lunatic
fringe,’ leading to a distinctive Bandjalang Pentecostal spirituality, ‘too unorthodox to
fit easily into one of the white Pentecostal organizations.’ He sees the practice of
the UAM in this area of segregating black and white congregations as ‘one of the
most important factors perpetuating the social exclusion of Aborigines from the
religious life of the [white] community.’ If this is true, then Pinch’s partnering
with Aboriginal evangelists may have been another cause of conflict with the
Mission.

On Friday evening 18 January 1946, the Pinches were placed on trial in
Sydney by the UAM leadership on a charge of ‘blasphemy against the Holy Ghost.’
The following ‘errors’ were charged against them. They believed in a crisis
experience of entire sanctification that could destroy original sin. This was deemed
‘contrary to the teaching of the Scriptures.’ They believed in the possibility of

140 Pinch, ‘Memoirs,’ p. 15.
141 Calley, Aborigines Now, p. 50. Interestingly, McDonald’s more recent study indicates that UAM
churches in the Kimberleys are now less damning of Aboriginal culture and spirituality and the AOG
churches have taken the prohibitive stance earlier taken by the UAM. Though both AOG and UAM
missionaries hold overall negative views of traditional Aboriginal belief, the AOG stance is decidedly
more bleak, holding as they do a ‘missiology of radical discontinuity.’ All Aboriginal sacred sites and
practices are seen as demonic and the Christian must have nothing to do with them. McDonald, 66-8.
142 Calley, Aborigines Now, p. 57.
apostasy after believing. This was said to be ‘robbing God of his glory.’ They did not believe, as did the Mission (according to Pinch) that the imputation of Christ’s righteousness meant that a believer could ‘partake of the most grievous sin and yet make heaven’ without repentance. After the charges were laid, Pinch calmly testified to his own experience of entire sanctification and ‘the meeting was in an uproar.’ Pinch concludes his account of the proceedings with the understatement, ‘It was a relief when the gathering came to an end.’

Soon after they broke ranks with the UAM, the Pinches received their ministerial license from the Church of the Nazarene. Their departure from this government-recognized missionary society meant that their permits to enter ‘Native Reservations’ were rendered null and void. They now needed permission of the overseer or the local police and this was not always easy to obtain. The Pinches decided to establish an itinerant ministry to the Aboriginal people. They continued to minister alongside of aboriginal evangelists Frank Roberts, Dave Currie, and Langus Phillips, eventually establishing a base on the Tweed River. Phillips was the first Aborigine to receive a ministerial license among the Nazarenes. Pastor of the Tweed River church, he was a gifted speaker and musician, described by Pinch as ‘one of the godliest as well as gifted men I have been privileged to know.’ The relationship between Pinch and Phillips was said to be ‘one of the closest relationships [our family has] ever known with anybody throughout the whole of our lifetime.’

Never did a more saintly man grace the ranks of the ministers of the Church of the Nazarene. ‘He walked with God,’ was the only fitting summation of his life. An anointed preacher he elucidated clearly the message of full salvation

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145 The Aboriginal pastor Frank Roberts was still involved in the ministry in the Northern Rivers in the 1980s, during which time I met him and several of his aboriginal converts.
146 Parker, p. 588. Somewhat awkwardly, at least to our ears, Cook refers to this group as ‘organized among coloured people living along the coast.’ Cook, p. 150.
to his people…Never have I loved a man more dearly than I loved this man…¹⁴⁸

Among the Nazarene congregation at Tweed Heads, NSW, were some of ‘the last full-blood aborigines living’ in the area. The last of these, Bob Munday, was photographed alongside an American guest, the Rev. Weaver W. Hess, visiting Superintendent of the Oregon District, and died soon after. ‘It was a sad passing of the remnant of a fine race of people who once built their camp fires, hunted and fished and lived in an area [now known as] the Gold Coast.’¹⁴⁹

Nazarene missionaries believed that the answer to the supposed instability of Aboriginal converts was to be found in the ‘confirming grace’ of entire sanctification. Only when a convert was fully sanctified would he or she be able to avoid returning to the old ways.¹⁵⁰ Nazarenes had no time for any kind of ‘Social Darwinist’ view of the Aborigines which would see them as somehow doomed by race to be immune to religion. The ‘colour barrier’ was one that had to be gotten over, and the ill treatment and exploitation of Aborigines by white authorities was seen as shameful and a stumbling block placed before missionary success.¹⁵¹ One key to success among the Aborigines was believed to be the indigenisation of its leadership. Nazarene pastors and evangelists were widely utilized and encouraged, and it was believed that the best way to reach Aborigines was through Aboriginal ministers. Yet some Nazarene leaders, such as Berg, seemed to exhibit less than enlightened views of the Aborigines, referring to them as ‘abos,’ and the Aboriginal mission as ‘our colored work.’¹⁵² While the term ‘colored’ was probably not a racist term in 1946, ‘abo’

¹⁴⁸ Pinch, ‘Memoirs,’ p. 29.
¹⁴⁹ Pinch, ‘Memoirs,’ p. 44.
¹⁵⁰ Doug Pinch to Ted Hollingsworth, n.d. (Kansas City, Nazarene Archives).
¹⁵¹ Doug Pinch to Ted Hollingsworth, n.d. (Kansas City, Nazarene Archives).
¹⁵² Albert Berg to Ted Hollingsworth, 12 February 1946 (Kansas City, Nazarene Archives); Albert Berg to Ted Hollingsworth, no date, but in reply to a letter of Hollingsworth dated 6 June 1946.
certainly seems inappropriate. Until very recently the only other Wesleyan-Holiness group to have developed significant work among the Aborigines has been the Church of God (Cleveland), and the indigenous Nazarene work has sadly not survived to the present time. Currently, the North Queensland District Superintendent of the Wesleyan Methodist Church is an Indigenous leader, the Rev. Rex Rigby, having responsibility for eight churches stretching from Rockhampton to Cairns. The emergence in 2005 of the indigenous Baparrdu Fellowship in Rockhampton, led by Rigby and Aboriginal leader Lester Adams, is an encouraging sign of the re-emergence of Aboriginal Christians in the Holiness movement.

![Photo of Doug Pinch, Frank Roberts, and Langus Phillips](photo: Nazarene Archives, Kansas City, Missouri)

**Holiness in Australian Methodism in the 1940s**

In chapter two an investigation was made into the type of holiness preaching that was typical in Australian Methodism at the time. It was argued there that Kingsley Ridgway’s perception of Methodism being in a virtual state of apostasy

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(Kansas City, Nazarene Archives); Albert Berg to G. B. Williamson, 7 April 1949 (Kansas City, Nazarene Archives).

153 See chapter 6, p. 207.

154 Lester Adams, a police officer, and member of the Rockhampton Wesleyan Methodist Church was NAIDOC [National Aboriginal and Islander Day of Celebrations] person of the year for the Rockhampton area in 2005. He was honoured for his contribution to youth, gospel broadcasting, service in the church, and as a police liaison officer. ‘North Queensland District,’ *The Australian Wesleyan* (Issue 2, 2005), p. 14.
when it came to Holiness teaching was a limited and inaccurate one. Was the situation any different by the time the Holiness churches were officially organized in the mid-1940s?

Methodist minister, the Rev. Walter Betts, of the Fitzroy Methodist Mission was certainly doing his best to keep Holiness teaching alive and well among evangelicals during this period. Speaking at a Christian Endeavour meeting in the Prospect Town Hall, Adelaide in 1944, he spoke of four aims:

1. For sinners to be saved.
2. For backsliders to be sought.
3. For the power of the Holy Spirit by sanctification.
4. For the young to offer for missionary service.

The crowd, an unprecedented number, was large enough to overfill the hall. Eighty ‘passed through’ the enquiry room including some who ‘came for the infilling of the Holy Ghost.’ Compared with dissidents like Betts, however, the Holiness climate in Methodism was decidedly more lukewarm, if not cool. Victoria’s Annual Holiness Convention for 1944, now in its 29th year, was held at South Richmond Methodist Church. Still being run by the Methodist Local Preachers Association, it was advertised as a time for ‘withdrawal from the incessant strain of modern life, and for heart searching and prayer in a congenial environment.’ The description is certainly a tame one, lacking the distinctiveness and energy of earlier conventions.

The front-page lead article in the Spectator of 26 July 1944 speaks of ‘the essential need of holiness,’ as one of the ‘notes’ of Methodism. However, holiness is

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defined rather vaguely as ‘a man’s faith issuing in good works and pure life’ and as involving a ‘moral’ and ‘disciplined’ life.¹⁵⁷ No second blessing holiness here! J. A. Broadbelt, on the other hand, gives a much more explicit call to the ‘Baptism of the Holy Spirit’ which frees from the bondage of ‘inbred sin.’¹⁵⁸ In a commentary on Charles Wesley’s hymn All Things Are Possible, ‘AHW’ suggests that the term ‘Christian perfection’ be replaced with the term ‘Christian progress.’ Using a series of rhetorical questions he suggests that the doctrine of holiness is not very often sung about, spoken about, or taught, and that the older language connected with it is ‘outworn…not understood and not appreciated.’¹⁵⁹ One Spectator contributor set out to ‘clarify the distinction between justification and entire sanctification’ by means of early Methodist testimonies to the experience. It is notable that, while these historic examples are given, there are no current testimonies, such as would be found in The Australian Nazarene, The Australian Wesleyan or The Wesleyan Messenger.¹⁶⁰

In the approximately 20 years between Kingsley Ridgway’s departure from the Methodist Church and his formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the holiness witness in Victorian Methodism seems to have waned significantly. The Spectator of the 1920s ran several articles explicitly expounding entire sanctification as a distinctive doctrine of Methodism. By 1945, only a handful of enthusiasts, such as Walter Betts and Gilbert McLaren, through the agency of the Methodist Local Preacher’s Holiness Convention, were continuing to teach Holiness in the old fashioned Methodist way. Some of these Holiness diehards would join up with the Wesleyans or Nazarenes, some, such as McLaren, for only a short time, while others,
such as Betts, maintained an independent witness. Betts, who spoke at a Nazarene convention in 1955 shortly after withdrawing from the Methodist Church, was highly praised by Nazarene leader Richard S. Taylor

At present we are in an opening convention with Rev. Walter F. Betts who resigned a year ago from the Methodist ministry over the issue of modernism. He was in the Methodist ministry for thirty-seven years. Quite a following came out with him and they are now worshipping in his home in Melbourne, sometimes over a hundred gathering in every room of the house. He is quite a rugged character and widely influential and widely known in evangelical circles in Australia. He has been doing some excellent holiness preaching, very clear cut, these last few days and yesterday in the services two women were soundly converted for the first time in their lives. One with Roman Catholic background and the other Church of England. The evangelist is really a Spirit-filled man. Normally I do not want to use non-Nazarene evangelists, but I think this mission is of the Lord both for his sake and for the general prestige of the Church of the Nazarene, for his association with us is already an eye-opener to some and breaking down prejudice. I consulted Brother Berg before inviting him and Brother Berg was in full harmony.161

This chapter has focused only on the formative years between 1945 and 1958, when the Church of the Nazarene and the Wesleyan Methodist Church were sectarian movements of radicals. Though sponsored by American ‘home’ churches, they were pioneered by Australian evangelical leaders who sought early to develop an Australian identity and ethos. They were often looked upon by mainstream Australian evangelicals as ‘holy rollers’ and ‘sinless perfectionists,’ purveyors of a brand of religion thought to be populist, coarse, and theologically suspect. Even separatist evangelicals of a more stridently ‘fundamentalist’ tone, suspected them because they were associated with highly organized American denominations, with codified rules and a defined polity that was thought to frustrate the freedom of the Spirit’s working. Their strong sense of possessing a missionary mandate helped them to lay aside these non-essential doctrinal differences and disputes with other Christians, in order to get on with taking the Holiness message wherever they could

161 Richard S. Taylor to Hardy C. Powers, 3 March 1955 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
find responsive hearers, including among the Aboriginal people. It was not that they were unconcerned with doctrine, or that they did not seek to preserve their own Wesleyan orthodoxy. They were very concerned that their preachers be thoroughly ‘Holiness’ in doctrine and life. Yet they did not expend a great deal of energy in answering their theological detractors, choosing instead to work with them whenever they could and to agree to disagree on doctrinal questions when they needed to.

After the Billy Graham Crusade of 1959, in many ways a watershed moment for Holiness churches as they identified more fully with broader evangelicalism, the form of American religious piety represented by the Holiness movement churches, and also by Pentecostalism, began to influence Australian evangelicals more widely. Only then would fellow Christians begin to ‘open up the ecumenical door to let the riffraff in.’

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When the Holiness churches began to arrive in Australia in the years immediately following the Second World War, they faced considerable opposition from Australian Christians who, to some extent, resented American influence on the religious scene.\footnote{Much of this chapter was published as Glen O’Brien, ‘Just Another “Queer Sect” from Over the Pacific’: Americanism and Anti-Americanism and the Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Australia,’ Aldersgate Papers, vol. 4 (Sept. 2003), 29-58.} During the war, minority religious groups, such as Jehovah’s Witnesses, with beliefs that disallowed bearing arms in defense of the state, were declared illegal.\footnote{Kate Darian-Smith, ‘War and Australian Society,’ in Joan Beaumont, ed. Australia’s War 1939-1945 (Sydney, Allen and Unwin, 1996), p. 55.} There were limits to how welcoming Australians in general would be of Americans. P. L. Beals notes that ‘the Sydney people rose up and [refused] their large city hall’ to “Judge” Rutherford, the leader of the Jehovah’s Witness organization. This was one American who was a little too much for them.’\footnote{Beals, Report to the Board of General Superintendents, p. 3.} Marjorie Newton, though she does not see ‘any sustained opposition to [Mormonism] because of its American origins,’ concedes that ‘some suspicion attached to the Church during World War II, probably due to confusion with other American churches,’ such as Jehovah’s Witnesses.\footnote{Newton, Southern Cross Saints, 204, with footnote 48.}

The activity of these groups may have led to suspicion also toward the Wesleyan-Holiness churches who allowed their members to take the stance of conscientious objection on religious grounds, an unpopular stance in the immediate post-war years. In January 1945 Albert Berg wrote to Ted Hollingsworth:

To a number of people [the Church of the Nazarene]…is just another “queer” sect from over the pacific [sic]…So far, any mention I have made of [it]…has not been received on the whole with a great deal of pleasure…I am endeavouring to break down the idea that it is not just the starting of another
sect but the introduction of a Church here that God can use…for the propagation of…holiness…’

In chapter 3 the opposition to the Holiness churches on theological grounds was traced. Here attention will be given to another basis for opposition to these new groups – the fact that they had their origins in the United States.

‘Alexander’s Racy Hymns and Americanism’

A longstanding anti-American attitude has existed in Australia throughout its history, right alongside of a positive attitude of fraternity and co-operation. During the nineteenth century many colonial Australians, including Parkes and Deakin, argued that Australia would be the ‘United States of the future.’ Many looked with envy at America’s educational system, its patronage of high culture on the part of the wealthy, and its federal constitution. Mark Twain, when conducting a lecture tour in 1895, had seen little difference between Australians and Americans. Their ‘easy, cordial manners’ were essentially American, ‘English friendliness with the English shyness and self-consciousness left out.’ The American Constitution’s approach to religion was the subject of much discussion during Australia’s constitutional debates, resulting in there being close parallels between the two documents on the relationship between religion and the state. The lengthy campaign to include the ‘recognition’ clause in the Preamble, described in detail by Richard Ely, demonstrated a knowledge of questions of ‘religious liberty’ drawn from the American experience. Mainstream Protestants could even, like their American counterparts, sound decidedly theocratic.

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5 Albert Berg to Ted Hollingsworth, 8 January 1945 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
in their conception of government and use language reminiscent of the ‘manifest
destiny’ rhetoric of early American Puritanism.9

For all of the positive connections between the two countries it is clear that
anti-Americanism has also been a part of the Australian consciousness for some time,
and the religious world has not been exempt from such sentiment. In nineteenth
century Victoria, an Anglican newspaper attacked Wesleyan camp meetings at
Queenscliff as ‘an undesirable United States import likely to be subversive of home
discipline and social order,’ and this response is probably not atypical of the period.10
Hugh Jackson makes a distinction between the American Methodist evangelist
William ‘California’ Taylor as a ‘folk evangelist’ whose largely rural meetings
numbered in the hundreds rather than the thousands, and those later ‘overseas
practitioners of the hot gospel’ who, aided by rapid transport and new methods of
mass media, increased throughout the 1870s and 90s.11 The pioneers of this new
approach were also Americans - Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey, who took their
‘kindlier’ message of the Gospel of God’s love to Britain in 1873-75. Reports of the
success of Moody and Sankey’s British campaign reached Australia and gave rise to
certained prayer meetings for revival in Sydney and Melbourne.12 Many longed for
Moody and Sankey to come to Australia and repeat their successes here. They never
came, but in 1902 Rueben A. Torrey, the superintendent of Moody's Chicago Bible
Institute, did come, accompanied by Charles Alexander to play the musical role
earlier performed by Sankey. J. Wilbur Chapman, one of Moody's converts came in

9 Southern Cross, 22 April, 1898 in Ely, p. 39.
10 J. D. Turner, The Pioneer Missionary, (Melbourne 1872), pp. 296-34 [the numbering error is in
     Breward], cited in Ian Breward, A History of the Churches in Australasia (Oxford, Oxford University
11 Jackson, Churches and People in Australia and New Zealand, p. 57.
12 Darrel Paproth, ‘Revivalism in Melbourne from Federation to World War I: The Torrey-Alexander-
1909 and again in 1912, also accompanied by Alexander.\textsuperscript{13} Significant here was the fear on the part of some clergy of the day that the converts of such crusades would be converted to ‘Alexander's racy hymns and Americanism.’\textsuperscript{14} Ron Gibbins remembers hearing American Holiness evangelist E. E. Shellhamer preach at the Islington Baptist Church, about 50km south of Newcastle in the mid-1930s. Shellhamer had been preaching at the Bethshan Holiness Mission in Wyee, and Gibbins’ father, who was the Baptist pastor at Islington urged caution as ‘some queer things come out of America.’\textsuperscript{15}

\textbf{I Object…to Billy Graham}

\textit{I Object…to Billy Graham was a pamphlet produced by Howard Guiness, rector of St. Michael’s Church of England in Vaucluse, NSW, as a defense of the 1959 Graham Crusade, with cartoons drawn by Benier. One of the objections it sought to answer was ‘I object to my religion being imported from America.’} (Photo: Wesleyan Holiness Archive, Kingsley College, Melbourne)

\textsuperscript{13} Jackson, pp. 57-8. See also Broome, \textit{Treasure in Earthen Vessels}, pp. 65-73.
\textsuperscript{14} The Rev. A. Burt, cited in Broome, p. 66.
\textsuperscript{15} Letter from Ron Gibbins to the author, 4 July 2003.
Jill Julius Matthews has identified ‘an extensive and long term campaign of
denunciation of Americanism’ in the years following the First World War, on the part
of business, civic, social, educational, industrial, and political groups. 16 Particularly
distasteful to these groups was the cheap American culture conveyed in the cinema,
jazz, dancing, advertising, radio, and pulp fiction. In 1922, the movie mogul Will
Hays expressed a confidence that American films correctly depicted American culture
and the cultures of other countries, and that this depiction would go far in promoting
world peace. According to Matthews, ‘[t]his imperial will to exploit the world, to
explain the world to itself, and to be boastful about having done so, seems to have
been widely resented among Australians’ and expressed both in public humour and in
political and economic retaliation, through lobbying for the application of tariffs to
American goods. 17

The strongest anti-American feeling in the years following the ‘Great War’
seems to have come from the Church, as both Catholic and Protestant ecclesiastics
cried out against those forms of imported popular culture which were seen to be a
threat to the purity of the nation’s families. The 29 June 1936 encyclical of Pope Pius
XI, Vigilanti Cura – On Motion Pictures, warned against ‘the damage done to the
soul by bad motion pictures’ 18 and everybody knew that the worst culprit was
Hollywood. Protestant ‘wowserism’ was equally vehement in its denunciation of the
motion picture. Secular critics were little more sparing in their warning against the
moral dangers of Americanisation. They turned their venom against Americanisms in
speech, against jazz, crooning, sex and crime films, and the overall lowering of

16 Jill Julius Matthews, ‘Which America?’ in Bell and Bell, Americanization and Australia, p. 16.
17 Matthews, pp. 22-3.
community standards through exposure to such things. ‘It is America’s mission,’ warned Beatrice Tildesley, ‘to vulgarise the world.’ ¹⁹ It would be the war in the Pacific, however, which would introduce a new and intensified phase to Australian-American relations.

Curtin Looks to America

World War Two saw a shift to the left in Australian politics with the years of Curtin, Evatt and Chifley a kind of ‘Golden Age’ in Labor tradition. ²⁰ Menzies’ preoccupation with British foreign policy led to a loss of support and Labor had been elected in a landslide in 1943. Now, the wartime conditions favored a strong centralised government, an idea at odds with the philosophy of the conservative parties but well suited to a Labor government, providing ‘a new legitimacy to labor.’ ²¹

Curtin made a public declaration of Australia’s dependence on the United States to secure its freedom from Japanese aggression in the Pacific. ‘Australia looks to America free of any pangs as to our traditional ties or kinship with the United Kingdom.’ This speech is often cited as indicating a ‘turning point’ in Australia’s orientation away from Great Britain and toward the United States. This hypothesis maintains that during the war Australia ‘swapped its British master for American ones.’ ²² ‘No longer was Australia an imperial Antipodes, but the New Frontier down

¹⁹ Tildesley, in Bell and Bell, Americanization, p. 25.
There are earlier precedents, however, which to some extent challenge the ‘turning point’ theory. In 1909 Alfred Deakin had proposed a Pacific pact that included America, as did Lyons in 1935 and 1937. Even the Menzies government had established an Australian legation in Washington following a 1939 Cabinet decision. Menzies had pressed Roosevelt in May 1940 to commit the US to greater support of the empire. So Curtin was by no means the first to ‘look to’ the US. After an initial burst of enthusiasm at the onset of the war, relations cooled and Australian leaders began to take a more independent stance, or even to look again toward a revived British empire.

‘The Man with the Turned-Up Hat’ and ‘the Feller with the Tucked-In Tie’

However the argument over Australia’s supposed ‘turning point’ may be settled, one thing is for certain. A very large number of Americans were about to arrive on Australia’s shores. When Curtin insisted, against Churchill’s wishes, that the 1st Australian Corp returning from the Middle East should defend the homeland and not Burma, the returning diggers encountered a ‘friendly’ alien in their own backyard – the American GI. American troops began to arrive in increasing numbers from December 1941. 25,000 US troops were reposted from the Philippines to

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23 Michael Dunn, *Australia and Empire: From 1788 to the Present* (Sydney, Fontana, 1984), p. 156. Beaumont rejects the idea that this speech represents a ‘turning point’ in Australian foreign policy, Beaumont, p. 31.


25 Borrowed from chapter titles in George Johnston’s *Pacific Partners*, a book ‘about Australia...written by an Australian to give Americans a clearer picture of the role of this great South Pacific ally in the general pattern of World War II...to penetrate into the psychology of the Australian fighting man; and to examine his relations, in action and out of it, with the American doughboy.’ George H. Johnston, *Pacific Partners* (London, Victor Gollancz, 1945), p. 5.
Australia. Between 1942 and 1945 an estimated one million American servicemen would pass through Australia, though never more than 200,000 at any one time.26

Early Nazarene leader, Doug Pinch, remembered the ensuing chaos.

With startling suddenness American servicemen with their tanks, jeeps, trucks and earth-moving equipment, the like of which had never [been] imagined [to] exist, filled the streets of that Queensland city. Everything, for the moment, seemed to be in chaos and confusion. Trains were requisitioned for the transportation of military vehicles. The whole pattern and life-style of a city was changed overnight.27

Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Military Forces, Sir Thomas Blamey, had little respect for the American troops and MacArthur reciprocated in regard to the Australian troops. There was so much concern about clashes between American and Australian troops that the Intelligence Branch recommended that Brisbane be fully lit up at night, a relaxing of the standard ‘brown out’ that was designed as a protective cover against Japanese attack. A dispute between an American MP and an Australian soldier escalated within an hour to a riot involving 4000 people.28 Though this was the largest scale incident, other incidents of conflict took place in cities as far apart as Townsville and Melbourne.

Reasons for the hatred of Aussies toward the ‘Yanks’ were many. They had higher pay, better uniforms, were big tippers, and emerged from the American Postal Exchange with such luxuries as ice-cream, chocolate, hams, turkeys, cigarettes, alcohol, and the nylons so prized by the women. Most grievous of all, however, was that they attracted the Australian women.29

Rosemary Campbell, in Heroes and Lovers, sees the presence of American troops as a threat to ‘a national identity based on the rugged masculine world of the

28 Thompson and Macklin, p. 6.
29 Thompson and Macklin, pp. 4-5.
bush.’ The Americans were refreshingly different from the ‘toughened, beer swilling bushmen, diggers and shearers.’ They were sensitive, romantic, ‘smooth-talking, considerate [and] polite,’ and women found this very attractive.\textsuperscript{30} Syd Harvey remembered, ‘The Yanks were very popular with the girls – they used to go around with a bunch of flowers in their hand and we used to think that was bloody stupid.’\textsuperscript{31} Dorothy Hewitt was not impressed. ‘I scorn the Yanks, pasty faced boys who seem to think an orchid or a box of chocolates can buy them anything…Nobody can buy me…I prefer Australians, who give neither orchids nor chocolates, who are inarticulate but seem to promise love and even silent understanding.’\textsuperscript{32}

J. H. Moore in \textit{Over-Sexed, Over-Paid and Over Here}, argues that while Americans were at first warmly received as ‘heroes and saviours,’ most Australians ‘were not sad to see them leave.’ The series of murders committed by Private Edward Leonski in Melbourne, and the brawls between Australian and American troops in Australian cities no doubt soured the relationship somewhat. Leonski was tried and swiftly hanged for the murder of three women in Melbourne in 1942.\textsuperscript{33}

George Johnston’s wartime book \textit{Pacific Partners} has the rather naïve, and perhaps propagandist, view that while ‘[t]here were brawls and fist fights – 99 per cent of them over women – [they] caused no more serious damage than a few blacked eyes and bleeding noses.’\textsuperscript{34} The author describes one fist-fight which ended, ‘apart from the two battered faces,’ with ‘nothing to indicate that they hadn’t always been

\textsuperscript{30} Anthony J. Barker and Lisa Jackson, \textit{Fleeting Attraction: A Social History of American Servicemen in Western Australia During the Second World War} (Perth, University of Western Australia, 1996), pp. 4-5.
\textsuperscript{31} Barker and Jackson, p. 152.
\textsuperscript{33} Private Edward S. Leonski, 24 years old, from New York City, stationed at Royal Park in Melbourne, attempted to strangle a woman in her St. Kilda flat but she escaped. He was more successful on 3 May 1942 when he strangled Ivy McLeod in Albert Park, followed by Pauline Thompson on 9 May in the city centre, and Gladys Hosking, in Parkville, on 18 May. Barker and Jackson, pp. 73, 122.
\textsuperscript{34} Johnston, p. 105.
the best of friends.' This in spite of the fact that in February 1943 mounted police dispersed brawls between Australian and Americans in Melbourne, and in January 1944 more than 1000 Americans and Australians rioted in Perth. Gunner Edward Webster, formerly of the 2/2nd Anti-Tank Regiment, 7th Division AIF, was killed by US military police officer, Private Norbert J. Grant, on 26 November 1942. Eight Australian servicemen received gunshot wounds and eleven Americans were injured. The Americans involved, including Grant, were fully exonerated but three Australian privates spent up to six months in jail. The ‘man with the turned-up hat’ and the ‘feller with the tucked-in tie’ were on unstable terms at best.

The Sanctified Soldier Boys

One factor rarely touched upon in the existing literature is the religion of the American G. I. Among the soldiers stationed in Australia were members of the American Holiness churches, the sanctified soldier boys. The arrival of American troops in Brisbane is remembered by Dorothy Hewitt as sending ‘a shudder through middle class sensibilities.’

With visions of young crew cut, gum chewing doughboys scattered ‘hi’s’ [sic] and ‘babe’s’ [sic] throughout the house and ‘cutting a rug’ in the lounge to that ultimate vulgarity, jazz music, many parents instructed their daughters to have nothing to do with the Americans. There were to be no exemptions, even for officers who looked like Cary Grant and sounded like Clark Gable.

But there were other young Americans, equally as handsome and dashing, yet possessing a different set of values from those portrayed in Hollywood and, in fact, more strongly opposed to secular American pop culture than the mothers of those girls who may have seen them as a threat to their daughters’ purity.

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35 Johnston, pp. 105-6.
36 Darian-Smith in Beaumont, pp. 73-4.
37 Thompson and Macklin, pp. 1-2.
38 Barker and Jackson, p. 93.
When Kingsley Ridgway heard a young American G. I. give a clear-cut testimony to ‘entire sanctification,’ this was just the kind of thing that would have filled him with memories of his days in the Canadian Holiness movement, into which he had married in 1929. Approaching the young serviceman he found that he was a Wesleyan Methodist of the more ‘radical’ type, represented by Conferences such as Allegheny and Ohio, and by God’s Bible School in Cincinnati. This did not faze him however as he knew the radical wing of the Holiness movement well, and though aware of its extremes, recognized it as his own spiritual ‘homeland.’ A seed was planted that would lead in a short space of time to the emergence of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Australia.

Melbourne would prove the headquarters of Wesleyan Methodism, while further north in Brisbane, Albert Berg’s encounter with another sanctified soldier boy, Ted Hollingsworth, led to the establishment of the Church of the Nazarene. Though Melbourne was the first city to see a large-scale arrival of troops, garrisoning 30,000 by early 1942, by September of the following year, after MacArthur transferred his HQ to Brisbane, 96,000 of the 119,000 American soldiers in Australia were stationed there.\footnote{Darian-Smith in Beaumont, p. 72.} Brisbane in 1942 was ‘a frightened city invaded by a friendly, though foreign, army.’\footnote{Thompson and Macklin, p. viii.} Among these were Holiness believers eager to share their message in a country believed to be desperately in need of it. Appeals to the American church for funds presented a view of Australia as being either without Christ or at least without any Holiness witness. It was viewed as a harvest field that was ripe for a revival of Holiness religion.\footnote{‘Facts and Figures of the Land Down Under,’ District N.Y.P.S. [Nazarene Young People’s Society] Missionary News vol. 1, no. 1, July 1945 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).} The Michigan Nazarene Young People’s Society urged its constituents to ‘Beat Southern California! [in a missions fund raising drive] and give Christ to Australia.’\footnote{Rally poster for Michigan NYPS meeting, 1945 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).} A rally poster urged Nazarene youth to ‘rise up in the strength of your Christ and give yourselves and 50,000 dollars to give the Gospel of Full Salvation to Australia and establish the Church of the Nazarene in this appealing continent.’\footnote{‘Facts and Figures of the Land Down Under,’ (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).} American Wesleyans and Nazarenes seemed unaware of the history of revivalism in Australia and there was a tendency to interpret Australian religious history in extremely bleak terms.\footnote{R. Franklin Cook, Water from Deep Wells (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Publishing House, 1977), p. 156.} Leo Cox observed that ‘churches in Australia have all been more ritualistic and formal than in America, and still are. None of them

\textit{O’Brien, North American Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Australia}
have been born in a revival fervor, and most of them have never seen a revival of any size. They quite oppose any emotion in their religion. Because of this, the church here is failing to meet Australia’s twentieth century need.’

Nelson Mink maintained that ‘Australia has not had any great revival or evangelical background, such as other British Commonwealth nations have enjoyed.’ When General Superintendent, Dr. G. B. Williamson visited Australia at the end of 1951 he claimed in his report that there had been no effective Holiness ministry in Australia in the thirty-five years prior to the establishment of the Church of the Nazarene. This is certainly an overstatement. Holiness teaching was not as widely forgotten or neglected among Methodists as the Holiness people thought it to be. It is understandable that, coming as they did largely from Brethren and Baptist backgrounds, early Australian Nazarenes were encountering Holiness as something entirely new. More conservative Methodists, Pentecostals, and those involved in the Keswick Convention movement were all aware of and promoting varieties of ‘Holiness’ teaching in their own ways. Nonetheless, as McEwan points out, for these early Nazarene pioneers, the absence of Holiness teaching in Australia was at least ‘subjectively’ true, and the hostility they received from other churches could only confirm their suspicions.

‘The Oddities of the Yank Deportment’: Differing Religious Origins and Styles

Holiness religion was different in its expression from more mainstream Christianity. Many of these differences were perceived as ‘American’ and thus proved a sticking point for some enquirers as the Wesleyan-Holiness churches sought to find a place in the existing religious scene.

48McEwan, ‘Correspondence,’ p. 39.
It is a commonplace that Australia’s first settlers were not the religious idealists that made up America’s first parishes. According to Hilary Carey, ‘in terms of church-going, deference to clerical authority, and acquaintance with theological principles, the convicts of Botany Bay made a poor showing.’ According to Mol, since the nineteenth century, at least, ‘Australians were born into a religion rather than changed by it, as happened in particular episodes of American history.’ Gary Bouma has described Australia’s religious style as ‘military chaplaincy’ religion, having its roots in the colonial experience. According to this view, the military and landowning classes in colonial Australia looked on religion as something done for one by a religious professional. This is significantly different from the evangelical Protestant voluntarism that prevails in the United States, in which one takes personal responsibility for one’s religious commitment and activism. Similarly, Mol contends that ‘religious affiliation seems for a significant number of Australians to be “ascriptive,” that is something one is born with. Contrary to the USA, where in Protestantism the “voluntarism” of religious affiliation is stressed, to belong does not imply that one supports the religious institution with one’s time and talents.’

The view of Australian Christianity as lacking the ‘charismatic events,’ which characterized American revivalism, however, has recently been challenged by historians who have researched significant periods of religious revival in places like the Victorian gold fields and the coal mining communities of the Hunter Valley.

49 Carey, Believing in Australia, p. 25.
50 Mol, Religion in Australia, p. 2.
52 Mol, Religion in Australia, p. 237.
The claim that Australian Christianity lacks a ‘voluntarist’ dimension is also open to question. For one thing Anglican evangelicalism of the ‘Methodistical’ variety characterized much of the religious ethos of early Australia, bringing with it the voluntarist ethic. Indeed, Carey goes so far as to say that evangelicalism was ‘the religious success story of the Australian colonies.’

Richard Johnson and Samuel Marsden were both evangelicals, and because of the absence of non-Anglican Protestant churches, at least in the earliest period, the evangelical Anglicans were not threatened by much religious competition. This meant that they were ‘keener and more visible in their practice of religion than most other Christians and accordingly they were able to set the colonial religious agenda.’

Nevertheless, it is true that Australian religious expression has always been notably more muted than in North America. During the debate over whether to insert a clause in the Australian Constitution which would recognize a reliance on ‘the blessing of Almighty God,’ the Tasmanian Adye Douglas, in opposing such a clause, asserted that ‘[While] we all rely upon…God in our daily transactions, we do not talk about it.’ He informed the delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1898 that the Lord’s Prayer was at one time used in the Tasmanian Legislative Council but that ‘it had become a matter of such indifference that the custom was given up.’ When Alexander Peacock made the point that the Lord’s Prayer was used in the Victorian Legislative Council, Alfred Deakin quipped, ‘And nearly all the members know it now,’ presumably meaning that they had not known it before its introduction!

Douglas then gave testimony that he was ‘ordinarily as religious as any member of

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54 Carey, p. 10.
55 Carey, p. 11.
56 Though Deakin may be commenting on the members’ illiteracy, rather than their irreligion.
this Convention,’ and then added, ‘I do not make a parade of it.’ It might be argued that Douglas’ reticence to display his religious convictions typifies Australian religiosity. If so, this stands in stark contrast to a more demonstrative American religious style.

Early Nazarenes believed that Australians were more receptive to American ideas and practices than to British ones. But Australian church leaders, as well as the general populace were often suspicious of American denominations. Even later, in 1969, When Earl and Marla Sparks showed interest in coming to Australia to help with the Wesleyan work, Jean Ridgway tried to dissuade them telling them ‘of our poorer living standards, of our small churches, and the inbred resentment which many Australians have toward Americans.’

Nazarene leaders recognised that there were differences in style between American and Australian Christians and that these had the potential to cause difficulties. The ‘oddities of the yank deportment’ were something Australians would find hard to understand. Some would-be American visitors had received a courteous ‘no’ from Berg because of the element of risk involved in their ability to adjust to ‘our local psychology.’ As much as possible, Australian and American workers should labour side by side so as to learn from each other. As much as possible promotional material was to reflect a peculiarly Australian ethos. It should

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58 PL. Beals, Report, p. 3.
60 Albert Berg to Ted Hollingsworth, no date, but replying to a letter of Hollingsworth dated 6 June 1946 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives), p. 1.
61 Albert Berg to I. F. Younger, 26 September 1962 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
62 Arthur A. Clarke to Ted Hollingsworth, 10 October 1946 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives), p. 2.
reflect the Nazarene message ‘in a true Australian fashion.’\textsuperscript{63} At the same time, Berg sees the Nazarene constituency as ‘Nazarene firstly and Australians secondly.’\textsuperscript{64}

When E. E. Zachary arrived from the United States in 1946, the ‘peculiarities’ of his style of preaching were seen by Pinch as something that the people needed ‘the Lord’s help’ to ‘rise above.’ The ‘altar call,’ (kneeling at an altar of prayer in a public meeting) so typical of American revivalism, seemed something of a novelty.\textsuperscript{65} When Dr. Weaver Hess, Oregon District Superintendent, preached in Sydney in January 1948, the tears that rolled down his cheeks were perhaps indicative of the approach to preaching among American revivalists, but were not immediately intelligible to the average Australian evangelical, whose expressions were characteristically more reserved. Pinch recalls upon seeing these tears, ‘We Australians were unaccustomed to this.’\textsuperscript{66}

According to David Bennett, when the altar call first emerged in British Methodism early in the nineteenth century ‘it was dubbed “the American custom.”’ Thus it was perceived as an import, rather than a home bred practice, and was certainly not seen as a strategy used by the English founder of Methodism.’\textsuperscript{67} As a distinct and intentionally planned system it seems to have had its beginnings in the American camp meeting revivals in the first decade of the nineteenth century.\textsuperscript{68} Bennett concludes that ‘Methodists seem to have been its only regular users until the 1870s. From then it was promoted to a wider audience by various itinerant evangelists, but there is little evidence of it being widely used in denominations of

\textsuperscript{63} Albert Berg to Ted Hollingsworth, 25 January 1946 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives), p. 3.
\textsuperscript{64} Albert Berg to G. B. Williamson, 7 June 1949 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
\textsuperscript{65} Pinch, p. 38.
\textsuperscript{66} Cook, p. 41.
\textsuperscript{68} Bennet, p. 79.
non-Methodist origins in the nineteenth century.’ What use, or memory, of this practice there may have been among evangelicals of the 1940s is uncertain but the fact that those in early Nazarene meetings encountered it as a novelty seems to suggest that it was not a widespread practice.

American servicemen stationed in Geraldton, Western Australia, during the Second World War found themselves without Coca Cola, a drink not known in WA at the time. They did, however, have a supply of the syrup available so they struck a deal with a local soft drink manufacturer to add the carbonated water and begin local production. There may be a metaphor here for religious importation. Certain forms of religious expression may be imported from America on a global scale, and yet they soon begin to be produced locally as well, blending local distinctives with the original ‘product’ to produce home grown varieties. Yuri Lotman has proposed a five stage model of cultural importation which begins with the assumption that cultural imports are superior to local product, and then moves through various stages of engagement and modification between local and imported cultural expression, culminating in local culture defining itself with little reference to outside cultural influences, ready to transmit meaning on its own terms. Australian evangelicals did not so much find the altar call something ‘superior’ but they did accept it and incorporate it into their own practices until it was no longer seen as, or even remembered as, an American import.

Piggin sees Australians as displaying an uncritical disposition toward all things American during the 1950s, as America ‘began to replace Britain in the affections of Australians.’ Hilliard agrees seeing a ‘discernable shift from Britain

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69 Bennet, p. 157.
70 Barker and Jackson, p. 118.
to the United States as a source of religious models and ideas’ during this time.73 Neville Buch has examined the way in which Australian Baptists in the years following the Second World War began increasingly to look to the United States for their inspiration.74 Pastors frequently travelled to the US to receive exposure to and training in methodologies and approaches successful in that country, but with perhaps dubious benefits down under. The traffic also ran in the other direction, as American pastors visited Australia where they were usually well received as successful pastors with proven know how.75

In 1956, Robert Mattke admired the new Wesleyan Methodist Church at Balwyn as having incorporated ‘some of the modern features of architecture proving so popular in the states [sic].’76 The American ‘Wells Organization’ introduced American style fund raising to Australian churches and the All-Age Sunday School was a US import particularly popular among Baptists.77

The Wesleyan Methodist involvement in the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade may be seen as one expression of this tendency among Holiness churches.78 Billy Graham films had been screened on Sunday nights at the Pascoe Vale Wesleyan Methodist congregation, where Kingsley Ridgway served as pastor since at least September 1956.

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76 In particular these features were reminiscent of ‘some of the new churches which are being built in the Wisconsin Conference.’ Robert and Janette Mattke, Aussie Answers [prayer letter], 10 March 1956 (Indianapolis, Indiana, Wesleyan Archives).
78 See chapter 5 of this thesis for the significance of the Graham Crusade in Wesleyan movement along the church-sect continuum.
1954. 79  Ridgway’s service on the Victorian executive council for the 1959 Crusade was a significant step in breaking down prejudices against the Wesleyans. In fact, there were two American Wesleyan Methodists on Graham’s team, his well-known baritone, George Beverley Shea, and Paul S. Rees, and this no doubt gave further credibility to the otherwise little-known Australian Wesleyans. 80  Lova Swart, pioneer missionary of the Church of God (Anderson) reported on the Crusade.

[It] was really thrilling. It had a camp-meeting atmosphere about it that we thoroughly enjoyed. It was wonderful to see the people literally pour to the front of that huge arena at the close of each meeting. One could more easily visualize what happened at Pentecost when three thousand were added to the church. Of course, no one knows how many were added to the church during the Crusade, but I am sure that thousands of earnest people responded. 81

At the final Crusade, Graham read a greeting from President Eisenhower which was warmly received. Along with this came a diplomatic letter from Richard Nixon. Graham was a well-known anti-Communist, considered to be a powerful ally on the American side of the Cold War. All of this resonated well in the anti-communist atmosphere of Australia at the time. 82 Kingsley Ridgway’s second wife, Jean, had been briefly involved with the Communist Party before her conversion and a planned visit by the Ridgways to the US in the same year as the Graham Crusade was cause for concern to the American Consulate when she applied for a visa. Her

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79 The Graham film Happiness was screened on 8 August 1954, The Friendly Messenger of the Wesleyan Methodist Church (August 1954), and another, Storms of Life was screened on 12 September 1954, The Friendly Messenger of the Wesleyan Methodist Church (September 1954).
80 Kingsley Ridgway to Harold K. Sheets, 31 January 1959 (Indianapolis, Indiana, Wesleyan Archives).
82 When Graham returned in 1968-1969 he drew smaller crowds and faced opposition from some. At the Melbourne crusade in March 1969 there was a protest against the Vietnam War, a sign of how the climate had changed in the decade since his first visit. David Hilliard, ‘The Religious Crisis of the 1960s: The Experience of the Australian Churches,” Journal of Religious History vol. 21, no. 2 (June 1997), p. 220.
application needed to be referred to Washington before they could be cleared to enter the country.\(^\text{83}\)

A young Billy Graham

(photo: Archives of the Billy Graham Centre, Wheaton College, Illinois)

Anti-American sentiment waned in Australia, in the post-war period, especially on the part of conservative intellectuals. American culture was far to be preferred to the totalitarianism which threatened the peace of the ‘free world.’ Left wing intellectuals, on the other hand, saw the day coming when Australia would be just another American province.\(^\text{84}\) The perception, on the part of the left, of a sudden move toward American cultural influences was unfounded, according to Waterhouse, since Americanisation had been a part of the cultural scene in Australia since the mid-nineteenth century.\(^\text{85}\)

\(^{83}\) Kingsley Ridgway to Harold K. Sheets, 31 January 1959 (Indianapolis, Indiana, Wesleyan Archives).

\(^{84}\) Richard Waterhouse, ‘Popular Culture,’ in Bell and Bell, Americanization, p. 47.

\(^{85}\) Waterhouse, in Bell and Bell, pp. 48-50.
As Wesleyan-Holiness churches sought to move from ‘outsider’ to ‘insider’ status they have tended to reflect those broader aspects of Americanization that have been integrated into Australian evangelicalism, and to minimize those that have not. When the Graham-style altar call was being used by Anglicans, Baptists, and Presbyterians, in the post Crusade era of the early 1960s, Wesleyan-Holiness use of this device would be far less conspicuous, and would not mark them out as a ‘fringe’ group. On the other hand, more uniquely ‘Holiness’ expressions, such as waving of the handkerchief in the air as a sign of being ‘blessed,’ or shouting ‘glory!’ were minimized in Holiness churches, partly because such behaviours were identified with Pentecostals, a group from which the Holiness people were keen to distance themselves.

‘Sheep Stealers’ and ‘Sinless Perfectionists’

In spite of the good will generated by Graham, anti-American sentiment among Australian evangelicals survived at least into the 1970s as is clear from the experience of members of the Church of God (Anderson) and the Church of God (Cleveland) who entered the Australian scene in 1960 and 1973 respectively.86 Pioneer Church of God (Cleveland) missionaries Bill and Winnie McAlpin were not well received by other Christians who considered them ‘sheep stealers.’ Even among the Pentecostal churches they were viewed as outsiders.87 The lack of cooperation from other Christians made their work more difficult. Not only was there no denominational connection, and little fellowship with others, they were told in no uncertain terms that they were not welcome in Australia. Viewed as being ‘sinless

86 See chapter 5 for more detail on the Church of God (Anderson) and chapter 6 for the Church of God (Cleveland).
87 Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland, Tennessee, July 2001.
perfectionists,’ whose presence was detrimental to the Christian cause, they were urged to ‘denounce’ their affiliation with the American church. They were often seen as an American group in competition with existing groups.

This anti-American sentiment did not prevent the Church of God (Cleveland) from experiencing significant growth in Australia, growth largely built upon strong immigrant communities arriving on Australian shores having been members of Church of God congregations in their home countries. These immigrant communities did not necessarily share the anti-American sentiment of many Australians. Winnie McAlpin remembers that her husband Bill’s style of pulpit ministry was totally different from the Australian style and that he made no effort to change. According to Mrs. McAlpin, preaching style at that time in Australia was more muted than in America. It was ‘more like a Sunday School teacher…teaching rather than preaching…[in preaching] the American manner was a little more demonstrative, a little more forceful…that was…a little bit frightening to some people coming in seeing this vast difference. Some people really loved it. Some people were scared to death.’

When the McAlpins held evangelistic meetings in Busselton WA, soon after their arrival in Australia, some of the members of this conservative rural farming community of about 10,000 people disapproved of the emotionalism of the meetings. When about twenty children were ‘moved to tears of repentance’ at an altar service some parents withdrew their involvement. Attendances after that were small. Bill was told, ‘We’ve heard about you American preachers. You have some sort of powder that you put on the kids. It affects them and makes them do crazy things. We

88 Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland, Tennessee, July 2001.
89 Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland, Tennessee, July 2001.
90 Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland, Tennessee, July 2001.
didn’t see you but you must have done that.’92 The Church of God had the practice of a ‘concert of prayer,’ during which everybody prayed out loud all at once. Australians didn’t appreciate this practice, thinking it was fanaticism. When asked whether there was anti-American sentiment on the part of Australians, the McAlpins answered strongly in the affirmative.93 Harold McLoud also found it important not to wear his American identity on his sleeve, as did Malcolm Hughes of the Church of God (Anderson), who recalls often being mistaken by other Christians for another one of those strange American cults94.

Overall, the Holiness churches themselves have had a very positive relationship with their American older cousins. There has been a great deal of mutual respect between the leadership in the two countries, with Australians more than willing to defer to Americans and Americans more than willing to defer to Australians. Albert Berg was extremely deferential to American authority and sought always to go by the book as far as Nazarene protocols were concerned. He would receive no visiting preachers to the Australian field who were not first authorized by the General Superintendents. After receiving a request from a Rev. W. L. King Jr. of Pennsylvania, to circulate a contentious paper outlining a negative view of the Church of the Nazarene, Berg responded with a concerned loyalty, that showed his respect for the American leadership.

I have read your paper and my first question was does this have the blessing of the Board of General Superintendents and has it been issued in full fellowship with these men of God?…There are some sweeping statements in your paper which to me appear to be harmful [and] could be interpreted as destructive of faith in our beloved church and its godly leaders, the General Superintendents…there is the risk that it would be divisive in its final effects—a sad prospect indeed. Is it necessary to cast such clouds of suspicion? Reading this kind of material will never serve the best interests of the Church.

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92 Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland, Tennessee, July 2001.  
93 Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland, Tennessee, July 2001.  
of the Nazarene in Australia…I am confident that [our preachers] would not be very interested in anything which would tend to minimize the loyalties of devoted Australian Nazarenes to those over them in the Lord, and to the church in its corporate constitution…We have no contentious problems on the Australian District and all is sweet peace with much blessing. Hallelujah! We want it to stay that way.95

The Australian churches have been encouraged to be self-supporting and self-determining to a great extent, and there has been an absence of paternalism. If anything, it has been the Australian churches themselves who have at times been slow to sever the apron strings. During the 1980s, the development of an Australian supplement to the North American Wesleyan Discipline (book of church polity) and then a complete Australian Discipline was not at first universally supported. The development of an Australian Discipline had been favoured by American leaders for many years. James Ridgway and many older Wesleyans preferred the Australian Church to simply fit in under the American Discipline. Aubrey Carnell, who was ‘the grand old man of the Australian church’ since the death of Kingsley Ridgway, was described by visiting American official Don Bray as ‘…a fanatically loyal Wesleyan and…the leading spokesman for using the Wesleyan Discipline from North America as it stands without alteration.’96 Don Hardgrave, who wanted an Australian Discipline, nevertheless was concerned that the desire for such not be perceived as an expression of independence from the American Church. Don Bray described the Australian leaders as ‘loyal Wesleyans and committed to the Wesleyan Church worldwide. They have true love and affection for the North American Church.’ Bray assured Hardgrave that it was the Wesleyan Church’s goal ‘to see that each National Church had its own discipline and that we did not see their desire to develop their

95 Albert Berg, letter to W. L. King Jr., 5 October 1955 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
96 Donald L. Bray, ‘Australia Administrative Visit, September 12-14, September 29-October 2,’ no year but references in the document would seem to place the visit in 1985 (Indianapolis, Indiana, Wesleyan Archives), p. 7.
own document as a separatist move but rather as a fulfillment of our own administrative goals.”

American Imperialism or the Production of Modernity?

Were the Wesleyan-Holiness churches examples of a kind of American religious imperialism? Or were they authentically Australian religious communities who looked to the United States as an older sibling able to give them a head start and provide connection to a broader international community?

The question of whether the charge of ‘American imperialism’ is a valid one in the Australian historical context lies at the heart of Bell and Bell’s treatment of ‘Americanization.’ Where Philip Adams and Donald Horne have raised concerns about Australia being a victim of both British and American imperialism, Bell and Bell contend that Australia’s relationship with America is ‘embedded in more general processes of modernization and globalization.’ Charges of American cultural and political ‘imperialism’ are often simplistic and overstated. Brouwer, Gifford, and Rose see Australian ‘fundamentalists,’ among others, as ‘an aggressive international sales force’ whose ‘social product’ distributes so successfully around the world is ‘clearly stamped “Made in the USA.”’ Salomon Nahmad of the National Indigenist Institute of Mexico sees American missionaries in Latin America as ‘the Franciscans and Dominicans of their time…the religious arm of an economic, political, and cultural system.’

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97 Bray, ‘Australia Administrative Visit,’ p. 3.
98 Bell and Bell, Implicated, p. xii.
99 Bell and Bell, ‘Introduction: The Dilemmas of Americanization,’ in Americanization and Australia, p. 5.
Those things labelled as instances of the ‘Americanization’ of society and culture may in fact be no more than examples of cross-cultural and internationalist modernisation. Modern nations such as Australia share with the United States, and other nations, in an emerging global culture, some aspects of which might be expressed in ways seen to be ‘American’ but whose American origins are only secondary to their significance as expressions of a global movement. Slater and Taylor agree, rejecting the ideas that ‘receivers’ of American culture are ‘passive and docile; local and national social practices interact with the intruding discourses of globalizing power to create a world of “hybrid Americas” - multiple ensembles of meanings and practices which intertwine the inside and the outside.’

Giles Keppel points to the way in which ‘evangelical movements…have been denigrated as representing the obscurantism of a bygone age’ and resists this ‘widespread view’ as ‘quite inadequate.’ Conservative religious groups contain, he says ‘a high proportion of people, young or not so young, who have been through a secular education, with a marked bias toward the technical disciplines.’ They have ‘habits of thought acquired in schools which are themselves the product par excellence of the modernity whose course they now wish to alter.’ They are those ‘intellectuals of a proletariat cast’ spoken of by Max Weber, who conclude in the final analysis that ‘the modernism produced by reason without God has not succeeded in creating values.’

According to Brouwer, Gifford, and Rose, the myth that evangelicals are a ‘bizarre anomaly’ of anti-modern and uneducated people who cannot fit in with secular American society can no longer be sustained. American religion, whether liberal or conservative, has always been able to ‘adapt itself to

modern contingencies and cultural realities while preserving its dedication to the twin civic doctrines of Americanism, extreme nationalism and unapologetic pro-capitalism.\textsuperscript{104}

In 1960 only 7\% of American evangelicals had a university education. By the mid-70s that number had grown to 23\%.\textsuperscript{105} Conservative Christians are not anti-modern. They avail themselves fully of the technologies and modes of discourse produced by the contemporary era.\textsuperscript{106} They are not Luddites raging against the machine, but are making the machine serve their own ends. They are, in fact, modernists par excellence, much more comfortable with the certainties of a modernist worldview, that in the shifting plural ‘realities’ of postmodernity. Australian evangelicalism is one form of that modernity of which America is another.

According to Appadurai and Breckenridge, most of today’s societies ‘possess the means for the local production of modernity.’\textsuperscript{107} Australia, then, need not be seen as the target of Americanisation, but as a creative partner in a dance of mutually enriching cultural expressions.

However much evidence might confound the ‘Los-Angelization of the world’ hypothesis, the anti-American sentiment that formed much of the resistance to Wesleyan-Holiness churches was real and would only begin to be broken down as broader evangelicalism itself became Americanized in the wake of Billy Graham-style revivalism. Piggin sees the difference between American and Australian spirituality as being highlighted by Anglican evangelicalism’s hegemony as a distinctive feature of Australian evangelicalism. Its suspicion and rejection of ‘the

\textsuperscript{104} Brouwer, Gifford, and Rose, p. 30.
\textsuperscript{105} Kepel, \textit{The Revenge of God}, p. 124.
\textsuperscript{107} Bell and Bell, \textit{Americanization}, pp. 10, 12. See also, Bell and Bell, \textit{Implicated}, p. 7.
highly individualistic theology of the indwelling Spirit’ is ‘a vital point for understanding the differences in the ambience of American and Australian spiritual life.’ ¹⁰⁸ This is significant, for it is just this ‘highly individualistic theology of the indwelling Spirit’ that has been a hallmark of the Wesleyan-Holiness churches. The Anglican evangelical establishment has always been opposed to what it has labelled ‘sinless perfectionism,’ and Piggin sees the retreat into ‘second blessing’ holiness on the part of some Anglicans at Moore College in the 1950s as an unhealthy response to encroaching liberalism, and as a threat to healthy evangelicalism. ¹⁰⁹

In an earlier essay, Piggin sets out a number of important questions.

Was Australian evangelicalism shaped primarily and definitively at the time of the origins of Australian settlement? Or have exogenous factors constituted the nature of Australian evangelicalism either by continuing to influence it as it grows or by repeatedly reintroducing varieties of it after other implants have died or grown too sickly to reproduce? What have been the patterns of interaction between evangelicalism and social and cultural forces in Australia, and how do they compare with such interactions in Britain and America?¹¹⁰

It may safely be asserted that ‘exogenous factors’ have indeed shaped Australian evangelicalism and that one of those factors has been American evangelicalism. David Hilliard has traced the reception of religion in post-war suburbia and found that though suburbanization threatened denominational ties and church attendance, ‘the spread of Sunday Schools, outdoor rallies, and American-based evangelism’ helped to counter this drift.¹¹¹ It is interesting to note that all three of these methods were widely utilized by the Wesleyan-Holiness churches. In fact,

¹⁰⁹ Piggin, Evangelical Christianity in Australia, pp. vii-ix, also pp. 105-24.
through much of the early history of the Wesleyans and the Nazarenes, Sunday School attendance in the suburbs far outstripped adult church attendance.\footnote{See statistical reports in \textit{Church of the Nazarene Australia District Assembly Minutes}, passim. In 1951 adult Wesleyan membership was 55 and Sunday School attendance was 557! Hardgrave, \textit{For Such a Time}, p. 71.}

Lotman’s model of cultural importation presupposes a fairly stable or even passive ‘receiving culture,’ which is acted upon by an outside culture perceived as superior to the local product. Australian evangelicalism was no such static culture. It cannot be understood as something ‘floating above’ or ‘suspended over’ the cultural, political, and social forces that shaped Australia broadly during this, or any historical period. It may be argued that it was ‘Americanised’ in the post-war years only to the extent that everything else in Australia was ‘Americanised.’ The case of the Wesleyan-Holiness churches in Australia differs from Lotman’s model in that the cultural import (American evangelicalism) was not at first considered a superior product. In fact, it was viewed with suspicion. The engagement and modification that took place over time, however, led to a gradual tendency to admire American approaches, especially the well-oiled machinery of American evangelistic techniques,
and to adopt them in Australia until the American origins were either forgotten or not
seen as important.

It is doubtful that the Wesleyan-Holiness churches themselves have had a
significant shaping influence on Australian evangelicalism. They have been too
small in number and too marginalized to be granted much leverage. However, they
emerged as a new expression of the Holiness impetus that had been present in
Australian evangelicalism earlier, primarily through Methodism, and also the
Keswick Convention movement, but which had all but died out. As much as they
would like to think otherwise, the doctrine and experience of ‘entire sanctification’ as
a second work of grace was not introduced to this country by the American
Wesleyan-Holiness churches, though it was revived by them. Other evangelicals
influenced by earlier forms of ‘Holiness’ teaching were drawn to the new Holiness
groups because they recognized an echo of this older, but now almost forgotten
tradition. It is worth, however, putting the ‘counterfactual’ question – ‘Would
Australian Holiness denominations have emerged in the postwar years without the
involvement of the American players?’ The answer to that question is probably ‘no.’
American money, personnel, literature, and moral support were all vital to the
establishment of these new churches and to their survival in an unfriendly
environment. The sense of being part of something much larger than themselves,
which came with the American friendship, gave an important boost to morale during
difficult pioneer days.

In spite of these important American connections, these churches were not
instances of American religious imperialism, but authentic movements of Australian
Christians finding in their American cousins willing ‘sponsors’ who could provide
legitimacy for their efforts by links with recognized and established denominations.
My own experience of interaction with American personnel, both past and present, confirms this finding.113 The fact that these ‘sponsoring’ denominations were American, far from being seen as an advantage, was seen by Australian and American church leaders alike, as a liability. These groups continued to be marginalized because of their perceived American origins and control. Only as features of American evangelicalism began to be more widely accepted among Australian evangelicals and seen as authentically Australian and not an American import, did the holiness churches become less ‘queer’ and, as we will see in chapter five, less sect-like.

113 In saying this I run the risk of being seen as failing to invoke the ‘Rawlsian principle’ of the ‘unencumbered self.’ (Rawls, Political Liberalism, pp. 30-32) However, in keeping with my conviction that such an objectified ‘self’ is an impossibility (see p. 20), I invoke my own personal experience; believing that the historian’s ‘historical situatedness’ need not be completely suspended in writing history but may in fact be an important asset in the telling of the story (Seeman, p. 121).
Chapter Five

Joining the Evangelical Club:
Moving Along the Church-Sect Continuum

Sociologists have utilised one or other version of the church-sect typology in order to place religious groups in perspective and to demonstrate a movement on the part of many groups from their initial beginnings as sects to their development as denominations and churches.1 Sects are seen as ‘innovative, and unstable, tending to develop into churches over time.’2 Where ‘churches’ are world affirming, ‘sects’ tend to be world rejecting and to have precise definitions of church membership, being very clear about who is and who is not a member, and keeping clear tabs on gains and losses. Those on the church end of the scale are less definitive and less careful with tabulating gains and losses.3 Denominations now considered churches in their own right, such as Methodists, Baptists, and the Churches of Christ, began as sects and, over a process of time, have ‘moderated their exclusive ideas about the world, softened their membership requirements, and have accepted other denominations as relative equals.’4 In just the same way, all of the Holiness churches that form the subject of this thesis began as sects with very high demands placed upon their members but over time have gradually moderated their expectations becoming more like the established denominations in the process.

Members of ecstatic religious movements are often drawn at first from among socially marginalised people, before going on at a later stage in their development to

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2 Bouma, Religion, p. 93.
3 Bouma, Religion, p. 94.
4 Bouma, Religion, p. 94.
experience upward social mobility. Early Pentecostals, for example, identified with, and drew their constituency from, marginalized people who lived on the fringes of society, which eventually led to a growing commitment to social reform. They then began to recognise the importance of schools and education, and today their leaders are predominantly educated and middle class.\(^5\) The nineteenth-century American Holiness movement began out of a concern that there was a ‘gradual drift of Methodist church practice away from the old Wesleyan landmarks and toward the sedate forms of middle class Protestantism,’ which Ahlstrom sees as ‘the most basic aspect of the antagonism…toward mainline Methodism on the part of the Holiness movement seceders.’\(^6\)

Bainbridge sets out the emergence of the American Holiness movement as a classic illustration of church-sect typology.

The greatest single drama of American religious history is the rise of the Methodist Movement, its gradual loss of fervor, and the eruption from it of dozens of small sects that together constitute the Holiness Movement. This religious drama illustrates classical church-sect theory, which says that high-tension religious movements often will reduce their tension and form an accommodation with the surrounding society. When they do this, the religious needs of relatively deprived members will no longer be met, and the

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\(^5\) Walter Hollenweger, ‘Islands of Humanity: A Sociological Assessment,’ in Walter J. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals* (London, SCM Press, 1972), pp. 457-96. Hollenweger takes issue with those who assert that the Pentecostal movement continues to recruit its members from the lower levels of society maintaining that his own research demonstrates that, as a whole, it is ‘a predominantly bourgeois movement. ‘All attempts to understand [Pentecostal] sub-culture as an inferior culture, as the expression solely of social, intellectual and economic deprivation, are clearly contradicted by the most recent sociological statistics’ (p. 474). In the results of his study of a group of ‘extremist’ snake-handling Pentecostals in Minnesota, alongside members of a mainstream church, contrary to expectation, the Pentecostal group showed a lower rate of abnormality. ‘The traditional Christians were more defensive, less ready to admit errors, and displayed more repressions and depressive disturbances, while the Pentecostals presented a more spontaneous, free and independent picture. In particular, in old age the Pentecostals in this group grew more ‘normal,’ while the traditional Christians grow more reserved, unfriendly and fearful. The conclusion of this study is that Pentecostals seem to derive from their worship more comfort and flexibility to help them master the problems of life than do traditional Christians.’ pp. 490-91.

stage will be set for a new act of the drama, in which new high-tension sects explode out of the old movement.7

The early American Holiness movement at first represented the ‘comfortable, middle-class, and largely urban constituencies’ of its Methodist Episcopal Church origins.8 Only as the movement spread beyond this earlier setting did it begin to appeal to small farmers in rural areas, and recent farming migrants arriving in the big cities in search of employment. By 1890, Holiness churches were made up of working people whose first experience with Christian faith was through a Holiness group, and who had ‘a taste for a very hot form of religion.’9 These urban workers soon experienced an upward social lift, leading to a corresponding lessening of religious fervour. Holiness movement churches such as the Church of the Nazarene seem destined to live out the same experience as their parent Methodist church. Upward social mobility and a lessening of expectation of sanctification in this life ‘[had] the effect of reducing the emotionality of the movement, permitting it to accommodate further to the institutions of secular society, and lowering its sectarian tension.’10

[S]ociological theory and qualitative historical evidence both suggest that Methodism is lower in tension than the Church of the Nazarene, which in turn may be lower in tension than the host of smaller Holiness groups…[D]ata from the General Social Survey [reveal] that [o]rdinary Methodists exhibit far weaker religious commitment, on average, than do Nazarenes or members of the small Holiness groups. For each variant the Nazarenes are slightly closer to the Methodists than are the Holiness respondents. However, the Nazarene and Holiness respondents are quite close to each other…As groups that broke away from conventional Methodis[m], the Nazarenes and Holiness groups are more strongly committed to traditional religion, but the Nazarenes reveal a slightly reduced commitment compared with the Holiness respondents…Like the parent Methodist movement itself in the nineteenth century…Holiness denominations will have to cope with the constant elusiveness and

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10 Bainbridge, p. 88.
disconfirming of salvation. The classic response is to reduce expectations for worldly sanctification, placing the greatest benefits on the supernatural plane where they cannot be proven false by human observation. This has the effect of reducing the emotionality of the movement, permitting it to accommodate further to the institutions of secular society, and lowering its sectarian tension. Then the combination of mass relative deprivation and individual longing for perfection can ignite the Holiness Movement afresh.\textsuperscript{11}

Factors that may reduce the tension of a religious movement are demonstrated by Bainbridge, beginning with H. Richard Niebuhr’s ideas and adding those of other sociologists of religion. He then adds six parallel factors that maintain or increase tension, each one comparable to its tension-reduction factor.\textsuperscript{12}

Table 1: Factors Leading to Variables in the Tension of Religious Sects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factors that reduce tension</th>
<th>Factors that raise tension</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth of a new generation of members who must be raised in the religion rather than converted to it.</td>
<td>A high level of recruitment of new members, which emphasizes their needs rather than those of members born into the group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socio-cultural assimilation of the ethnic group to which members belong.</td>
<td>Rejection of members by powerful groups in society because they belonged to a suppressed ethnic group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increase in the number of members, bringing the sect out of minority status</td>
<td>Failure of a conversionist group to grow causes members to stress specific compensators in lieu of worldly evidence of success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of a stable leadership structure which builds a bureaucracy and emphasises the needs of bureaucratic leaders.</td>
<td>A sequence of charismatic leaders stages numerous revivals that pump up the tension.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Random processes, including regression toward the mean, that tend to reduce the deviance of individuals or groups.</td>
<td>Holy Scriptures or other well-established traditions that anchor the group near a particular level of tension.</td>
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\textsuperscript{12} Bainbridge, p. 79.
Bainbridge’s analysis helps us to see that the church-sect continuum is not an inviolable law which religious movements must obey. Numerous factors may be introduced which raise or lower the religious tension, and ‘reducing’ and ‘raising’ factors may even interact together in a variety of ways in a given instance. The existence of these variables remind us that ‘random processes’ make any simplistic church-sect analysis impossible. This chapter will seek to indicate the presence of such variables in the case of the Wesleyan-Holiness churches in Australia.

‘We’re wowsers; Let’s wowse!’

All of the Holiness churches began with strict codes of behaviour thought to be indicative of the sanctified life. Early Australian Nazarene leader Albert Berg was insistent that the Church of the Nazarene must maintain high standards of personal conduct among its members, if it was to ‘justify its existence’ in Australia.

We do not need to be like any other denomination. We are distinctly a holiness church and that means we are not a worldly church in any sense of the word. We are to guard against worldly intrusions, and our pastors and people are to see that Manual standards are maintained in spirit and conduct. Worldliness, both overt and covert, spells doom to any church. I am sure that Australian Nazarene preachers stand together uncompromisingly to keep the world out of the Church of the Nazarene and that we can confidently count on the support of our membership in this regard.

The Nazarene Committee on the State of the Church, in 1960, saw television as having been ‘used of the devil to sidetrack Christians,’ and ‘strongly’ recommended that Australian Nazarenes ‘refrain from introducing this medium’ into their homes. Makeup and ‘ostentation of dress and deportment’ were also warned

against. The ‘current trend toward sensuality in modern music,’ was seen as a reason to warn members to ‘refrain from listening to worldly music.’

Church of God (Cleveland) members adopted strict codes of behaviour, which were widely held in the early years in America when the church was confined to the Appalachian mountains, but would prove difficult to enforce as the group moved along the church-sect continuum in the years following the Second World War. Dancing was prohibited as leading to promiscuity. Church fetes were considered illegitimate money-making ventures. It was considered outrageous that the Church should invite sinners to support the gospel through purchasing merchandise, when they had no interest in Christ or his message. The Church should be supported by the free will giving of its members, not by the marketing of material goods.

Such arguments were predicated as much on lower-class prejudices as upon scripture proofs. Objections to ‘necktie socials’ and ‘fancy costumes’ obviously reflected economic and social deprivation. Church of God members, aware of their lower-class status, concluded that the middle-class churches exchanged true Christian faith for a cheap imitation.

In the 1920s and 30s when Hollywood was producing films that were catapulting the cinematic arts into a mass phenomenon, Holiness people resolutely refused to participate, believing that the films being produced were pornographic, and a waste of time that could be better spent on more useful activities. No one who operated a movie theatre was eligible for membership in the Church of God (Cleveland), and members of all the Holiness denominations were prohibited from patronizing the movie house. Again, it was the postwar years that saw a failure of the churches’ membership to comply with the established rule, and an attempt by the churches’ leadership to enforce prohibition, which largely went unheeded. The

advent of television complicated matters, since members could now see things in their living rooms, which they were prohibited from seeing on a movie screen.

Holiness Christians in the first half of the twentieth century, like most conservative Christians of the day, were strict teetotalers. In the Church of God (Cleveland) even Coca-Cola was banned for a time as it still held a bad reputation from the days in which it contained a very small amount of cocaine (this additive was dropped in 1905). Arising out of this association, soft drinks were called ‘dope’ drinks, and in 1917 a regulation was passed banning their consumption. This ruling was repealed in 1935, but the Church of God (Cleveland) remains opposed to the consumption of all alcoholic beverages. The Cleveland group did not participate in the Prohibitionist movement, perhaps because the political lobbying necessary was considered a ‘worldy’ distraction. They adopted the total abstinence code for themselves but do not seem to have sought to enforce it upon others in the general populace. However, when the Prohibition Amendment was repealed in 1933, some members were urged to vote for state referenda seeking to place restrictions on point of sale. In 1942 the Supreme Council recommended that the President of the United States be asked to ‘ban the sale of alcoholic drinks to our soldiers,’ and the General Assembly passed a resolution in support of the Shepard Bill which would have made it illegal for soldiers to consume alcohol.

Opposition to tobacco in the Holiness churches was mostly for health reasons, and because of the belief that it induced laziness and lethargy. When many Protestant churches in the tobacco-glutted American south considered the practice amoral, and even provided spitoons for worshippers, Holiness churches banned the practice as a filthy habit not becoming one professing holiness. It was also a practice to be

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19 Church of God 37th General Assembly, Minutes, p. 22, in Crews, p. 50.
condemned because the expense involved could not be justified in the light of so many pressing needs. It was not considered good Christian stewardship to be wasting money on tobacco that could be spent on preaching the Gospel. In the Church of God (Cleveland) not only using, but growing and trafficking in tobacco was also banned, including working as a clerk in a store that sold tobacco. This was hard on members whose livelihood often depended on tobacco as a cash crop. In 1933 the General Assembly lifted the ban a little so that those who depended solely on a tobacco crop for their livelihood could continue to do so. Holiness churches were well ahead of their time in warning about the damaging effect of smoking on health. In 1962, Charles Conn, then editor of The Evangel approved the suggestion of one congressman to require that cigarette manufacturers ‘print on their packages a clear warning...that continued use of their product may result in heart disease, lung cancer or death.’

This of course is now standard practice.

The rigid dress code of the Holiness groups applied mostly to women. The ‘flapper’ styles that emerged following the First World War were particularly abhorrent. It was believed that women should never dress so as to be attractive to men, and of course, the swimsuit came in for the most trenchant criticism. The 1933 General Assembly of the Church of God (Cleveland) passed a resolution requiring women to wear dresses that came to the elbow and ankles. But again many members simply followed the prevailing fashions with little regard for church law. The Bishops Council meeting in 1940 recommended the rescinding of all previous rulings on dress and asked members, in determining what to wear, simply to follow the principles of modesty laid down in the New Testament. Conservatives were not happy with this but it was ‘simply unrealistic for them to think that all Church of God

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21 Crews, p. 58.
women would live according to one standard dress code devised by an all-male ecclesiastical hierarchy. \textsuperscript{22} But the issue was raised again in the 1960s when the wearing of trousers (‘slacks’) was opposed as blurring the distinction between women and men. Sometimes it was the body-hugging properties of the garment that came in for attack, accentuating as it did the beauty of the female form, thus causing men to stumble. More often than not however, the rejection of the wearing of trousers was based on the perception that it was an expression of the ‘women's liberation’ movement, calling for the equal rights and recognition of women in society. Trousers were worn by businessmen, labourers, tradesmen, and executives, that is, by the work force. Women were mothers, homemakers, cooks, and ‘helpers’ of their husbands on the home front. They wore dresses.

Crews sees the classification of certain types of dress as immoral as ‘a cultural conflict between rural and urban values’.\textsuperscript{23} There was also in strict dress codes, a social protest against the alienation of the poor through the wearing of the most expensive clothes. To dress ‘plainly’ rather than in expensive clothes was both a personal discipline relating to good stewardship of personal finances, and also an expression of responsibility toward those who might not feel comfortable in a church service where everybody but themselves was dressed in the latest (and thus most expensive) styles. The wearing of jewelry was rejected for similar reasons. Even wedding rings were frequently foresworn in Holiness circles.

In Australia in the 1970s, the Church of God (Cleveland) people were considered more conservative than Australian Pentecostals in their external expression of holiness. Winnie McAlpin remembers that she wore her hair long, uncut, and gathered up on the top of her head, and that the wearing of trousers by

\textsuperscript{22} Crews, p. 59.
\textsuperscript{23} Crews, p. 56.
women was frowned upon. Her husband Bill would never wear shorts, as was common among Australian men. ‘They called it “clothesline holiness.”’

Winnie recalls the change in their views over time.

We were never dogmatic about [this dress code] but we maintained it ourselves. We did not have missionary training. We did not have a very big worldview and after being [in Australia] awhile and ministering to maybe 15 or 20 different kinds of cultures, then we realised, for instance, that a woman might wear pants in Korea and that would be her standard dress…and so, as we got a wider worldview, some of these things didn’t quite make sense. And of course a pair of shorts in Australia is standard wear, although I still don’t prefer them in church because of my Wesleyan background…As we grew our perspectives…changed. As we gained a wider view of culture…we realised that some of these things did not matter to God. He looks down into the heart.

Dress codes are no longer a feature of any of the Wesleyan-Holiness churches discussed in this thesis, either in America or Australia, except among some older, more conservative members who find it difficult to move away from the customs they have imbibed, in many cases, since childhood. Attendance at the movies is common, especially among young members, though discernment is urged in regard to the appropriateness of individual films viewed. Dancing is no longer prohibited, with some local churches holding barn dances and discos as either youth or whole-family events. The culture associated with ‘nightclubbing,’ and the ‘rave’ scene, however, would be frowned upon. At the National Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia held in January 2004, the delegates adopted a membership proposal, by a strong majority, that, in effect, removed the total abstinence rule while still recommending abstinence as the preferred option for members. This was ratified later in the year by three of the Church’s four District Conferences.

While observable external behaviours could successfully be enforced, the degree of religious tension in Holiness churches was maintained. Such external

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24 Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland, Tennessee, July 2001.
markers made it easier to determine who was ‘sanctified’ and who was not. This tension was at its height in the earlier generations of the movement, but the children and grandchildren of the founders, who were raised in these denominations rather than converted into them, did not always embrace the lifestyle commitments as wholeheartedly as their ancestors, and so tension was reduced.

Not only were the outward physical signs of an inward, spiritual, holiness made less clear over time, the distinctive doctrine of holiness as a second blessing has itself significantly waned among Holiness churches. Little difference is now found between Holiness preaching on sanctification and general exhortations to godly living that might be found in any evangelical church. The Wesleyan Pastor’s Discussion Group carried out a discussion in June 2003 arising out of the following question:

How many of us preach entire sanctification as a definite second work of grace giving an invitation to people to respond with a distinct act of consecration designed to appropriate an actual experience of sanctifying grace, subsequent to conversion? Are we still a holiness movement as well as a holiness church? A holiness movement would be proclaiming a message and a distinct experience. A holiness church, would be confessing a holiness creed, taking a confessional stance regarding entire sanctification, but would not necessarily be promoting a distinct experience of entire sanctification as a second work of grace.26

There were only four respondents to this question. Three claimed that they often preached on sanctification but the examples given by two of these were the kind of generalised call to holy living that any Christian preacher might offer. One respondent, new to the Wesleyan Methodist Church, expressed considerable uncertainty about the doctrine.

I confess that I cannot recall preparing a sermon specifically on entire sanctification as a definite second work of grace, although I may have referred to it in sermons. To be honest, I have found that a great deal of confusion exists around this subject. I am not convinced that even Wesleyans themselves are in agreement about what entire sanctification is! There are times, I suspect,

when some of us get sanctification, which is the work of God, mixed up with consecration, which is something that we do. I agree that, as a holiness movement (which we still are, aren’t we?), we should preach entire sanctification as a second blessing of grace. But how does one avoid confusing people, or adding further to their already existing confusion? Perhaps, as a part of a holiness movement, we as pastors need to spend more time educating ourselves in this area. The only time I hear the term ‘entire sanctification’ used within the Wesleyan Methodist church is at Kingsley College. And this has often been in the context of debate about what the term means! Are we in danger of losing, a sense of ‘experience,’ particularly the experience of being a sanctified Christian?27

Lindsay Cameron surveyed Wesleyan Methodist pastors in 1988 to ascertain their viewpoints on sin and holiness.28 140 questionnaires were distributed to 35 churches, with a 75% response rate. He found that there was some degree of variation in exactly what constituted sinful behaviour, especially when it came to matters not explicitly mentioned in the Bible. He attributed this diversity in part to the fact that Wesleyan membership ‘has been drawn from a wide spectrum of denominations.’29 The respondents were divided about 50-50 over whether smoking tobacco, selling tobacco, divorce and remarriage, and IVF procedures, were sinful. Apart from IVF, which was not available in the formative years of the Church, this degree of doubt on such issues indicates a significant shift of attitude from earlier clear-cut denunciation of such things. The only factor that gained 100% agreement was the statement that homosexual practice was always sinful.30 Cameron calls for pastors to be more careful in explaining the basis of the membership commitments of the Wesleyan Methodist Church at that time, including total abstinence and the refusal to use tobacco.

28 Lindsay L. Cameron, ‘Understanding the Holy Life as Freedom from Sin with Special Reference and Interpretation of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia,’ BTh thesis, Melbourne, Kingsley College, 1988. This research was later published as Lindsay L. Cameron, *Holiness or Legalism: A Study of the Effect that Differing Convictions Have Upon the Quest for Holiness*. (Brisbane: A Pleasant Surprise, 1989).
29 Cameron, *Holiness or Legalism*, pp. 97-8.
30 Cameron, *Holiness or Legalism*, p. 12.
If there are good reasons these standards, even though they are not intrinsically sin, these reasons must be discussed. If there are not good reasons then the Wesleyan Methodists should be careful not to allow tradition to exercise too high an authority over people’s lives. The Bible remains the final authority.\(^{31}\)

Again we see a lowering of religious tension accompanied by some degree of skepticism about the distinctive features which had earlier helped maintain a higher degree of tension. ‘Standards’ and ‘tradition’ must be submitted to a higher authority – the Bible itself, a more mainstream Protestant conviction. Cameron attributes the variance in opinion on just what constitutes sinful behaviour to the high number of people transferring in from other denominations. This is significant in light of Bainbridge’s typology. What seems to be happening here is that the recruitment of new members is leading to an emphasis on their needs (in this case the need to submit traditional Holiness practices to scriptural authority) rather than the needs of existing members of the group to maintain the old standards.

Bainbridge states that the ‘development of a stable leadership structure which builds a bureaucracy and emphasizes the needs of bureaucratic leaders’ is another factor in the tension reduction of religious sects.\(^{32}\) Edwin Jones has traced the trajectory of the American Holiness movement denominations toward institutionalism, a pattern which is now also beginning to be seen in the Australian Holiness churches.

The Holiness denomination subsumed the holiness cause. Church standards supplanted individual convictions and promotion of programs and institutions replaced the authority of zeal and ordered aggressiveness of the early years. Entire sanctification, which faded as the central aspiration of many in the second and third generations, became instead the Holiness cultus. Christian perfection remained as the unassailable shibboleth of doctrinal affirmation long after fixation on numerical and financial prosperity had replaced personal and collective sanctity as the central agenda. The outlook and methods of the business corporation captured the collective mind; conformity superseded

\(^{31}\) Cameron, *Holiness or Legalism*, p. 99.

\(^{32}\) Bainbridge, p. 79.
conviction as the mark of group identity… Although each movement professed the experiences of the elders… neither was successful in carrying the typological understandings or the creative separatism of its youth with it. Faced with the challenges posed by their own children, potential converts, and the technological revolution, they embraced much of the world their fathers and mothers had shunned… Pilgrim had settled down. He was now into product development and marketing.  

While a definite movement toward the ‘church’ end of the church-sect continuum is recognisable, it is still clear that Wesleyan-Holiness churches in Australia retain at least some sect-like features. Typologies of religious expression see sects as tending to be more conservative theologically, strict on questions of personal morality, and exhibiting the highest rate of church attendance, and habits of individual piety, such as daily prayer and Bible reading. The Wesleyan-Holiness churches clearly fit this description. Religious groups will exhibit various religious ‘styles’ or ‘modes of transcendence,’ with one style tending to predominate. These modes include 1) awe, wonder, and mystery; 2) ecstasy; and 3) mind and reason. Earlier types of Holiness movement expressions were decidedly more ‘ecstatic’ than they currently are, perhaps an indicator of movement to the ‘church’ end of the church-sect continuum. Ecstatic raptures tend to be left to the Pentecostals and Charismatics these days. Apart from the rapture of hymnody, Holiness people are more likely to experience transcendence through the hearing of the sacred text of scripture, more engaged in Bible study, and the application of such findings to life situations, than to be searching for moments of religious ecstasy. Experience is to be regulated by the Bible and not the Bible interpreted through experience. When the

33 Jones, in Miller, pp. 28-9.
35 Bouma, pp. 68-73.

O’Brien, *North American Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Australia*
Scriptures are expounded through the instrumentality of an ‘anointed’ preacher, the voice of God is heard, and the will is moved to action.

Whether the movement of the Holiness churches in Australia along the church-sect continuum is a result of upward social mobility is difficult to ascertain. There has been no extensive collection of data on the sociological makeup of the early Holiness churches in Australia. An examination of seventeen Wesleyan Methodist marriage certificates between the years 1953 and 1963 show about half of those being married as drawn from white collar professions, such as office workers, and nurses, most of the rest being tradesmen and unskilled labourers. Interestingly, only one of the women listed 'housewife' as her occupation. Five of the seventeen women were engaged in some kind of office work, six women were in the nursing field and there was one woman doctor.36

The findings of the National Church Life Survey of 1996 give us an idea of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia in that year, the only Wesleyan-Holiness denomination to participate in this survey of Protestant churches.37 The findings show that in ratio of male to female, in educational levels, in marital status, and in ethnicity, those who worship in Wesleyan churches are not significantly different from those in any other of the participating churches.38 11% of Wesleyans have a bachelors degree, as compared with 12% of all other Protestants. Those holding post-graduate degrees are 6% as compared to 7% of others. They rate higher than most in

36 The marriages were all performed in the state of Victoria. The male occupations were textile worker, minister (x2), carpenter, labourer, machine mechanic, student, truck driver, missionary, salesman, electrical fitter, butcher, clerk, public servant, driver, engineer, and moulder. The female occupations were nursing sister (x2), nurse (x2), student nurse, nurses aid, sales assistant, process worker, machinist, clerk, typist, telephonist, teletypist, calculator operator, housewife, teacher, and doctor. Wesleyan-Holiness Archive, Kingsley College, Melbourne.
37 This survey was a joint project of the Uniting Church Board of Mission and Anglicare, Diocese of Sydney. Detailed findings of the NCLS are given in Peter Kaldor, et al. Build My Church: Trends and Possibilities for Australian Churches (Adelaide, Open Book, 1999).
38 All of the information in this section is drawn from National Church Life Survey, 'Taking Stock: Printout of a Detailed Denominational Profile (Wesleyan Methodist)' accompanying material to Peter Kaldor, et al. Taking Stock (Adelaide, Open Book, 1999).
their giving (53% give one tenth of all their income to the church). They have a higher commitment to biblical authority than most, and are less likely to have ever ‘spoken in tongues’ than any of the other participating groups. The average size of their congregations is 51 (average of all others 69) and those participating in small groups at some time other than the Sunday worship service is a high 56% (all of others 42%). Like the other Protestant churches the age profile of the Wesleyans closely matches the general population. For example, 32% of Wesleyans are aged between 20 and 39, which compares with 29% of the general population. The Wesleyan churches show a high rate of ‘switchers,’ that is people who already have explicit Christian faith and have ‘switched’ to the Wesleyans from another denomination. Here again we see a demographic change significant to the move from ‘outsider’ to ‘insider’ status. A number of Bainbridge’s factors come into focus here. The increase in new members helped move the group out of a minority status. If these new members had been raw recruits converted from a non-religious background, they might more easily have been persuaded to accept the particular lifestyle convictions of the group. The fact that they were instead ‘switchers’ who already had their minds made up about what did or did not constitute holy living, led to a tendency to ‘reduce the deviance’ of the group, resulting in a further lowering of tension.

We are able to gain some insight into the religious tension of the early Church of the Nazarene in Australia by noting differences between Australian and American Nazarenes on lifestyle issues. American Nazarenes had moved much further along the church-sect continuum by the 1940s than had their Australian cousins. The Americans were already fifty years into their history and facing issues of a second-generation loss of enthusiasm for Nazarene distinctiveness. On the other hand,
Australians, like Albert Berg and Doug Pinch were enthusiastic zealots who had discovered a new and exciting message which they were keen to promote and exemplify. Because the literature that informed them was largely from the early period of the Holiness movement, Australian Nazarenes tended to adopt a greater enthusiasm to external indicators of Holiness than did the Americans.

Nazarenes perhaps best exemplify the moderate tendency within the Holiness movement, while the offshoot Pentecostalism of the Assemblies of God may be seen as the more radical expression of the movement. The early years of the Church of the Nazarene saw rapid growth. In the period between 1926 and 1936, a period of decline in all mainline churches in America, the Nazarenes more than doubled from 63,558 to 136,277. In 1969 they numbered 350,882 members in the United States alone. By this time their upward social mobility, increased interest in higher education, lessening of private fervour, and even talks of merger with the Methodist Church, showed them to be ‘a remarkable instance of a nearly full sectarian cycle.’

They continued to see positive growth throughout the twentieth century until today they number 1.2 million members in 135 ‘world areas.’

A similar growth pattern can be traced for the Church of God (Cleveland). During the great depression of the 1930s, when most denominations recorded no growth or even decline, the membership of the Church of God more than doubled. It expanded into northern and western states, as well as into foreign mission fields. There were sometimes expulsions from the movement for breach of its ‘teachings’ in the years prior to the Second World War. In the postwar years, however, it became

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39 Ahlstrom, p. 818.
40 Ahlstrom, pp. 818-19, p. 920.
41 http://www.nazarene.org/headquarters/secretary/who
42 Crews, p. 32.
increasingly difficult to impose discipline on erring members.\textsuperscript{43} According to Crews this was a result of the differing social climate between its northern and southern members.

Members from different parts of the country and different social and economic classes brought with them cultural baggage much different from that of their southern coreligionists. Many of these nonsoutherners felt they need not comply with teachings that had been developed because of conflicts within southern culture.\textsuperscript{44}

The years after 1944 saw the Church of God’s ‘move into mainstream conservative evangelicalism and its evolution into a middle-class Protestant denomination,’ until by 1990 it had grown to 2 million members in over 100 countries.\textsuperscript{45}

In America in the 1940s all of the Holiness movement churches had moved much further toward the ‘traditional mainstream’ than was the case for the newly emerging Holiness churches in Australia. The Australian Holiness churches of the 1940s and 50s saw a decline in the religious fervour of other evangelical bodies, and saw themselves as raised up to champion a return to the apostolic fire of early Methodism. In this respect, they were much closer to the sect end of the church-sect continuum than were their sponsoring churches in the United States. The early Nazarenes in Sydney were, perhaps naively, unaware of the lowering of religious tension in their own ‘mother’ church. They were horrified, for example, to receive a Bethany-Peniel College magazine from Ted Hollingsworth, and find pictures of ‘modern hairdo’s’ [sic] and ‘ballroom frocking.’ Berg ‘explained to the best of his ability re American customs and that we were free in Australia to follow the Lord in a

\textsuperscript{43} Crews, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{44} Crews, p. 22.
\textsuperscript{45} Crews, p. 37.
more simple manner.’ Far from the American Holiness movement mores being
enforced upon the Australian church, it seems the opposite was happening. The
Australian Nazarenes were more concerned about strict dress codes, than the ‘second
generation’ Nazarenes on the liberal arts college scene. Arthur Clarke expressed
some of this conservatism when he wrote to S. T. Ludwig, in September of 1946. He
was convinced that the high standards of Nazarene church membership would appeal
to serious Christians in existing denominations in Australia, as ‘there are many lovely
Christians who do not smoke or go to worldly amusements, or belong to secret orders,
and they frequently have ministers or leading members who do…’

In that Nazarene leaders such as Albert Berg placed special emphasis on
distinctive Nazarene behaviours and beliefs they may be seen as examples of those
‘charismatic leaders’ which Bainbridge sees as ‘pumping up the tension’ of religious
sects in an attempt to ensure their survival and growth. However, in a group
dependent on ‘switchers’ it may well be the lowering of tension and a movement
toward the mainstream that in fact lead to growth. What is being reported in the
religious world today as a ‘resurgence of evangelicalism,’ Donald Dayton sees rather
as ‘the emergence into the broader culture and the middle classes of movements
found among the lower classes in the nineteenth century but now claiming a place in
the sun…[churches] with a sectarian past now entering the larger church world with a
distinctive witness.’ Because the growth and survival of North American Holiness
churches in Australia has depended more on ‘transfer’ than on ‘convert’ growth it
seems that a lowering, rather than a heightening, of religious tension has been the

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46 Berg to Hollingsworth, 12 February 1946, (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
47 Clarke to Ludwig, 27 September 1946, (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives).
48 Bainbridge, 79.
49 Donald W. Dayton, ‘The Holiness Witness in the Ecumenical Church,’ Wesleyan Theological
major factor in their success. The lowering of their lifestyle standards and the
lessening of their theological uniqueness has made growth by transfer more possible.
However their continued reliance on the authority of the Bible and a general sense of
being ‘Wesleyan’ rather than ‘Calvinist,’ ‘Pentecostal,’ or ‘Liberal,’ have provided
the ‘well-established traditions’ that have enabled them to be ‘anchored near a
particular level of tension.’ These factors have also helped preserve some degree of
uniqueness of identity and prevented any significant move away from theological
conservatism.

‘Our Aim – Fidelity Not Popularity’: Relations with Other Churches

The Holiness churches, as any religious group, ‘cannot be understood in
isolation, but only in terms of their relationship with the secular world and with other
religious groups to which they are related.’ Evangelicals often see themselves as
maintaining a centrist position and calling mainline churches to return to the centre
from their drift toward liberalism. On the other hand, the ‘churches of the traditional
mainstream’ may be seen as holding that central position and the newer movements
of the nineteenth century, such as the Holiness movement, as having a role to play in
informing the centrist church with insights it has forgotten. Though the American
Holiness churches, newly emerging in Australia in the 1940s, were considered as
‘sects’ by other Australian evangelicals, for the most part, they did not themselves
exhibit a sectarian attitude. To the contrary, they desired to be seen as fellow
evangelicals, to co-operate where they could in evangelistic work, to be accepted; in

50 Bainbridge, 79.
51 The motto is drawn from The Wesleyan Witness July-August (1952), cover.
short, to be admitted to the ‘evangelical club.’ They have succeeded in doing this, but to some extent it has been at the cost of becoming less distinctively ‘Holiness.’

The visit to Hobart of the American Nazarene chaplain, Claude Chilton in late 1945 serves to illustrate the reciprocal friendliness and openness that could be experienced between American Holiness visitors and Australian Christians. Chilton was in the company of a Baptist chaplain from Georgia, was hosted by the Lord Mayor (a Baptist layman), and was invited to have tea with the Anglican Bishop. He also met ‘one of the city’s finest citizens, a man connected with a large shipping company and a good Christian [who] belonged to some small independent group.’ He spent time in the home of an Australian army chaplain who had never heard of the Church of the Nazarene but who was nonetheless friendly. American Nazarene Ted Hollingsworth saw positive signs of acceptance emerging. ‘Where a year ago, any mention of our denomination only evoked questioning looks from the Australians, now there is an interest in, and an anticipation on the part of many to see the Church and its message established.’

Albert Berg was invited to pastor a suburban Baptist Church in Brisbane and to enter the Baptist Bible College upon his discharge from the army. However, he wrote to Ted Hollingsworth:

I do not believe God wants me there as I can never compromise on the message of Holiness and it would appear that I would have to do this should I agree to the request and secondly I believe that God is working for the inception and continuance of a real Holy Ghost work in Australia in which he needs to use you and I…and of course whoever He calls.

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54 Memorandum to Dr. S. T. Ludwig from the Nazarene Servicemen’s Commission, November 1945 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives), p. 5.
56 Albert Berg, letter to Ted Hollingworth, 21 August 1944 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives), pp. 2-3.
Berg, though a loyal Nazarene if ever there was one, saw the denomination as a means to an end, rather than an end in itself. It was the best vehicle he knew of for the proclamation of the Holiness message. Not necessarily hostile to other evangelicals, he could not see himself finding a place of ministry anywhere but in the Church of the Nazarene.

In his Conference President’s report for 1955, the American Wesleyan Robert Mattke noted that the Wesleyan Methodist Bible College gospel team had travelled 3,700 miles in 3 states. According to Mattke, ‘The ministry of the Gospel team helped to improve relations with other evangelical groups [and] helped to make Wesleyan Methodism an evangelistic force in Australia.’ The College Prospectus for 1955 describes the school as ‘Non-Sectarian.’ ‘Although this college is sponsored by a church denomination, it is not designed to confine training to Wesleyan Methodists. In the short history of the college, students from 11 different denominations and other organized groups have been trained. No effort is made to change a student’s church affiliation.’ In addition to a Board of Managers there existed a Board of Reference which included evangelical leaders such as Rev. Walter Betts, pastor of the Melbourne Evangelical Fellowship and Rev. Gilbert McLaren, superintendent of the Noone Street Mission in Clifton Hill. The Peoples Church at Kew held a United Holiness Convention in 1959 at which the Wesleyan Methodist Conference President Robert Mattke was speaker. He also preached twice at St.

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57 Albert Berg, letter to H. V. Miller, 24 July 1945 (Kansas City, Missouri, Nazarene Archives), p. 3.
60 Prospectus: Wesleyan Methodist Bible College of Melbourne, n.d. but announcing classes for 1955.
Hilary’s Church of England in Kew, at an Easter Convention at Noorinbee, and at three independent fellowships in areas around Melbourne.62

Such experiences and viewpoints indicate that Holiness believers were positive in their attitude toward other Christians, and hopeful of harmonious and cooperative relationships. However, these hopes would take much longer to realize than they expected. Once it became apparent that the Holiness churches were here to stay, and not just popping in for the occasional friendly visit, relations cooled somewhat. Enjoying a cup of tea with a Wesleyan or a Nazarene was one thing, but seeing one’s friend or relative sever his or her own church connections to join up with one of these groups was something else again. E. M. Kelsall, who joined the Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1955 remembered the concern of ‘old friends and relatives [who] could not take the change in [our] lives. They thought that the Wesleyan Methodist Church was too radical.’63 Robert Mattke remembered the climate as a difficult one for Wesleyans.

It was a time when denominational emphasis was waning, and was discredited, and now we were coming in as a new denomination, and there was a good deal of skepticism. And in those days…anything American was a little bit suspect…The majority of the evangelical community was Calvinistic and Baptist, and anything Wesleyan was thought to be emphasising sinless perfection, and that was out of the question, and so that really made our role hard to hold…The Melbourne Bible Institute [was] very skeptical of our theological position, and even the secretary of the Oriental Missionary Society, when we were there, was not…given to the Wesleyan message and the Wesleyan movement, and that was very difficult to cope with. I think it just took…a long period of time, to break down those barriers.64

64 Interview with Bob and Janette Mattke, Orchard Park, New York, 7 July 2001.
Leo Cox, American Principal of the Wesleyan Methodist Bible College in Melbourne, outlined the rather combative atmosphere, which he saw as prevailing in 1955.

In her spiritual life [Australia] is sadly lacking in that which we Wesleyans hold most dear. For some reason her Methodism did not produce a holiness revival. As a result Australia has had, and is having no revivals. All evangelism in that land has been left to Calvinism with its ‘sinning saints’ and ‘eternal security’ doctrines. Even they are not producing any aggressive evangelism, and in most cases only shallow conversions. Through various incidents, and special calls of the Holy Spirit, God has laid in our hands the task of raising up a Holiness Church on this needy continent. The task is not an easy one. Both Modernism and Calvinism unite there to discourage and destroy such a beginning….When one realizes the high cost of professing holiness in Australia, and the great barriers raised against such a cause, one is not surprised at [the College’s] small enrollment. The large churches, as well as the evangelicals, have warned their youth against us. With the conservative people who are slow to accept new things, and especially new churches, and with the lack of tradition of holiness among them, we cannot expect a rapid growth of student body, nor great support from Australia at the present.\(^{65}\)

Opposition to Holiness teaching on the part of evangelicals left Holiness leaders sometimes feeling that they had more in common with Pentecostals.

Holiness in Australia is much frowned upon in evangelical circles. A periodical which is the official organ of the main evangelical union here contained an article recently on the ‘Error of Perfectionism.’ It was clearly an attack on our holiness position. These evangelical leaders are good men, and do work hard for the Kingdom, but are absolutely opposed to entire sanctification, and they find it hard to recognize us as an evangelical group. Because of this being ‘set off’ by other evangelicals, it is easier for some among us to find ‘fellow feeling’ with the Pentecostals. The ‘tongues’ doctrine does make occasional thrusts at our work, and it takes much wisdom to hold the ‘ship of state’ from being wrecked on the rocks. If it were not for this work being of God, it would have wrecked long ago.\(^{66}\)

The July-August 1952 issue of The Wesleyan Witness carried on its cover the motto ‘Our Aim - Fidelity not Popularity,’ a sentiment which might stand as a kind of rallying cry for a church under siege. The American Arthur Calhoun’s evaluation of

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\(^{66}\) Leo G. Cox, letter to the Wesleyan Witness, 29 December 1951 (Indianapolis, Indiana, Wesleyan Archives).

O’Brien, North American Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Australia 169
the scene in 1969, shows that not much had changed in the Holiness churches’
perception in the more than twenty-year period since their beginnings in Australia.

A crystallized complacency which senses no need of God nor of His Church is
everywhere in evidence [in Australia]. For us as Wesleyans, to whom God
has entrusted the full gospel message that the world so desperately needs,
probably a greater obstacle is confronted in the growing distrust of all
denominations. This has been the natural fruitage of the apostatizing of the
old-line churches. It is generally felt [among] large sections of evangelicals,
that to be truly evangelical every group must be independent of
denominational ties. Our denominational name is so near like that of one of
the large church groups of the country that we are held as suspect, making our
situation most difficult, though not impossible to our God, whose we are and
whom we serve. How we do need the enlistment of a host of intercessors in
behalf of this people, the Australians.67

Laura S. Emerson, an American woman who visited Australia in 1973 when
she volunteered at the Bible College, perceived opposition from ‘several “old line”
churches and the complacent, cold orthodoxy of many’ [in those churches] as the
reasons why, after thirty years, the Wesleyan Methodist Church was still in a pioneer
stage of development.68 So it seems that the Holiness churches were too sectarian for
the mainline churches and not sectarian enough for non-denominational evangelicals.
Here we see another of the many unpredictable ‘random processes’ that Bainbridge
includes in his typology and which warn us against seeing a neat and orderly
progression along a predetermined church-sect trajectory.

In 1985 the Wesleyan Methodist Church declared, ‘We are not sectarian in
emphasis, being part of the Methodist World Council, The Wesleyan Methodist
Church has continued since its founding in 1843 and is part of historic Methodism,
which originated in the great revival of the 18th century under John and Charles
Wesley.’69 However, this disavowal of sectarianism needs to be set alongside of an

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68 Laura S. Emerson, ‘Let’s Visit Australia,’ Women’s Missionary Society program materials May
equally vehement rejection of the type of ecumenism represented by the World Council of Churches. Fearful of any church union that would lead to ‘subsequent loss of spiritual fervour…the Wesleyan Methodist Church worldwide rejects the World Council of Churches and its related national organisations as being established contrary to biblical principles, and we refuse to be associated with them on these grounds…We are [however] committed to co-operation with other evangelicals where this will strengthen the Christian witness.’

So, in its official church pronouncements, the Wesleyan Methodist Church’s posture is warm toward fellow evangelicals but decidedly cold toward mainstream denominations. Holiness people as a whole have not been very active in or enthusiastic about ecumenical dialogue. There have been a few exceptions to this in the United States. John Smith of the Church of God (Anderson) funded his own way to attend the Faith and Order discussions of the National Council of Christian Churches for twenty-five years in his commitment to the ecumenical dimensions of his own movement. David Cubie and Donald Dayton have served together as Holiness movement representatives to the National Council of Christian Churches’ Faith and Order Commission, and Dayton on the executive board of the North American Academy of Ecumenists.

The single most significant event in early Australian Wesleyans’ identification of themselves with (and as) evangelicals was the 1959 Billy Graham Crusade, an event which had a profound influence on the Australian religious landscape. It is sometimes claimed that one quarter of the entire population of Australia and New Zealand attended a Graham crusade meeting, but it should be remembered that the

70 ‘More About the Wesleyans,’ p. 1. See chapter 7 for Wesleyan response to the church union movement and the Uniting Church’s Basis of Union.
71 Donald Dayton is concerned that, in seeking acceptance in the evangelical community, Holiness churches have allowed themselves ‘to be so assimilated into the broader ‘evangelical’ world…that they can no longer remember their ‘most distinctive contributions to the rest of the church world.’ Indeed, he doubts whether holiness churches should even consider themselves evangelicals. Dayton, ‘The Holiness Witness,’ pp. 97-98.

O’Brien, North American Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Australia
attendance usually cited are aggregates, with many people attending more than once, some even attending every night, making the total number of individuals much less.\textsuperscript{72}

Hilliard describes Graham’s visit as ‘the religious event which encapsulated more than anything else the religious themes and preoccupations of the 1950s.’\textsuperscript{73} In many ways, the involvement by the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia in the Graham Crusade was a watershed moment in the history of that church. The Wesleyans had been the only denominational member of the Fellowship of Evangelical Churches of Australia (FECA), a fundamentalist conglomerate of small independent churches, which followed Carl MacIntyre’s lead in the US in boycotting Billy Graham’s ministry. In refusing to boycott Graham, and breaking ranks with the FECA, the Wesleyan Methodists in a sense, ‘came of age,’ choosing to throw in their lot with mainstream evangelicalism, over against reactionary fundamentalism. Graham had himself broken with the extremist fundamentalist wing back home, shortly before coming to Australia. He received strong mainline church support here as he did in the US.\textsuperscript{74}

The \textit{Standing Orders} of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of 1958 urged that ‘each pastor and charge enter wholeheartedly and energetically into the visitation programme of the Billy Graham Crusade.’\textsuperscript{75} The Conference President, Robert Mattke, was able to speak of the Crusade as having a ‘spiritual impact…upon [the] continent’ and urged that Wesleyans ‘do everything humanly possible to follow

\begin{footnotes}
\item[72] I am grateful to David Hilliard for pointing this out.
\item[74] Billy Graham, \textit{Just As I Am}, pp. 325-37.
\item[75] Standing Order 18, Minutes of the Annual Conference, 1958, p. 250. Strangely the Nazarene Assembly Minutes for 1958, 1959, and 1960 have no mention of the Graham crusades at all. Mrs. Miriam Midgely, at that time a member of the Church of the Nazarene, recalled that as a member of that Church she was not permitted to serve as ‘counselor’ at the crusades, the Nazarenes not being a recognized denomination by the organizers. Conversation with the author, c. 1996.
\end{footnotes}
through with every contact. Let us make the most of this historic opportunity." Kingsley Ridgway represented the Wesleyans on the Executive Committee of the Billy Graham crusade in Victoria. He thanked God for ‘the great door and effectual’ which the campaign had opened for Wesleyans in that state. In the wake of the event, Mattke spoke of the Crusade as having brought to Australia ‘a spiritual atmosphere which was probably unique to [its] history…[bringing] to the masses a certain awareness of God.’ Wesleyans wanted to capitalize on this awareness and work alongside of evangelical and mainline churches alike to make a contribution to the renewal of Australia’s religious life.

‘Seeing the True Church of God’: The Church of God (Anderson)

While the Nazarenes and Wesleyans sought friendly relations with other evangelicals and experienced some degree of success, albeit hard won, the Church of God (Anderson) has had less success establishing itself in the Australian religious context. This is all the more ironic, since its distinctive message is Christian unity. The Anderson group commenced work in Australia in 1917 under E. P. May but this mission did not develop well and the church re-entered much later, in 1960, led by Carl and Lova Swart. The title of John Smith’s history of the Church of God (Anderson), The Quest for Holiness and Unity, highlights the twin concerns of the movement. This restorationist movement sought to take the Wesleyan-Holiness ethic of Christian perfection and apply it to the question of church unity. Warner

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77 Vice-President’s Report (Minutes 1958), p. 262.
79 See chapter 2, pp. 48-52, also Harold Chilver, ‘My Heart Set Aflame, in Callen, Following the Light, pp. 116-17.
80 Ward and Humphreys, pp. 136-7; The identity of the couple is not given by Ward and Humphries but was provided in an interview with Judy and Malcolm Hughes, Anderson, Indiana, 13 July 2001 and then subsequently traced in the archives at Anderson University.
introduced into the Holiness movement ‘many conceptual patterns which show the strong influence of classical Anabaptism.’

Disclaiming that it was a new denomination it called people out of all the denominations to form a new and purified church on New Testament principles. According to Sidney Mead, three central ideas drove the various restorationist movements of 19th Century America - ‘the idea of pure and normative beginnings to which return was possible; the idea that the intervening history was largely that of aberrations and corruptions which was better ignored; and the idea of building anew on the true and ancient foundations.’

Most Church of God (Anderson) writers reject any reference to Warner as ‘founder.’ The Church of God was ‘founded’ by Jesus Christ in AD30. They prefer to use the term ‘pioneer’ in reference to Warner. Like the pioneers of the Church of God (Cleveland), Warner and his colleagues were opposed to formal creeds because they ‘tend to blunt the primacy of biblical authority in the church’s life and encourage sectarian division.’

On 7 March 1878 Warner wrote in his journal, ‘the Lord showed me that holiness could never prosper upon sectarian soil encumbered by human creeds and party names, and he gave me a new commission to join holiness and all truth together and build up the apostolic church of the living God.’ Melvin Dieter sees Warner’s movement as seeking to ‘apply the logic of Christian perfectionism, with all the ultraistic inclinations of the perfectionistic mentality, to the…question [of church unity].’ In the memorable expression of Merle Strege, it was born ‘the child of a marriage of two different theological traditions. To an

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84 Callen, *It’s God’s Church*, pp. 9-11.
85 See chapter 6 of this thesis.
87 Callen, *It’s God’s Church*, p. 79.
essentially Wesleyan soteriology Warner had joined a restorationist ecclesiology that closely resembled that of the believers’ [Anabaptist] churches.89

The Church of God sees itself as attempting to live out the ideal of John Wesley who wrote, ‘Would to God that all the party names, the unscriptural phrases and forms which have divided the Christian world were forgot; and that we might all agree to sit down together as humble, loving disciples, at the feet of our common Master, to hear his word, imbibe his Spirit, and to transcribe his in our own.’90 Callen summarises the core conviction of the movement as the belief that ‘true Christian unity…remains linked to and genuinely rooted in the Wesleyan teaching of a holiness experience in the lives of individual believers.’91

In 1995 there were 6 small Church of God congregations in Australia and about 200 adherents, the same number as a decade earlier.92 The website currently lists only 3 churches and 1 ‘fellowship.’93 The reasons for the smallness of its gains may partly be discovered in the very founding principles of the movement. Rejecting all denominational structures, it was believed that the true Church of God would emerge in ‘the last days.’ Involvement with existing denominations was seen as a return to captivity in ‘Babylon.’94 The rejection of all sects (who might have provided much-needed fellowship and support) in the very act of forming and sustaining a new one, would prove to be a difficult ideal to live up to as well as a poor strategic move.

91 Callen, *Following the Light*, p. 52.
92 Ward and Humphreys, p. 138.
94 ‘The Carson City Resolutions (1881),’ were drafted by the first two congregations to ‘step completely out of Babylon,’ – Beaver Dam, Indiana and Carson City, Michigan. Callen, *Following the Light*, p. 71.
Valorous Clear has documented the Church of God, Anderson’s move (in the US) along the church-sect continuum in his 1953 dissertation at the University of Chicago, ‘The Church of God: A Study in Social Adaptation.’\textsuperscript{95} Clear maintains that the Church of God has more recently presented its restorationist ideals in a non-judgmental way so that it has ‘deteriorated,’ in Callen’s words, ‘into a quiet quest for the movement to gain recognition from and acceptance by mainstream Christianity.’\textsuperscript{96} According to Callen, ‘What diminished over the years is a dramatic sense of a reformationist or restorationist cause for which all should be sacrificed…like one that inspired several earlier generations of the movement.’\textsuperscript{97} In 1996, church consultant Leith Anderson made the following observation. ‘There is a very strong desire to be described as a movement and not as a denomination. However the Church of God retains few characteristics of a movement and many characteristics of an aging denomination.’\textsuperscript{98}

The Church of God recommenced work in Australia when Carl and Lova Swart arrived as independent missionaries in 1958. This was only after negotiations with the missions board had failed to convince the church officials that Australia was, properly speaking, a mission field.\textsuperscript{99} When Carl Swart met Lester A. Crose, Secretary of the Church of God Missions Board at the World Missions Convention in Wichita Kansas in 1958, Crose could only see the possibility of starting a work in Australia in negative terms. However, he wrote to Swart on 2 December 1957 after hearing from a German-speaking congregation in NSW, who were requesting funds

\textsuperscript{95} This was published as Valorous Clear, \textit{Where the Saints Have Trod} (Chesterfield, Indiana, Midwest Publications, 1977).
\textsuperscript{96} Clear, \textit{Where the Saints Have Trod}, 6; Callen, \textit{Following the Light}, p. 37.
\textsuperscript{97} Callen, ‘Developmental Profile,’ in Callen, ed. \textit{Following the Light}, p. 33.
\textsuperscript{98} Leith Anderson, ‘Movement for the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century: Structuring the Church of God for Future Mission and Ministry,’ cited in Callen, \textit{Following the Light}, p. 35.

for a church building. This renewed Crose’s interest in Australia to some extent and he wrote to clarify whether Swart would see himself working among immigrant communities or native-born Australians, hoping it would be the former as working with immigrants ‘always in the end creates language problems.’

In replying, Swart is quite blunt: ‘While your encouragement has been nil and your remarks quite negative until the present letter, we have not given up the idea that something could and should be done.’ He assures Crose that his focus would be upon the general Australian population, rather than immigrant communities, believing also that there were many Americans in Australia, including ‘G.I’s who have married Australian girls, and we would because of our concern try to find a way to reach the original Aborigines, if possible.’

Swart went to Anderson, to meet with Crose in January or February to plead his case in person. Crose raised the issue again with the Executive Committee on 10 February, but to no avail. There was still refusal to officially authorize and financially support the Australian work.

[O]rdinarily the Missionary Board would not think in terms of sending missionaries to a country like Australia. It is not a mission field in the strictest sense any more than the United States is a mission field. Of course, in reality, the world is a mission field, but I am speaking in terms of the Foreign Missionary Board.

The Swarts managed to get some promises of support from various camp meetings and churches, as well as one particularly generous donor, and sailed

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100 Lester A. Crose to Carl L. Swart, 2 December 1957 (Anderson, Indiana, Church of God Archives).
101 Carl L. Swart to Lester Crose, 7 December 1957 (Anderson, Indiana, Church of God Archives). When Swart indicates that they plan upon arrival to ‘see as much of the continent as possible’ before settling in a spot that gave the most promise of success, he may be betraying a lack of understanding of the vastness of the Australian geography.
102 Lester A. Crose to Carl L. Swart, 2 January 1958, compared with Lester A. Crose to Carl L. Swart, 14 February 1958 (Anderson, Indiana, Church of God Archives).
103 Lester A. Crose to Carl L. Swart, 14 February 1958 (Anderson, Indiana, Church of God Archives).
from Los Angeles, with their youngest son, Galen, on 11 November 1958. Apart from themselves there were only three other passengers. They were impressed with the sumptuous food provided and the hospitality of the captain who hosted them in his cabin to celebrate Lova’s birthday. The captain said that the small load of passengers was unusual as ‘they have been bringing capacity loads of Mormons who are really settling here and in New Zealand. Seventh Day Adventists and Jehovah’s Witnesses are here in abundance, too, and working zealously. I am glad we are here. We shall do our best to make the Church of God known.’ Clearly, they were entering into a competitive soul-winning market!

Upon arriving in Sydney, on 2 December at 8am, they were met by Vivian Gill, a Nazarene woman who offered them accommodation, Nazarene pastor, Doug Pinch and his wife Maysie, German Church of God pastor ‘Brother Siebert,’ his seventeen-year old daughter Helen Manderey, and Gill’s two daughters, ‘eight new friends’ in all. Lova Swart remembered the coastal cities of Australia being, ‘much more advanced than we had anticipated. Clothes in store windows look very much American, though the prices are higher and the quality is a little inferior to American standards.’ Purchasing a car and caravan they toured the east coast looking for a good place to begin. They strengthened links with Siebert’s German congregation in Warner’s Bay, near Newcastle (NSW) and established a small congregation. Albert

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107 Carl L. Swart to Lester A. Crose, 11 November 1958 (Anderson, Indiana, Church of God Archives).
Drews, Siebert’s father-in-law, past sixty years of age, left Church of God work in Germany and came to Australia with a special call to German speaking people in Australia.

What most of the people lack in Australia is religious services. In the larger centers one finds all kinds of churches, but for the most part only English is preached there. But since many people long to hear the Word of God in their Mother tongue, we are doing our best to conduct services in German. We invite everybody, whether Protestant or Catholic. However, many are very cautious, fearing that they will be led into a sect… The children have no prejudice against any nationality. They play together happily. The street, the playground, and the bush belong to them. Even the Russians, Ukranians, and Poles in this county have a great desire for the pure Word of God, and they have urged me to bring them the gospel in their language. So, for some time now, I have preached in Russian. We would be very happy if we could get literature about the doctrines of the Church of God in Russian and Polish, or if we could get our hymns translated into these languages.112

After deciding to base themselves in Sydney, the Swarts held their first meetings at the Masonic Hall in Canley Vale. The first public service was on 3 May 1959 after personal invitations, door-to-door ministry, visits to schools, and advertising. Twenty-six adults attended in the morning service and twenty-three in the evening, including one young woman who was converted during the service. Lova Swart wrote back home, ‘We were very conscious of your prayers and felt that we were ambassadors from the church in the States, doing what you would have done could you have been present.’113 After eight months experiencing ‘semi-suitcase living’ they moved into a home in Canley Heights. Just as was the case with the Wesleyans and Nazarenes, their Holiness orientation made their acceptance more difficult.

The Church of God is unheard of here. Holiness is preached only by a very few. There is not a very warm feeling on the part of some toward church groups like ours coming into the community. In spite of all this we believe

that God has led us here, and we are determined to do all in our power to live, preach, teach, and promote the truth we love.114

Carl Swart noted the difficulty of winter living in homes, and worshipping in churches, with no central heating. The kitchen in their home was heated by an electric heater, a kerosene heater, and a wood-burning stove. By ten in the morning it was warmer out of doors than inside the house. Nine and ten foot ceilings did not help the situation. The Masonic Hall was heated by only two electric heaters. ‘Many times during the singing one can see one’s breath. Those who have lived here for some time do not seem to mind the cold; at least it doesn’t keep them from attending church.’115 The Swarts continued to drive over six hours to Warner’s Bay to support the German congregation there where conditions were also quite primitive, compared to American church standards. The seats were ‘boards, supported at each end by five-gallon drums, and some broken-down chairs.’116 The Swarts rolled up their sleeves and helped the German congregation to beautify its sanctuary, removing a partition, sealing walls and ceiling, tiling the floor, erecting a Church of God sign and a cross above the building, and cutting the weeds and grass.117

By January 1960 the Swarts believed their dreams were beginning to materialize. At their six-month anniversary they had seen forty-eight in the morning service and sixty-eight in the evening after setting a goal of fifty. The larger attendance in the evening may indicate that some were attending other churches in the morning and the Church of God at night. Yet their morning service was still between twenty-five and thirty. ‘Loyalty and faithfulness in attendance, as we know it in the

States, is seemingly unknown here. As with the Wesleyans and Nazarenes Sunday School attendances in the formative years far outstripped adult church attendance.

The Swarts soon met the Harold Chilvers family, who ‘had remained loyal to the Reformation Movement from the days of E. P. May.’ Both Harold and his son Lloyd were successful dairy farmers and their two families made a vital contribution, with Lloyd and Ruth entering the pastoral ministry. A congregation of thirty-two adults in Forster, NSW, led by ‘one of Mr. Chilver’s sons’ (presumably Lloyd) was organized as a Church of God congregation, with the help of the Swarts, around September 1960. A brick church was built in 1961 on two acres of land purchased the previous year at Canley Heights. A full half of the purchase price came from one member of the congregation. This same woman would loan $3600 to the church interest-free for its building project. Carl Swart hired a crew of carpenters and after talking with them on the first day of work about the importance of meeting deadlines, and urging them to be on the job every day on time and put in a full day’s work, surprised them all by dedicating the whole project to the Lord in prayer. They had prayed for the rain to hold out and it did. On one occasion it rained during the men’s lunch break and quit in time for them to go back to work. It would rain overnight but always stop in time for work the next day. One of the workers was

118 Carl Swart, ‘Our Dreams Materialize,’ *Church of God Missions*, vol. 24, no. 5 (January 1960), the page number is not visible on the photocopy.
120 Crose, *Passport for a Reformation*, p. 182.
overheard to say, pointing to Swart, ‘Does he control the weather, too?’ The new
church building was officially dedicated on Sunday 30 December 1962. ‘It has not
been easy,’ remarked Carl Swart, ‘to build a congregation among people who
are considerably less inclined toward Christianity and church attendance than
Americans. But we came and have done our best.’

Several other Americans came out to assist in the work, and most were self-
supporting schoolteachers. A second congregation was established at Green Valley,
then a new and growing subdivision. The Swarts were then led to Queensland where
they purchased land at Surfers Paradise, but no work would commence there for a
few years, when a Sunday School was established.

In 1965 the Association of the Church of God of Australia was legally
established, all church properties being held by this Association. In 1968, there were
still only three congregations in NSW and one in Queensland. By that time a church
building had been completed in Surfers Paradise. On the first anniversary of the
Surfer’s Paradise congregation, there were 46 in attendance. ‘Our aim is to grow fast
enough,’ declared Swarts, ‘to challenge the other congregations to get on with the job
of evangelizing Australia.’ In 1972 Swart was still confident that the Church of
God in Australia, on its 14th anniversary, was ‘making plans that will put it on top.’

At a Church of God Women’s Conference in Louisville, Kentucky in 1977,
Sue Good, a missionary to Australia on furlough, reported that ‘Australian women

124 Lova E. Swart, ‘I Remember When…,’ Church of God Missions (Anderson, Indiana, Church of God
125 ‘Canley Heights Dedication,’ Church of God Missions, vol. 27, no. 7 (March 1963), p. 11.
126 Two experienced pastoral couples, Edward and Leona Schweikert from Michigan and Gilbert Swart
and his wife from Ohio were valuable additions to the Church of God team. The Gilbert Swarts
planned to become permanent residents and offer continued assistance to the church. ‘The Year in
Australia,’ Church of God Missions, vol. 27, no. 3 (November 1962), p. 10.
127 Clyde E. Goin, ‘How Swift the Year,’ Church of God Missions, vol. 31, no. 3 (November 1966),
p. 3.
129 Carl L. Swart, ‘Australia Church on the Move,’ Church of God Missions (no date on clipping circa
suffer because their husbands often are from the criminal elements of society and do not know how to be good husbands and fathers.' This sweeping statement was challenged and an apology for these remarks was published in a subsequent issue.

I feel I must not have made clear what I was trying to say concerning how women in Australia suffer. I was trying to point out how fortunate we Americans are. We have a religious heritage whereas Australia was started as a penal colony. After America declared her independence, England had to find a new place to send her criminals. Australia had the ‘honor’ of being a colony founded for convicts. Many persons were considered criminals for very minor wrongdoings, such as stealing a loaf of bread. At any rate, they were considered criminals. The first Australian currency was rum, and many men would not work unless they had a rum ration to drink. So drinking has been part of Australian heritage and has carried over today. Most men go to the pub, or tavern, after work and, perhaps, when they go home are not in the best condition. However, I would not consider them criminals, as implied in the article. They are people of different heritage and way of life. Because of this, many women do suffer. I also would say that many of the men are not good husbands and fathers. Those who have visited Australia know what loving and caring people Australians are. I would not want to misrepresent the Australians, for they have a very special place in my heart.

The apology serves further to incriminate Good who only adds further misrepresentation to her original portrait. This incident is an example of how unsophisticated American missionary assumptions about Australia, and how skewed their historical understanding, sometimes could be.

The Swarts welcomed involvement with other evangelical Christians during their pioneering days. The early congregations were made up mostly of ‘switchers’ from other denominations, including Assembly of God, Baptist, Church of Christ, Church of England, Church of the Foursquare Gospel, Church of the Nazarene, Methodist, and Presbyterian. They were also ethnically diverse, with Swart mentioning Greek, Russian, Lithuanian, English and Australians among the members.
of the Sydney congregation. A German and Polish congregation was established in Cabramatta in July 1959. A Greek Church of God was formed in 1960, which was receiving teaching ministry from a Russian.

Doug and Maisie Pinch, Australians who had been pioneer workers in the Church of the Nazarene, and missionaries to the Aborigines, were worshipping with the Church of God at Canley Heights in 1961. Doug Pinch was one of the preachers at the first Church of God camp meeting held 17-20 May 1962, and it was hoped that he would become pastor of the Canley Heights congregation freeing up the Swarts for evangelistic work. They appreciated their ‘first genuine boost among the churches’ at the interdenominational Camp Farther Out. Pastor Roland Brown who was leading the camp gave the following commendation, which drew a ‘bless his heart’ from Carl Swart. ‘The Church of God is a fine group of Christian people seeking to live in the New Testament pattern. They love the Lord, and they are doing a good work. You are fortunate to have one of their number in this camp.’ There were actually two Church of God people present at the camp and Swart drew great encouragement from this warmth, which seemed to contrast to some extent with their experience so far. ‘Prejudice, hostility, and even hatred are manifested by some we meet, but we hope to break down barriers and build good will and respect as we work.’

In 1974, American missionaries Austin Sowers and Kenneth Good, along with Australian leaders were teaching weekly religious education in high schools, to about 133 Carl L. Swart, ‘Seekers in Australia,’ p. 11.
137 Carl Swart, ‘Our Dreams Materialize,’ Church of God Missions, vol. 24, no. 5 (January 1960), the page number is not visible on the photocopy taken from Anderson, Indiana, Church of God archives.
150 students a year. Kenneth Good was chairman of the Board of Directors for Liverpool Youth for Christ, a large and active group. Lillian Hale, a lay leader, was director of the Child Evangelism Fellowship of the area near her church. In 1978 the ministers of the [Broadbeach] area were said to be ‘very complimentary of the leadership [Church of God pastors] Andy and Becky [New] are giving to the whole Christian community. Andy has been a key person in the planning for the Leighton Ford Campaign in the Gold Coast. Becky is directing the crusade choir.’ Pauline Chilver, daughter of Pastor and Mrs. Dwight Chilver went to Ethiopia as a missionary nurse with the Sudan Interior Mission, an interdenominational missions agency.

And yet for all this engagement with other churches and interdenominational agencies, there was an underlying attitude, sometimes made explicit, that theirs was the true church to which all who were open to the Spirit’s leading would come. When, at an evening service a young man ‘with a license to preach’ from another denomination promised to be with the Church of God regularly, Swart requested in the pages of *Church of God Missions*, ‘Pray that he may see the true Church of God.’ Judy Hughes (nee Sowers), the daughter of Church of God (Anderson) missionaries to Australia in the 1970s, and a third generation ordained woman minister in the Church of God, remembers there having been ‘some definite views and interpretations of Scripture.’

If you didn’t adhere, or didn’t follow that way of thinking, even though they were saying on one hand ‘we reach our hands to every blood washed one’, on the other hand its like…’If you are blood-washed, you’ll think this way.’ I grew up with that, and that was very strong. I don’t know that that is quite as forceful now. I think people are realizing and celebrating differences within

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141 Clyde Goin, ‘Into the World,’ *Church of God Missions* [no date on clipping circa 1968.]
the body of believers, but I still believe there are some set interpretations, not man-made rules, but what they feel is God-ordained.143

By October 1978, the Australia Bible Training School had been discontinued and Kenneth Good reassigned as Director of Christian Education. One of his responsibilities was the ‘establishment of preliminary relations with Bible schools already established by evangelical groups with the intent of cooperating with them for the training of ministerial leadership.’144 In 1984, the Consultation on Mission and Ministry of the Church of God issued a call ‘to expand ministries through voluntary relationships with church groups outside the Church of God reformation movement’ in order to ‘achieve our mission more effectively and expand our ministries.’145 Yet guidelines issued in 1985 to aid this process were so restrictive as to make such co-operation difficult.

An inter-church relationship should not be maintained if that relationship gives support to beliefs or actions which clearly violate beliefs or actions generally held to be true and proper by the Church of God reformation movement. We in the Church of God must be accountable to each other and maintain the integrity of our doctrinal heritage.146

Judy Hughes, remembered the confusion that resulted from misidentification during her time in Australia.

We had a very difficult time a first, primarily through the fault of the Church of God’s, I think, in letting people know who they were, but more importantly who they were not. There was a lot of misidentification of this group, ‘the Church of God,’ or that goes by the name of ‘the Church of God.’ There was a lot of misunderstanding and misidentifying of us with folks who are more of a Pentecostal and Charismatic nature…We got a lot of calls [for the Church of God, Cleveland].147

Relationships were better, however, with Wesleyans and Nazarenes.

143 Interview with Malcolm and Judy Hughes, Anderson, Indiana, 13 July 2001.
144 ‘Dateline: Australia,’ Church of God Missions (no date on clipping, circa October 1978).
146 ‘Acceptable Inter-Church Cooperation [June 1985],’ in Callen, Following the Light, p. 189.
147 Interview with Malcolm and Judy Hughes, Anderson, Indiana, 13 July 2001.
There was…a sigh of relief that somebody who at least begins to understand where we’re coming from, you know, theologically, understands some of our terminology, and I think as the understanding went both ways there was definitely more, if not a formal relationship, a least a very strong working informal relationship, if not outright friendship and ongoing communication.\textsuperscript{148}

For all of these good intentions, fruitful relationships with fellow evangelicals and other Holiness groups in Australia have not yet emerged. When Bethshan Holiness Mission, the Church of the Nazarene, the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Salvation Army formed an Australian Christian Holiness Association in the early 1990s, Church of God leaders declined to participate either in the Association itself or in its Annual Holiness Conventions. This aloofness may well be one reason why the Association of the Church of God in Australia (as the Church of God, Anderson is officially known here) is the least successful of the Wesleyan-Holiness groups studied in this thesis. Without the development of a network of connections in wider evangelicalism, it could not find the resources to sustain itself in an unfriendly environment.\textsuperscript{149} Barry Callen notes, in his American context, the irony of a church with a message of unity maintaining such an isolationist stance.

To date, the Church of God movement has kept too much to itself, thus risking self-preoccupation. Fearing the contamination of our doctrinal understandings and thinking it wrong to look and act like the denominations, we have been too much isolationists with our unity witness. The irony of this now is quite apparent, and should end.\textsuperscript{150}

Are the Wesleyan-Holiness Churches still ‘Movements’?

\textsuperscript{148} Interview with Malcolm and Judy Hughes, Anderson, Indiana, 13 July 2001.

\textsuperscript{149} It should be noted that my own involvement with the Church of God (Anderson) here in Australia, and in the United States, has been very warm and cordial. I am grateful for the hospitality of Dr. Barry Callen and other staff at Anderson College, Anderson, Indiana, to Malcolm and Judy Hughes in the Missions Department at Anderson, and to Pastor Tim and Cindy West and Marleta Black of Friends Community Church, in Nerang, Qld.

\textsuperscript{150} Barry Callen, ‘Honouring the Six “R’s” of Heritage Celebration,’ in Callen, Following the Light, p. 406.
As Bainbridge’s analysis makes clear, religious movements do not move inexorably along the church-sect continuum as though following a fixed law.¹⁵¹ There are many factors that can interrupt movement along the continuum. When a Holiness group is relocated into a different context, such as when Romanian Church of God (Cleveland) members from Europe immigrated to Australia, the trajectory along the church-sect continuum may be slowed in order to adapt to the new setting, or even halted altogether.¹⁵² A Holiness denomination, such as the Australian Church of the Nazarene in its founding years, may be positioned toward the church end of the continuum in its place of origin and be positioned toward the sect end in its mission areas. On the other hand, the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia, in recently lifting its total abstinence rule, is an example of a church further away from a sectarian outlook than its parent church in the United States. A particular movement may be seen as a ‘sect’ when compared to one group and a ‘church’ when compared to another, and it may go through a series of sectarian eruptions as it constantly shifts back and forth along the continuum.

The growth in the Wesleyan-Holiness churches in Australia through a large number of ‘switchers’ from other denominations is another example of how the church-sect trajectory can be interrupted. Holiness churches in Australia, though viewed by many as sects, did not typically hold to sectarian self-understandings. They sought involvement with evangelical Christians and took up opportunities for ministry in evangelical circles whenever they could. They received members from other denominations into their ranks in large numbers, and grew more by such ‘switchers’ than by new converts. These new members brought with them the theological convictions and the particular ethos of the groups from which they came

¹⁵¹ Bainbridge, The Sociology of Religious Movements, p. 79.
¹⁵² See chapter 6, pp. 208-9.
and this infusion of non-Wesleyan emphases served to dilute the distinctiveness of the receiving group. ‘Second blessing’ holiness began to be explained whenever possible in terms with which in-coming evangelicals would be comfortable. Bainbridge cites the ‘recruitment of new members’ as raising the religious tension but if these new members are from other Christian traditions, rather than fresh new converts, the opposite effect may occur. Ironically (for the founders convinced of the distinctiveness of their message) it was this lowering of religious tension which led to survival and growth, since growth was based more on ‘transfer’ than ‘new convert’ intake and the more generically ‘evangelical’ and less distinctively ‘Holiness’ the receiving church was, the more successfully it could retain switchers who already had strong theological convictions not always in keeping with traditional Holiness views.

Except for the Church of God (Cleveland), none of these groups has prohibited the ordination of women to the ministry but church leaders have not forced the issue when congregations, influenced by more Reformed evangelical views, have not wished to have a woman appointed to their church. Views on biblical inspiration which might be described as ‘fundamentalist’ gradually replaced an earlier ‘dynamic’ view. The radical social stances of their nineteenth century Holiness forbears, such as abolitionism, women’s rights, and pacifism tended to be forgotten and a much more politically and socially conservative constituency has emerged. The statement issued by the Board of General Superintendents of the Wesleyan Church upon the death of Ronald Reagan in June 2004, may be taken to illustrate this trend, indicating as it does a strongly conservative political orientation.

153 Bainbridge, *The Sociology of Religious Movements*, p. 79
155 ‘On behalf of our fellow American citizens, we are saddened at the loss of our fortieth President, Ronald W. Reagan. His undying dream for the future of our country, his resolve to extinguish the taunts of our enemies, and his untiring effort in turning global adversity into an even greater...
The Wesleyan-Holiness churches have distanced themselves from more sectarian fundamentalism, and gained greater acceptance among moderates. But moderation comes at a cost – the loss of a distinctive fervour, the loss of a sense of divine mission to announce a specific message about holiness, and, as evidenced by the recent decision of the Wesleyan Methodist Church to remove its total abstinence rule, the lessening of religious demands upon its members. All of this was part of the price paid for acceptance into the Evangelical Club.

As the membership demographic of Holiness churches has become more and more like other (not only evangelical but also mainline) Protestant churches, there has been much less uniqueness exhibited among Holiness constituents. The Holiness churches have become more mainstream, borrowing freely from trends in the broader Pentecostal-Evangelical culture. There is today very little social threat to the ongoing existence of the Holiness groups, either from the general community or from other Christian churches. This means that there is no longer any need to huddle together and stress distinctive doctrinal beliefs or behavioural norms. Numerical growth in membership, coupled with the development of strong denominational structures, has given these groups all of the features of established denominations. Yet the strong commitment to biblical authority and a stress upon evangelism have kept the Holiness churches anchored at a level of religious tension higher than most other Protestant groups, but probably less than Pentecostals. The Holiness churches may still think of

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opportunity, won the hearts of those who now line the halls of his repose to express their thanks. President Reagan dared to profess his faith before kings, unabashedly glowed when the banner of the Republic passed his viewing stand, and openly displayed an uncommon love for his First Lady, Mrs. Reagan. History will prove his greatest influence and heaven will finally judge his character; but all of us who stood with him in spirit, pledging our allegiance to the country that he loved, will be forever grateful for the cause he cared for most: our freedom. Thank you, Mr. President.’ – The Board of General Superintendents, The Wesleyan Church, Thomas E. Armiger, David W. Holdren, Earle L. Wilson, accessed at the Wesleyan Pastor’s Discussion Group, http://groups.yahoo.com/group/wesleyanpastors/message/481

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themselves as ‘movements,’ but in reality they are something other than ‘movements.’ A movement is still going somewhere; a church has arrived.
Chapter Six

They ‘Made a Pentecostal Out of Her’:
The Church of God (Cleveland) in Australia

Paul Conkin dismisses the historical significance of the Holiness movement as ‘largely a way station on the path to Pentecostalism.’¹ Those within Holiness churches are more likely to see Pentecostalism as the aberrant and illegitimate offspring of the Holiness movement. Charles Edwin Jones notes that the Holiness and Pentecostal movements ‘are sometimes regarded as one movement by outsiders because of their common emphasis on the present work of the Holy Spirit.’ According to Jones, however, they are ‘a mother and daughter estranged by mutually contradictory beliefs concerning the purpose and sign of the baptism of the Holy Spirit and by mutually incompatible modes of devotion and worship.’² It is observable in social interaction that arguments within families are often more bitterly contested than those with strangers. Pentecostal and Holiness churches have much in common but it is this very commonality which makes their differences stand out in such bold relief.

When the Church of God (Cleveland) first emerged in Australia it received a less than warm reception as it sought to negotiate a place in the Australian religious context. Other North American churches who came to Australia, such as the Wesleyans and Nazarenes entered ‘the Evangelical Club’ and saw acceptance and growth, partly through transfer growth from other evangelical churches. They would do this, however, only at the cost of becoming more generically evangelical and less distinctively ‘Holiness.’ The Church of God (Cleveland) had already sought and gained entry to the Evangelical Club in its country of origin. The American branch of

¹ Conkin, p. 287.
the Church had become foundation members, in 1948, of the National Association of Evangelicals. But they had also moved from the ‘Holiness’ into the ‘Pentecostal’ family of churches. They paid the same price for growth, both in Australia and in the US, as the Holiness churches. They would enter the Pentecostal club only at the cost of becoming less distinctively Holiness.

J. H. Ingram came through Australia in 1945, and generated some interest in the Church of God (Cleveland) but it would be nearly thirty years before any real work would commence. Florida paint contractor and Church of God preacher, Bill McAlpin married a Wesleyan Methodist girl and, in his own words, ‘made a Pentecostal out of her.’ Their experience serves as a metaphor for the way in which the Church of God (Cleveland), though aware of its Holiness roots, has oriented itself more toward Pentecostalism than toward the Wesleyan-Holiness churches. McAlpin had been serving Church of God congregations on Florida’s East Coast in the late 1960s when he first began to feel restless, and to pray for new direction. A passing reference to Australia by their local church secretary led the McAlpins to research in libraries and a deepening sense that this was the direction toward which they should head. Surprised to hear that there was no Church of God work in Australia, the McAlpins approached the World Missions department in Cleveland and a meeting was arranged. McAlpin notified his local church that he was resigning to become a missionary, but the Mission Board decided that the McAlpins were not equipped

3 Conn, Like a Mighty Army, pp. 311-14.
4 A brief biographical account of this itinerant globe trotting missionary can be found in Charles W. Conn, ‘J. H. Ingram: Missionary Extraordinaire,’ in Christopher C. Moree, ed. Into All the World: Church of God World Missions Anniversary Album (Cleveland, Pathway Press, 1984), pp. 36-7.
5 Those who met Ingram in 1945 include Robert Taylor and his wife, pastors of the Emmanuel Mission in Sydney, which has maintained friendly contact with the Church of God. See Bill and Winnie McAlpin, ‘Where God’s Finger Points: The Church of God “Down Under’”, typewritten manuscript copied at the Dixon Pentecostal Research Center, Cleveland Tennessee, p. 3. The only name on this document is B. M. McAlpin, but it is clear from reading the text that it is also his wife Winnie’s work.
financially, nor with the necessary knowledge of Australian conditions, and
determined to do nothing. They told the Mission Board they would go to Australia at
their own expense if the Board would contribute to the cost of literature and some
rent. They arrived home to find a letter from the Australian Consulate inviting them
to an interview. On the list of tradesmen being let into the country were painters, so
long as they had a job offer. Such an offer came from a fellow paint contractor in
Australia and a short time later a visa arrived from the Australian government, with
an offer of assisted passage to Australia.

The McAlpins left the US on Columbus Day, 12 October 1973, with a sense
of divine calling to serve as self-funded Church of God missionaries. They were met
at Mascot by a hire-car driver, employed by the Australian government, who
identified them through the immigration badges they wore. They were 31 years old,
with two children, aged twelve and eight. They had no contacts, no friends, and no
personal finances. The driver took them to the government subsidized ‘East Hills
Hostel’ in Liverpool, where they stayed in a three-room apartment for three months,
before buying a home in Campbelltown. The job offer fell through and Bill never did
work as a paint contractor, turning instead to full time missionary work. From these
small beginnings they worked to establish a strong Church of God (Cleveland)
presence in Australia.

As with other Holiness churches, the fact that they were Americans, members
of an American denomination with a strongly centralized form of government, would
mean that their acceptance by other Christians would be slow in coming. It was
among Pentecostal, and not Wesleyan-Holiness groups that they gained the greatest
acceptance (and even that was sometimes hard-won) and it has been among

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immigrant groups with existing Church of God connections in their home countries that the greatest growth has been seen.

**Fire in the Mountains: The Beginnings of the Church of God (Cleveland)**

On 9 August 1886, a small band of believers from Polk and Monroe counties, in the Smoky Mountains of Tennessee, gathered at Cokercreek as the founding members of what would become the Church of God (Cleveland), currently the largest white Pentecostal-Holiness denomination in the United States. Mickey Crews has traced in his social history of the Church of God the way in which the concerns of these rustic mountain folk, during one of the most severe depressions of the nineteenth century, were mirrored in many respects by the Populist movement. Each movement was egalitarian in its own way and this egalitarianism was the primary basis of the Church of God’s rejection of the mainline Protestant churches, which they perceived as having bought into markers of social difference based on the privileges of wealth. To Methodists and Baptists, Church of God people were ‘holy rollers.’ To Church of God people, Methodist and Baptists had lost their true holiness by being merged into the prevailing culture of affluence.

Church of God ministers were bi-vocational subsistence farmers, with large families of up to 20 or more children. Though most members were dirt poor, the spokesmen of the movement were landowners, relatively affluent in their particular setting. Most early Church of God members had transferred in from Methodist and Baptist origins, concerned with the liberalizing tendencies of a Darwinian age. Some Baptists revived Landmarkism, a movement which had arisen in the 1850s to ‘save’ Baptists from liberalism, and Methodists joined Holiness associations. What

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7 Crews, pp. 1-18.

Methodists involved in the Holiness Movement called ‘Christian perfection’ or ‘entire sanctification,’ Church of God folk called ‘the way of Holiness.’ Only when a person was sanctified wholly could he or she become a candidate for the ‘third blessing, the ‘baptism with the Holy Ghost and power,’ marked by manifestations of divine power, and authenticated by ‘speaking in tongues.’ During the great depression of the 1930s, when most denominations recorded no growth or even decline, the membership of the Church of God more than doubled. It expanded into northern and western states, as well as into foreign mission fields. By 1994 the Church of God had grown to three and a half million members in over one hundred countries.8

The Church of God was Holiness before it was Pentecostal. For a while it sought to be both Pentecostal and Holiness, and in its official self-definition it remains so. In real terms, however, it has oriented itself much more toward the Pentecostal than the Wesleyan-Holiness churches. In identifying primarily with the ‘tongues’ movement more than with the ‘Holiness’ movement, it has moved, like Winnie McAlpin herself, from distinctively Wesleyan origins to a more general Pentecostal orientation.9

The Church of God (Cleveland) in Pentecostal Context

The doctrine of a three-stage way of salvation (salvation, followed by sanctification, and then the ‘baptism of the Spirit’ as a third ‘blessing’) was the earliest form of Pentecostalism, and was taught by ‘the whole Pentecostal movement

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8 Conn, Like a Mighty Army, p. 582.
in America’ until 1908. According to Vinson Synan, ‘the historical and doctrinal lineage of American Pentecostalism is to be found in the Wesleyan tradition.’ Yet a divide opened up in the Wesleyan-Holiness movement, leading to two quite distinct streams – those which affirmed that speaking in ‘tongues’ was a sign of the ‘Baptism of the Holy Ghost’ and those who retained the older Wesleyan view of the ‘Baptism’ as an experience of sanctification. Some Holiness churches opened up to the new doctrines and expressions, while others closed ranks and made a concerted effort to distance themselves from the ‘tongues heresy.’

It was the Holiness preacher W. H. Durham who, under the influence of Baptist teaching, would reduce the earlier ‘Wesleyan’ three-stage pattern to a two-stage experience, stating that God dealt with the sinful nature decisively at conversion, leaving no further need for any sanctifying baptism. Durham was expelled from the Apostolic Faith Church because of this teaching, and the early Pentecostals were in broad agreement that Durham’s two-stage theory was demonically inspired, and yet it has been this two-stage ‘Baptistic’ theory which has become a global movement, recognised as ‘authentic’ Pentecostalism, the older three-stage expression remaining pretty much confined to the southern United States.

The pastoral orientation of the original three-stage understanding of salvation was

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12 The Pentecostal Church of the Nazarene (the word ‘Pentecostal’ was dropped later) and the Pilgrim Holiness Church (later to merge with the Wesleyan Methodists) were the two largest groups to actively reject the ‘tongues’ version of holiness. Pentecostal denominations that report their membership to the National Council of Churches (USA), number their membership at around 10 million (these include both two-stage and three-stage Pentecostals). On the other hand, denominations that are Holiness, but not Pentecostal, number only 1.5 million. See Conkin, p. 276. These figures, of course, do not include the very large number of independent Holiness, Pentecostal, and Pentecostal-Holiness congregations who do not submit statistics to the National Council of Churches.
13 A certain ‘Sister Rubley’ received a vision in which she felt she was able to identify the source of Durham’s theology. The demons were discussing what to do, now that the Holy Spirit had come to the world again. But when at last a very distorted demon said, “I have it, give them a baptism on an unsanctified life,” all the demons clapped and roared in approval.” Hollenweger, p. 25.
14 The term ‘Baptistic’ is used to distinguish this later development from the original ‘Wesleyan’ position.
that, since the Holy Spirit will only enter a pure heart, believers should not hope to gain full victory by a detour around holiness, in order to grasp onto ‘power’ and ‘gifts.’

Holiness groups such as the South-West Holiness Association, which came into being as early as 1882 in the Missouri-Kansas area, and the California and Arizona Holiness Association, with congregations in Azusa, Pomona, San Bernardino, Santa Barbara and Los Angeles would be absorbed into other Holiness and Pentecostal groups, and represent an important early ‘seedbed’ of later Pentecostalism. Interestingly, the strength of Pentecostalism to this day is concentrated in the three areas of Kansas-Missouri-Oklahoma, Illinois-Indiana, and southern California.15

These congregations were racially mixed and mostly poor. Membership was not based on baptism or confirmation, as in Methodism, but on an experience of sanctifying grace. Entry to the communion service was on the same basis. Services were informal, chapels were plain, without musical instrumentation, and worship was

15 The South-West Holiness Association was led by John P. Brookes and would later take the name Church of God (Holiness), Conkin, p. 284. Pentecostalism in the Northern and Western states did not have as much success in absorbing existing Holiness denominations as its counterpart in the South. The largest group to emerge was the Assemblies of God. Leadership of this new denomination soon shifted from the Southerners with Holiness roots to Northerners, such as Eudorus N. Bell, with Baptist roots, and often with more education. Over time, this denomination, predominantly white and middle class, has moved much closer to the mainstream than any other Pentecostal group in America. See Edith L. Blumhofer, *The Assemblies of God: a Chapter in the Story of American Pentecostalism* (Springfield, Missouri, Gospel Publishing House, 1989); __. *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture*. Urbana and Chicago (University of Illinois Press, 1993). The second-largest two-stage Pentecostal group is the International Church of the Four-Square Gospel, founded by Aimee Semple McPherson. McPherson was married three times, divorced twice, and involved, in 1926, in a notorious kidnapping which was probably a publicity stunt, followed by a trial, surrounded by a media frenzy. She experienced several nervous breakdowns, financial problems, lawsuits, family conflict, and eventually died in 1944 from an overdose of sleeping pills. Evidence as to whether or not this was a suicide or an accident is inconclusive. Under her son Rolf’s leadership, the Church expanded to a worldwide membership of 2.5 million. See Edith L. Blumhofer, *Aimee Semple McPherson: Everybody’s Sister* (Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1993); Daniel Mark Epstein, *Sister Aimee: The Life of Aimee Semple McPherson* (New York, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1993).
often highly emotional. The movement was led by non-ordained evangelists, both
male and female. Some of these eventually adopted ‘tongues’ as the sign of a third
blessing of ‘fire.’ Those who didn’t formed the Holiness Church of California, which
later merged with the Pilgrim Holiness Church.

Two places have a legendary status in Pentecostal historiography – Topeka,
Kansas and Azusa Street, California. Charles Parham is the common element in both
locations. Parham had become a Methodist pastor in 1983, at the age of twenty, in
Eudora Kansas, but withdrew from Methodism in 1895, before being ordained. He
came in touch with Benjamin Irwin’s Fire Baptized Holiness Church, a three stage
Pentecostal-Holiness group. In Topeka, Parham established Bethel Bible College in
October 1900, with 30 students. He invited his students to investigate the question of
what evidence confirmed the Pentecostal experience recorded in Acts, and they came
to the conclusion that it was ‘speaking in tongues.’ According to the story, tongues of
fire appeared in the room during a ‘watchnight’ service in the old mansion which
served as the Bible school (many locals long believed it to be haunted). Agnes N.
Ozman ‘spoke in tongues’ (apparently Chinese) when Parham laid hands on her to
commission her for missionary service. Two days later, several other students also
‘spoke in tongues’ and only days into the new century, Pentecostalism was born.16

Moving to Houston, Texas, after unsuccessful attempts to establish
congregations on the ‘tongues’ model, Parham admitted some black Holiness workers
into his circle, including William Joseph Seymour, who would prove an important
link in the Church of God (Cleveland) moving from the older Holiness to the newer
Pentecostal stance. Parham helped pay Seymour’s way to Los Angeles to help in a
Holiness mission there, a work which would soon grow in influence way beyond

16 Conkin, pp. 296-7.

Parham’s own efforts. Parham’s career tapered off after this point as he moved around from place to place, openly criticized Seymour’s work, faced criminal charges of sodomy, and quickly lost his reputation even among his own followers. When he died in 1929, he continued to maintain that he and his converts spoke in actual foreign languages and not ‘ecstatic speech.’

Seymour’s attempt to convince the Holiness mission in Los Angeles that tongues was the evidence of a third baptism of fire did not go down well. Horrified, the mission dismissed him and he established his own work in a deserted, run down, two-story building on Azusa Street, which had been formerly used as a Methodist mission. The wild services Seymour had held in his own home, and which had disturbed his neighbours, were now transferred to Azusa Street where they would be given a wider, national platform. The Los Angeles Times wrote a ‘sensational and mocking’ article about the ‘revival’ taking place there and Azusa was poised to become an international Pentecostal shrine. Day and night, meetings continued with no observable beginning or finishing time, thousands pouring in to take part in the ‘blessing,’ or just to watch the show. Conkin demonstrates the way in which ‘time and place’ favoured the revival, and interprets the phenomenon in terms of social dislocation and economic deprivation.

A day after the *Times* article, San Francisco was devastated with a great earthquake, lending a peculiar apocalyptic quality to the latter-rain doctrines preached at the mission. Los Angeles was full of insecure working-class families, many just arrived from the Midwest and trying desperately to cope with the problems of a city. They were ripe for new religious innovations. Many were so near the bottom of the economic ladder or so open to religious enthusiasm that normal symbols of status meant little. Thus, for one of the few times in American history, blacks and whites, men and women, joined in complete equality in exhilarating and exhausting religious services.17

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17 Conkin, p. 298.
In the first year of the Azusa Street revival, 13,000 people were reported to have spoken in tongues. Seymour broke with Parham’s view of tongues as real human languages and saw them instead as ecstatic in nature. As the effect of Azusa spread throughout the States, the distinction (and division) between ‘Holiness’ and ‘Pentecostal’ became sharper.

A white Holiness preacher from North Carolina, Gaston B. Cashwell, had visited Azusa and received his ‘baptism’ at the laying on of William Seymour’s hands. He returned home to establish congregations all over the South, which eventually coalesced to form the Pentecostal Holiness Church, the second-largest white three-stage group in America, after Church of God (Cleveland).18 It was Cashwell, ‘baptized in the Spirit’ under W J Seymour at Azusa Street, who converted Ambrose J. Tomlinson to Spirit baptism and evidential tongues-speaking in 1908. So the Church of God (Cleveland) beginning in Tomlinson’s Tennessee and North Carolina mountain churches has a well-established lineage in Pentecostal historiography.19

The Self-Identification of the Church of God (Cleveland)

The formal self-identification of churches usually finds expression in their official statements of faith. The Church of God (Cleveland) had no such statement until the Declaration of Faith was adopted at the forty-second General Assembly in 1948. The early leaders of the Church of God had been opposed to creeds and

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18 The largest of all three-stage groups is the black Church of God in Christ, founded by Charles H. Mason who had also visited Azusa. See Bret E. Carroll, The Routledge Historical Atlas of Religion in America (New York, Routledge, 2000), p. 118.
19 In 1923, Tomlinson’s leadership was overthrown and the group became known as Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee). Subsequent splinter groups and heirs apparent have resulted in a confusing number of groups all claiming to be the torchbearers of the original movement. These include Church of God (Prophecy), Church of God (Huntsville, Alabama), and Church of God, Inc. (Original). See International Offices of the Church of God of Prophecy, An Introduction to the Church of God of Prophecy (Cleveland, Tennessee, 1999).

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confessions, as human, and therefore flawed, inventions. Furthermore, statements of faith were believed to be divisive and to set up barriers between Christians. At an address to the General Assembly in 1913, R. G. Spurling depicted humanly derived creeds as ‘small railroads’ leading away from the truth of the Gospel. ‘But the great engine of the Church of God can not travel these side tracks because they are narrow gauge.’

He knew first hand the controversies that could erupt over doctrine when ‘Landmarkism’ had disrupted the Baptist churches of East Tennessee. For early Church of God people, the New Testament was to be the only rule of faith and practice. When the Church was first formed as the ‘Christian Union’ in 1886, the charter members agreed to be free from ‘all man-made creeds and traditions…to take the New Testament, or law of Christ’ as their ‘only rule…giving each other equal rights and privileges to read and interpret for yourselves as your conscience may dictate,’ and to ‘sit together as the Church of God to transact business.’

Even so, by 1909 the General Assembly felt the need to provide ministerial candidates with helps to an understanding of the New Testament, and in 1910 provided a list of 25 brief statements with biblical references attached. In 1948 a 14-point declaration was approved, and though a fuller, more comprehensive statement was also called for, it never eventuated. The declaration reflects both Holiness and Pentecostal beliefs, and Charles W. Conn insists that these two traditions belong together in the Church of God.

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22 An Introduction to the Church of God of Prophecy, p. 5.
Conn wants to make clear the historic lineage of the Church of God as extending back through the nineteenth century Holiness movement to John Wesley and early Methodism. For him, ‘the Pentecostal emphasis is simply an extension of the earlier holiness concepts.’ Church of God adherents ‘regard themselves different among holiness believers only in the further spiritual experience they have received.’ In 1960, the General Assembly asserted that the Church had been a Holiness church before it had been a Pentecostal one, and reaffirmed its commitment to remain so.

The emergence of the Charismatic (neo-Pentecostal) movement, which brought ‘marginal’ behaviours such as ‘tongues speaking’ and ‘divine healing’ into the mainline churches in the 1960s and 70s, served to bring the Church of God’s sense of identity as a Holiness church clearly into focus. Church of God leadership was standoffish, if not positively hostile to this new development, which saw members of mainline Protestant and Catholic churches claim to have received the ‘baptism of the Spirit’ and spoken in ‘tongues,’ but without the preparatory work of entire sanctification. It was conceded that many had received genuine blessing in this movement but that these should be brought into Church of God fellowship where they would experience ‘true Pentecostalism.’ Wade H. Horton, General Overseer, at the 50th General Assembly in 1963, was concerned that those in the Charismatic movement who had received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit did not hold to Holiness doctrine, or live holy lives. Church of God leaders were concerned that such believers were bypassing the crucial second work of grace – entire sanctification. According to Church of God theology, one could not receive the ‘baptism’ without

25 Conn, Like a Mighty Army, p. xxv.
27 Wade H Horton, ‘For Such a Time,’ Church of God 50th General Assembly Minutes, 15 in Crews, p. 155.
this preparatory cleansing work. In 1972, Hughes insisted that ‘as fish cannot live out of the water, the baptism of the Holy Ghost cannot exist without holiness. Holiness is a prerequisite for the reception of the Baptism and for the maintenance of the Baptism.’\(^{28}\) For Horton, neo-Pentecostals were only ‘pseudo-Pentecostals.’\(^{29}\) The overall attitude of the Church of God to the neo-Pentecostal phenomenon was ‘let’s just wait and see.’\(^{30}\) Despite the perceived threat of the Charismatic movement, the Church of God increased in growth right alongside of its closest rival. In 1958, there were 155,541 members in the United States. In 1974 that number had more than doubled to 324,553,\(^{31}\) and by 1994 there were 721,476 members in the US alone and 3,646,409 members worldwide.\(^{32}\) Membership outside of the USA and Canada exceeded 5 million in 2001.\(^{33}\)

**Pentecostalism in Australia**

Just as in the United States, Australian Pentecostalism would be birthed from a Wesleyan matrix. Janet ‘Mummy’ Lancaster, born in Williamstown, Victoria, was a Methodist who, in 1908, experienced ‘speaking in tongues.’ She opened the Good News Hall in North Melbourne in 1909, which became the centre of the ‘Pentecostal Mission’ she would lead until her death in 1934.\(^{34}\) Lancaster wrote an editorial in 1930 in which she displayed her Methodist origins and sought legitimisation of her

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\(^{28}\) Ray H Hughes, ‘A Call to Unity,’ Church of God 54th General Assembly Minutes, 19-20 in Crews, p. 157.

\(^{29}\) Wade H Horton, ‘Where the Spirit of the Lord is, There is Liberty,’ sermon delivered at the 56th General Assembly and recorded on audio tape, Crews, p. 158.

\(^{30}\) Conn, *Like a Mighty Army*, pp. 364-5.

\(^{31}\) Crews, p. 159.

\(^{32}\) Conn, *Like a Mighty Army*, p. 582; US statistics at 1990 are given at 620,000 members in more than 5,800 congregations in Carroll, pp. 118-19.


\(^{34}\) Chant, *Heart of Fire*, p. 3.

cause in statements on Pentecost made by prominent Methodist clergymen. She quoted headlines from the *Spectator* and speeches given at the Methodist centenary celebrations. The Rev. T. C. Rentoul admitted the church’s ‘impotence and failure with a sense of shame, readily allowing that education had increased the power of analysis, which deadens the tendency to emotion.’

Why, if our Methodist forefathers, though illiterate and superstitious, found access to this power, ought we not, with our clearer vision and more scientific mentality, seek it, too?…Why shun the gift and work of God because in the past it produced strange manifestations?36

‘Mummy’ bemoaned ‘the fellowship so familiar and so vital to the Methodism of an earlier day [as] almost nonexistent’ and sees a revival of Pentecostal manifestations as the answer to the problem.37 The Methodist Church did not welcome the new Pentecostal message and the 1935 Conference directed Methodist minister, Arch Newton, and local preacher, Gordon Bowling, ‘to withdraw their Pentecostal influence or withdraw themselves from the Methodist ministry.’38 Bowling left, to become a minister in the Apostolic Church, but Newton stayed.

The second earliest Australian Pentecostal ministry, the Southern Evangelical Mission, was also established by a former Methodist, the home missioner, Robert Horne. He had been involved with the Keswick movement and began his own independent work in the Melbourne suburb of Caulfield in 1911. In 1922, Horne published an advertisement in the Melbourne Age distancing himself from the

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37 Chant, *Heart of Fire*, p. 287. The Good News Hall was considered heretical by other Pentecostals of the time because of its non-Trinitarian views. The Godhead was believed to be made up of God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, Jesus being inferior to the Father. Nonetheless, Pentecostal historians continue to regard movements such as Lancaster’s as authentic pioneers of the movement, Chant, *Heart of Fire*, 51-3.
teachings of the Good News Hall.\textsuperscript{39} The Sunshine Gospel Hall, under the leadership of C. L. Greenwood opened in 1925 and regularly saw a packed house. Greenwood organised the Pentecostal Church of Australia after a week-long series of meetings in the Prahran Town Hall. This group moved to Bridge Road in Richmond where they leased the Richmond Theatre, eventually purchasing the building and renaming it Richmond Temple. A meeting of seventeen Pentecostal leaders in Brisbane took the name ‘Assemblies of God’ in July 1929 and in 1937 the Melbourne-based Pentecostal Church joined this Brisbane-based group to form the Assemblies of God in Australia.

Since that time the Assemblies of God have seen phenomenal growth and has become the largest Pentecostal denomination in Australia, with over a thousand congregations and 160,000 adherents.\textsuperscript{40} The charismatic movement in the 1970s, which saw Pentecostal phenomena enter mainstream denominational circles, led to Charismatic fellowships within mainline churches as well as a proliferation of independent Charismatic churches and fellowships with virtually identical beliefs to those held by historic Pentecostalism. Added to the Assemblies of God are such groups as the Christian Revival Crusade, The International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, the Apostolic Church, Christian Life Centre Churches, Christian City Churches, and Christian Outreach Centres, all of whom share a similar outlook and have experienced similar rates of growth.

Barry Chant’s history of Australian Pentecostalism has only a few scant references to Pentecostalism’s Holiness movement cousins. Chant refers to the Church of God of Prophecy as tracing its origins to the American Holiness movement


\textsuperscript{40} http://www.aogaustralia.com.au/default.asp?ContentID=1000320

and consequently ‘having an emphasis on holiness and sanctification.’ He also refers to the Church of God (Anderson) as having experienced some conflict over ‘speaking with tongues.’ He seems less than enthusiastic about American incursions into the Australian scene.

It seems clear that in the future more American denominations will attempt to open branches in Australia. One cannot do anything to stop this, of course, even if that were desirable. But it would be a pity if Australian Pentecostalism became too much identified with American Pentecostalism. It has some colourful and unique history and pioneering traditions of its own. I, for one, would be sad to see them swamped.

The American Wesleyan Methodist leader Robert Mattke, remembers an attitude of ridicule toward Pentecostals in Australia in the 1950s.

[Pentecostal evangelist] Oral Roberts came to Australia when we were there, and he held meetings down in Melbourne. In the park he pitched his tent, but it was an area where free-thinkers of every type came. He...had a lot of...advance publicity that was negative. People heard about his herd of prize beef cattle back in Oklahoma, or somewhere, and when he arrived, he came with all the semi-trailers of equipment and lights, tents and curtains and the Australians kind of saw this as the American...circus come to town...and we went to one of the services to see what it was like, and they introduced him, and he popped out from the backstage, and ran through curtains, and ran to the pulpit, and this just did not go over at all. And so there were stink bombs, and heckling and it got so bad that he just had to fold his tent and leave.

Pentecostalism emerged out of Methodist origins in Australia, and thus out of a Wesleyan theology of experience. And yet a knowledge of these Wesleyan origins had not been sufficiently recalled in Australian Pentecostalism. If it had been, the Church of God (Cleveland) with its Wesleyan beginnings and its Pentecostal experience may have found a more ready welcome. As it was, there was considerable

41 Chant, *Heart of Fire*, p. 188. He attributes the pioneering of the Church of God wrongly to ‘Cole Schwardt’ rather than to ‘Carl Swart.’
42 Chant, p. 188. The other American group he discusses in this chapter is the United Pentecostal Church, which broke away from the American Assemblies of God in 1916 after rejecting the doctrine of the Trinity. Hollenweger, *The Pentecostals*, p. 32.
43 Interview with Bob and Janette Mattke, Orchard Park, New York, 7 July 2001.
suspicion toward them, on the part of other Pentecostals, as either too ‘American’ or ‘too Holiness.’

The New Testament Church of God in Australia

In January 1976, the Church of God was formally organized in Australia, with thirty-three members, five ministers, and three churches. The name ‘Church of God’ was already in use by the Anderson, Indiana group, so for a time the Cleveland group operated under the name ‘New Testament Church of God.’ When the McAlpins first moved to Sydney in 1973, they presented themselves as gospel singers, visiting as many churches as would have them, ministering in music. When invited to sing at a series of meetings in the western Sydney suburb of Leumeah, they were befriended by an Assemblies of God minister who sold them his modest house in Campbelltown before moving to Queensland.

Continuing to research the church scene and the Australian culture and lifestyle, the McAlpins discovered ‘vast differences’ between the American and Australian church scenes. ‘Did we ever get an education! The way of worship was totally different. They sang different. The way they conducted their services was different. Their altar services were different. Everything was different.’ Winnie remembers that there was very little media broadcast of the gospel as compared with America. Being a Christian was a very private matter in Australia. It was difficult to get someone’s attention. They gave out 5000 flyers on one occasion to draw attention to a meeting but with little result. The Australians worked hard during the week, both parents had to work in order to own a home. On Sundays the people were tired. They were happy for the church to have their children on a Sunday afternoon so long

44 Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland Tennessee, July 2001.

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as they had nothing else on, so there was quite an impact among children, but the parents themselves were uninterested. To the McAlpins, church life took priority, and everything else was secondary, but to Australians, secular life was first and church was secondary. In Florida, when they held special meetings, they could invite people from other churches, and even fellow pastors from other denominations, and there was a good response. The same participation was not found in Australia.

They remained committed to fellowship with all believers in spite of this opposition from other denominations. They held interdenominational tent meetings, sang with the interdenominational ‘Full Gospel Business Men’ and promoted harmony between churches as much as possible. As for musical differences, the focus in the American Church of God was on the hymnbook; Australians preferred choruses. In America, choirs were used; in Australia it was almost exclusively congregational singing, an approach which the McAlpins preferred. Instrumentation was the same in both places – piano, guitar, and drums.

The McAlpins also observed several social differences between American and Australians. They remembered having great difficulty getting Australians to bring food to any big ‘dinner on the grounds’ event. Bill remembered how ‘each would bring his own food, barbecue his own meat, sit with his own family, and eat his own food.’45 The driver who had picked them up from the airport upon arrival had taken a liking to them and invited them to his house. He was married with 5 or 6 children, but, until this time, other than his relatives, no one had ever visited inside his house. This outlook of a ‘closed family’ hindered the church’s ability to reach out. Home visitation wasn’t very successful as families were very protective of their home circle. Once when visiting a friend in Caboolture, Queensland, they found that their friend


would knock on the door of a friend’s house and ask first if it was okay to bring Bill inside.⁴⁶

Developing a team of church workers was also an uphill battle. In America, training on the job was all part of church life, but in Australia, a young person called into ministry might find himself or herself sitting in a pew ‘day in and day out’ and never participate in worship leadership or pulpit activity. Australian church leaders were seen by the McAlpins as keeping a tighter control over the ‘platform’ ministry, which left many ‘called’ persons feeling very frustrated.

What we had to work with in the way of pastors was usually young men who had not been well received because they lacked theological training and favour with other churches. They were disenfranchised and felt that they didn’t have a place. They kind of associated by way of coming into our meetings and very soon decided that they wanted to volunteer to work with us. Others was [sic] people that came in from other countries such as England. So, we imported. You know, when you’re building a building you scaffold. In those early days we received a lot of scaffolding material that was not necessarily going to be for the building project. So, in those early days we got a lot of disgruntles and various people who felt slighted and felt they weren’t given an opportunity to develop, and they found that we were just the opposite…Unless we recognized a sin factor in an individual’s life, we sought to try to find the qualities and the gifts that were there and develop them and that was part of our concept of church building. Take the material that God gives you and build on it, work on it, use whatever you can, whatever you’ve got to build to get the building up. We had scaffolding material that we used to build the building that, once the building was developed, was torn down and probably was never used again….Not many of those early guys are still with us…a very small percent. I would say better than 60-75% fell by the wayside, but it allowed us to do… what needed to be done to get the building up. Some people frowned on that as though we were all then just classified as disgruntles, unqualified, doing the wrong thing over there…They felt like you had to get the training first, you had to get degreed first, you should have already gone the distance and run the race before you ever was allowed to get up and say, ‘My name is Bill, how do you do?’⁴⁷

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⁴⁶ Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland Tennessee, July 2001.
⁴⁷ Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland Tennessee, July 2001.
Bill McAlpin had started preaching at the age of fifteen and was a pastor by the time he was nineteen. However, he had never received any formal theological training. This was seen as working against him in Australia.

Inevitably everywhere you went [it] was ‘where did you get your degree? What seminary did you graduate from?’ Well, I didn’t and so…as I began to recognize the importance put on this from other churches, I begin [sic] to say, ‘We need a training program.’ We tried several ways to bring materials in from the States, and we tried several people to do correspondence kinds of things…The country was so vast and we were so small that it just wouldn’t work.48

The New Testament Church of God seemed neither fish nor fowl. The churches the McAlpins sought to associate with, and which kept them at arms length, were Pentecostal groups such as the Assemblies of God. There was no involvement at all with Wesleyan-Holiness groups.49 The Pentecostals would not associate with them because they were considered too Holiness, and the Holiness churches would not associate with them because they were too Pentecostal.50 There was theological opposition to the doctrine of sanctification held by the Church of God on the part of other Pentecostals, who believed them to be not quite orthodox and too rigid in their lifestyle prohibitions. Harold McLoud, General Overseer of the Australian work from 1984 to 1995, found that he gained greater acceptance among some Uniting Church and Catholic churches than from the Assemblies of God, which seemed to have held the Church of God at arms length because it was perceived as an American group in competition with it. As a result, Church of God leaders were not invited to participate in any multi-church crusades or organizing committees.51 The fact that the Church of God (Cleveland) did not fit neatly into either the Holiness or the

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48 Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland Tennessee, July 2001. Eventually a Ministerial Internship Program was developed and now operates in Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne. When the McAlpins left in 1984 Bill returned to Lee University, in Cleveland, and then later to graduate study at the School of Theology, to obtain the formal educational qualifications he felt he had always lacked.
49 Interview with Bill McAlpin, Cleveland, Tennessee, July 2001.
Pentecostal camp, meant that one aspect of its self identification would inevitably be muted if it was to find its place among the existing churches in Australia.

That the Church of God identifies itself primarily as Pentecostal rather than Wesleyan-Holiness is clear from its own literature. Church of God historian David Roebuck can refer to the Assemblies of God as ‘our sister fellowship.’52 When Tuisi Tonga desired to commence Church of God work in his homeland of Tonga, the funds for supervision were not available and he was referred to ‘another Pentecostal church.’53 A combined tent meeting held at Fairfield in January 1982 demonstrated that the Church of God identified, not with the Wesleyan-Holiness churches but with Pentecostalism. Joining with the Christian Revival Crusade at Fairfield, and the Full Gospel Church at Merrylands, they participated in the Free Gift Festival, which was said to have ‘brought a unity among the Pentecostal ministers in an effort to reach the lost in the Western suburbs.’54

It is true that many informed Church of God people are aware of their Wesleyan roots. An ‘Account of the Life of John Wesley’ was included in the May 2001 issue of the Church of God Evangel (Oceania Region). It seems to be an older account drawn from a source without credit.55 Interestingly, however, it makes no mention of his doctrine of entire sanctification, belief in which was the constitutive factor in the Church of God’s original Wesleyan orientation. Harold McLoud, General Overseer of the Australian work from 1984 to 1995, when asked whether he would prefer the Church of God to be thought of as Pentecostal or Holiness, opted for Holiness. The basis for this was partly because the lifestyle standards of the Church

52 David G. Roebuck, ‘Declaration Prevents Church Division,’ p. 2.
55 For example, no contemporary account would be likely to include the statement “John Wesley was a gay and manly youth…” ‘An Account of the Life of John Wesley,’ Church of God Evangel Oceania Region (May 2001), pp. 15-16.
of God were generally more demanding than those of other Pentecostal churches. However, the artificiality of the question - being placed on the spot and asked to make a choice between two options – seemed to produce a different orientation than was evident in ordinary conversation.

You see, we’re very emotional, Pentecostals, Charismatics are very emotional. We clap and sing, and dance and jump and whoop and holler, but at the end of the day, if relationship with God…does not measure up, then it’s just vanity. God is not impressed with our emotions [but] with our relationship and to…really…please God [in] a life of holiness and purity.56

For Brother McLoud, Church of God people are a certain type of Pentecostal, rather than a certain type of Wesleyan.

A Church of Immigrant Communities

The history of the Church of God (Cleveland) in Australia is marked by a striking ethnic diversity. Members of the Church of God would emigrate from their home countries and establish congregations in their new homeland soon after arrival in Australia.57 According to Winnie McAlpin, some of the Pentecostal churches in Australia did not feel that the immigrant communities were worth their time and money, but the Church of God took on this ministry wholeheartedly. It was felt that God had given them an opening ‘to come in and minister to that sector.’58 The tent the McAlpins used for evangelistic meetings had been purchased from a Swedish couple they had met soon after their arrival in Australia. Bill preached through an

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57 This ‘reverse missionary’ pattern which saw immigrant groups evangelise the countries they entered, was a global pattern in the Church of the God as described in Conn, Like a Mighty Army, pp. 503-4.
58 Interview with Bill and Winnie McAlpin, Cleveland, Tennessee, July 2001.
interpreter to a group of twenty-five Swedish believers at a family camp in the Blue
Mountains.59

V. V. Matthew, from the Church of God in India moved to Sydney after he
had graduated from the Melbourne Bible Institute in November 1977.60 After
obtaining a permanent residency visa, his family joined him there from India. A
Romanian church grew by the arrival of family members reunited through the
immigration system.61 A Romanian congregation in Melbourne, under the leadership
of John Draghici, joined the New Testament Church of God on 3 April, 1982, with 40
adult members.62 Romanian congregations would later be added in both Sydney and
Adelaide in 1987, and by 1992 also in Brisbane. In 1982, 60% of the Romanian
immigrants who arrived in Australia were said to be from the Church of God-related,
Apostolic Church of God in Romania. 90% of these were young men under twenty-
five, about half of which were thought to be lost to the church upon arrival.63 By
1991 the Romanian congregation in Melbourne had grown to an attendance of 600
people.

The German Church of God opened in Adelaide in 1979. A South African
Full Gospel Church joined the Villawood Church of God in November 1982, after
their pastor, A. Lamb, returned from South Africa, swelling attendance into the
eighties within a few weeks. Twenty former members of his Durban congregation
were living in Campbelltown at the time. Another forty to fifty were said to be

60 This school is now known as the Bible College of Victoria.

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immigrating in 1982, adding to the large number of South Africans arriving in Australia at that time.\textsuperscript{64}

A Lebanese pastor, Ata G. Nasrallah, who had led the Arabic-speaking Christian Centre in Sydney, was received into the membership of the Church of God, along with his family, in February 1983. Pastor Paulus Darma, an Indonesian pastor, returned to his own country, in October 1983, to seek permanent residency in Australia, after the Department of Immigration refused him a visa extension. There were estimated to have been about two hundred Indonesian Pentecostals in Sydney at that time, many of whom were members of the Church of God in that country, known as the Bethel Church of God.\textsuperscript{65}

Pastor Jorge Rebolledo, after contact with Pastor Ted Wharemate, led one hundred Spanish people into the Villawood congregation in November 1983.\textsuperscript{66} A second Spanish congregation, this time in Brisbane, led by Roberto San Martin, brought one hundred and twenty-five people into the Church of God early in 1987. In 1991 they commenced building a sanctuary that would seat six hundred people. Another Spanish congregation was added in 1990, this time in Melbourne, under the leadership of Victor Reyes. A Filipino congregation in Sydney was opened in 1987 with one hundred in attendance. In December 1988, J. P. Mahaffey arrived in Australia to serve as Director of the Oceania School of Ministries. He found that the Northside Pentecostal Fellowship, where he served in pastoral ministry for a time, was made up mostly of immigrants ‘from Europe, Asia, and the United States.’ Only


\textsuperscript{66} The Communicator, p. 3.
‘a few of them were born in Australia.’ In 1990 two Fijian congregations were opened in Sydney with a total of two hundred members.

Like the Church of the Nazarene, the Church of God attracted significant numbers of Aboriginal Christians into its ranks. Tent meetings were regularly held in rural New South Wales from 1979 and throughout the 1980s. In 1980 Aboriginal pastor Edward Hickling, serving the Church of God congregation in Bogabilla, NSW, became not only the first Aborigine to join the Church of God, but the first Australian to receive a ministerial license in that Church. The Pentecostal preacher Gordon Nagas, a Solomon Islander, was ministering among the Aboriginal people at the Tabulam and Woodenbong missions near Kyogle in northern NSW. Nagas was making boomerangs to help finance the opening of an Aboriginal Bible College. He invited McAlpin to conduct evangelistic tent missions among the Aborigines and during this time Bill ‘learned to throw the boomerang, to hunt, to eat Aboriginal foods such as the kangaroo, turtle, snake, goanna and parrot.’ Here was an American evangelist from the south, lately of Tennessee and Florida, seemingly feeling more at ease with Aboriginal people than many white Australians would feel.

By 1991 the New Testament Church of God had grown from one family to a total of twenty-one churches and missions and approximately 1,300 members. The Church of God website currently includes thirty-five churches. Here is a church energetically established by contract painters, butchers, Aborigines, and migrants. Aboriginal, White Australian, Fijian, Romanian, Spanish, and Filipino congregations seemed able, despite their cultural differences, to unite. Perhaps their unity, in spite of the divergence of their cultures arose out of a shared sense of dislocation, as well

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as a shared Pentecostal experience. Paul Brodwin has traced the manner in which members of the Haitian diaspora gathered into Pentecostal churches, which provided ‘a form of collective defense and remoralizing’ that protected against a loss of social cohesion in the face of the temptations of secularism.70 Harold McLoud recalled that the immigrant Church of God congregations in Australia held much stricter views on things such as dress codes, use of alcohol and tobacco, and the prohibiting of ‘worldly’ entertainment.71 When Bill McAlpin first made contact with the Romanian Church of God congregation in Melbourne they ‘interrogated’ him about church practices.72 They never sat to pray, not even when giving thanks for food, a tradition perhaps drawn from Orthodox practice, where prayer is always either from a standing or kneeling position. They didn’t come forward for healing prayer unless they had been to the doctor first. They would not pray openly very often, but usually would confine this to prayer meetings. McAlpin suggested that this may have been a practice from the days of Communist restrictions when such meetings were of necessity held in secret. Women and men always sat on separate sides of the church. Many men would not wear neckties as such ‘superfluous adornment’ was seen as an expression of vanity, and women always wore scarves on their heads as an expression of proper modesty. In Brodwin’s study, the immigrant Haitians tended to reflect the more conservative features of earlier formative Pentecostalism. Immigrant Church of God communities in Australia would seem to bear out this thesis.

The Church of God may have had its international headquarters in Cleveland, Tennessee; but its emergence in Australia would not be furthered by its American identity so much as by the diversity of its immigrant communities who came to

72 Interview with Bill McAlpin, Cleveland, Tennessee, July 2001.
Australia already identifying with the Church of God in their home country. With its origins among the mountain Holiness people of southern Appalachia, the form of red-hot Holiness religion it exhibited was radical enough, but it developed into an even more radical strain of Christianity. The Pentecostal ‘blessing’ brought those who had already received the ‘second blessing’ of entire sanctification to an even greater intensity. The ‘baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire’ seemed to bring the conversion and sanctification experiences to their logical fulfillment. For a while, and in its formal doctrinal statements, the Church of God (Cleveland) sought to be both Holiness and Pentecostal. However, as time went on and the non-Wesleyan form of Pentecostalism dominated the religious landscape, it became more difficult for the Church of God to remember its Wesleyan roots. Not wanting to remain aloof from other Christians, but finding Wesleyan churches suspicious of their ‘tongues’ orientation, the Church of God (Cleveland) identified instead with the ‘Pentecostal club.’ Like Winnie McAlpin’s marriage to Bill, its Wesleyan roots were left behind, though still remembered fondly, and a Pentecostal orientation was fully embraced.
Chapter 7
Old Time Methodists in a New World:
The Continuing Viability of Conservative Religion

According to the proponents of a ‘new religious consciousness,’ the radical secularization prophesied by Max Weber did not take place in late modernity. Religion ceased to be seen as promising a social centre, however, it continued to be the means of a personal search for meaning.\(^1\) Cohen et al argue that every religious quest is in some sense a quest for a centre, but not necessarily a social centre. They propose instead the idea of an ‘elective center.’\(^2\) ‘Elective’ here means that a person ‘is not born into a culture which cherishes that center but has actively chosen it.’\(^3\)

One expression of the rejection and disenchantment with modernism has been the strength and growth of conservative movements within established Christian churches.\(^4\) Furthermore, revived conservatism appeals to all strata of society and does not seem to be limited to one socio-economic grouping.\(^5\) Baby boomers in America have a deep interest in religion but pursue this interest with a consumerist orientation. Church shopping and hopping are the order of the day. The days of a deeply held allegiance to a particular denomination seem to be over.\(^6\)

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\(^3\) Cohen, Ben-Yehuda, and Aviad, p. 324.

\(^4\) Martin Marty, ‘Religion in America Since Mid-century, *Daedalus*, vol. 11, no. 1, pp. 149-64.


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<td>United Methodist</td>
<td>-16.3%</td>
<td>Church of God, Cleveland (Pentecostal-Holiness)</td>
<td>+147% to 505,775</td>
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Growth and Decline in Australian Christian Churches

Similar patterns emerge in Australia. Between 1977, the year of its formation, and 1981, 58,176 confirmed members of the Uniting Church were lost to its ranks.\footnote{Breward, p. 182. The Uniting Church in Australia was formed on 2 June 1977 after more than twenty years of church union negotiations, beginning in 1954, between the Congregational Churches, the Methodist Church, and the Presbyterian Church. Between 83% and 94% (varying from state to state) of Congregationalist churches, 64% of Presbyterian churches and all Methodists joined the Uniting Church. Peter Bentley and Philip J. Hughes, *The Uniting Church in Australia* (Canberra, Australian Government Publishing Services, 1996), pp. 7-10.}

There followed a 13% decrease in membership between 1986 and 1991,\footnote{Bentley and Hughes, p. 48.} and a 12% attendance drop between 1991 and 1996.\footnote{Breward, p. 436.} The chart below indicates a large degree of non-participation in those claiming Uniting Church allegiance, as compared with two Wesleyan-Holiness churches showing a very different result.\footnote{Data drawn from *Census of Population and Housing, and the National Church Life Survey* (1996), given in Breward, pp. 436-37.}

\footnote{O’Brien, *North American Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Australia* 220}
Table 3: *Degrees of participation of adherents in the Wesleyan Methodist, Nazarene, and Uniting Churches.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Number of people identifying as (census)</th>
<th>Attendance in an average week</th>
<th>Percent attending of people identifying</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Uniting Church</td>
<td>1,334,917</td>
<td>142,900</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wesleyan Methodist</td>
<td>3,700</td>
<td>4,100</td>
<td>111%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nazarene</td>
<td>1,619</td>
<td>1,200</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The Wesleyan Methodist Church figure is the highest percentage of attendance of those identifying in the *National Church Life Survey* (1996). The second highest is Pentecostal, the third, Nazarene. The lowest is Anglican (5%). Churches of Christ are at the median (56%). Between 1961 and 1996, the number of Pentecostals in Australia increased from 16,572 to 174,720, just under 1% of the total population, almost doubling every 5 years. By 1991, 31% of incomers to Pentecostal churches had formerly been Anglican, 21% Methodist and Presbyterian, and 17% Catholic. Pentecostals have generally been seen as ‘marginalized’ and ‘sect-like,’ but should probably now be considered mainstream. After all, ‘[t]he term “mainstream” ceases to make sense if huge masses of people are excluded from it.’

David Hilliard maintains that the religious crisis of the 1960s was felt most acutely in those churches that had most fully embraced the assumptions of modernity. The religious bodies that were most affected [by the downturn of the 1960s] were those that had a tradition of openness towards the modern world and in urban centres that were most exposed to the cultural shifts of the period. Thus the ‘crisis’ was first experienced among liberal Methodists, Presbyterians, and Congregationalists in the state capitals. The experience of the Baptists in the 1960s was different. Relatively small in number, less likely to affirm the

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12 Breward, p. 393.
13 Breward, p. 394.
14 Miller, *America’s Alternative Religions*, p. 3.
secular world, and strongly conversionist in outlook, they were more successful than others in holding on to what they had.15

Dan Kelley’s 1972 work *Why the Conservative Churches are Growing*, was one of the first to seek an explanation for this trend, though his research related primarily to the American context.16 He argued that it was the ‘strict and serious…demands’ that conservative churches made on their members that led to their growth.17 One may view Kelley’s thesis through social exchange theory. Conservative churches demand more cost than do liberal ones but they also promise greater rewards – salvation, sanctification, closeness to God.18 There is meaning and purpose to be found in abandoning all other priorities and sacrificially seeking to spread the Gospel to all. By comparison, liberal churches lack definiteness in their beliefs and purpose, so they lack appeal to those seeking a rigorous religion. Kelley’s thesis has a degree of explanatory power that continues to influence the self-consciousness of evangelicals.19

Writing in 1985, the religious sociologist Hans Mol observed that ‘by far the fastest growing religious organizations in Australia are the sects,’ including Pentecostals. These groups ‘all transmit a strong sense of purpose and belonging’ with ‘resulting boundaries [that] provide a safe haven for individuals who feel that they are on the fringe of mainstream society.’20 The placing of adherents of these sects on the ‘fringe’ of society may apply to Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses, whose self-imposed exclusionary practices keep them at a high rate of sectarian

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17 Perrin and Mauss, in Robbins and Anthony, p. 158.
18 Perrin and Mauss, in Robbins and Anthony, p. 159.
19 Don Hardgrave, Queensland District Superintendent in the Wesleyan Methodist Church of the 1980s, made Kelley required reading in his efforts to get Wesleyans to see themselves as spearheading a latter-day spiritual awakening.
tension. Members of Pentecostal and Holiness churches, however, are much more accommodated to and accommodating towards the wider cultures they inhabit, but much less accommodating, in turn, than the Uniting Church, which may be taken as an example of the kind of church Kelley would expect to see decline. A church heavily indebted to, and widely embracing of, the liberal tradition, which places little demand upon its constituency, Bentley and Hughes state that ‘it is difficult to define closely the expectations [placed upon Uniting Church] adherents.’ Apart from ‘regular participation within a worshipping congregation’ there is ‘no practical definition of what regular participation means and expectations vary from one congregation to another.’

Since its inception the Uniting Church has lost many people, partly to other denominations but mainly to ‘no religion.’ As local communities have declined in importance, attendance in local community churches has declined. The Uniting Church has failed to keep those young people who have grown up in it, and to attract people under the age of 40. Younger single people are noticeably absent from Uniting Church life. Few blue-collar workers or people without post-secondary qualifications attend its services. Thus, it has become a church in which older people, particularly those with professional backgrounds or, in the rural areas, farm owners, predominate.

In its twenty-five year history the Uniting Church has developed a record of engagement with social justice concerns and with the interface of religion, politics, and society, of which it may be justly proud. It has not been afraid to ‘mix religion with politics or, as Rollie Busch (Moderator of the Queensland Synod in 1977-78) put it, challenge governments with the brilliant insights of the Bible and the radicalism of Calvin, Knox, and Wesley.’ Yet Emilsen and Emilsen’s recent history of the Uniting Church contains a collection of essays that describe a lack of clear identity and unity of purpose. Is the Uniting Church to be understood as ‘the birthing of a

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21 Bentley and Hughes, p. 27.
22 Bentley and Hughes, pp. 84-5.
23 Emilsen and Susan Emilsen, p. 2.
new form of Christian life and experience, or the death throes of a moribund ecclesiastical merger?24 The NSW Synod wrote in its 2001 Report, ‘Each of the churches that entered Union had reasonably clear identities, and a sense of what they stood for within the Christian family. We are less sure of our identity as Uniting Church, and less sure of what is distinctive about the faith we hold.’25

In 1985 Hans Mol warned mainline denominations against accommodating too closely to Australian culture ‘in a pluralistic world where the demand for strong guidelines balances the inevitable pragmatism and lack of concern for meaning in the secular environment.’26

[T]he message for the mainline denominations in Australia is that in the future the accent may have to shift even more than it already has from a priestly, understanding and consoling concern for Australian culture and society, to a prophetic, critical and separatist stance. After all, the secular culture may respect the churches and even hold them in high esteem, but is not likely to be persuaded by their call for self denial, self discipline and search for greater profundity. Not that true Christianity can in any way give up its priestly concern for any of man’s structures! Yet for the sake of a more effective promotion of its tradition of good news and redemption, it may have to follow more closely the sectarian example of sharp boundaries.27

Julia Day Howell’s study of Altered States of Consciousness induction techniques has demonstrated the way in which Pentecostal groups provide a direct experiential encounter with the divine in a way that mainline churches generally do not.28

[S]ome experiences, by virtue of symbolic content that is clearly associated with the belief system of an organization, can have a strong confirming effect. The effect should be strongest where the symbolic content is associated not just with the tradition (Christianity, Hinduism etc.) carried by an organization,

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25 Joan Mansfield and Bruce Mansfield, ‘New South Wales: Identity Firm or Fragmented?’ in Emilsen and Emilsen, p. 66.
but with beliefs unique to a particular organization…Those who have reported…that they…have had [experiences that match those particular beliefs] cast this as strong confirmation of the unique truth of their path. This suggests that New Religious Movements with unique features in their belief systems should be better able to tap commitment from those of other churches.29

This provides further explanation for the growth of Pentecostal and Wesleyan-Holiness groups. Those who feel that their own churches do not ‘deliver’ on ecstatic forms of religious encounter will gravitate toward those who do. According to Cohen et al, conservative renewal groups in Christianity manifest ‘highly explicit centers (i.e. centers which proclaim clearly defined and widely disseminated soteriological goals and messages); the site of such centers is mostly in the past – they direct their adherents to reorient their lives to their “roots,” or to religious conceptions and life-ways enshrined in tradition.30 For Pentecostals, this past is the New Testament (especially the Book of Acts), and to a lesser extent the historic revivals, such as Azusa Street, which have taken on mythic proportions. Wesleyans and Nazarenes also value the New Testament, of course, but do not generally take the Book of Acts as normative of Christian experience. Their treasured past is the age of revivals in the eighteenth and nineteenth century. Nonetheless the Holiness churches insist on religion as something to be experienced in personal encounter with God, leading to a supernaturalizing of life’s experiences.

According to Ian Breward, over the last quarter century, many disillusioned Uniting Church members, have ‘either become charismatics or moved into other churches, dispirited at the lack of commitment to evangelicalism and revival in the Uniting Church.’31 One of the churches into which they moved, especially those members with a continuing sense of Methodist identity, was the Wesleyan Methodist

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30 Cohen, Ben-Yehuda, and Aviad, p. 338.
Church. Between 1975 and 1985 the Wesleyan Methodist Church experienced an annual growth rate of 20-25%, much of this from ‘switchers.’ Such rapid growth led to some perhaps naïve expectations on the part of some leaders, such as Don Hardgrave, who saw the Wesleyans spearheading a ‘spiritual awakening’ that was expected to ‘spread and become a national one with a fresh surge of advance for the whole people of God.’ Hardgrave had resigned from the Methodist Church in October 1974 to join the Wesleyan Methodist Church. In 1977, just prior to the formation of the Uniting Church, he published a booklet that was critical of Church Union stating that ‘just putting three sick churches together doesn’t make a healthy one.’

In reporting to the Wesleyan World Fellowship in 1984, National Superintendent, the Rev. Tom Blythe, described ‘the pattern of church planting’ over the previous four years as continuing to be ‘opportunistic, with most churches being started around groups of displaced Christians from the Uniting Church scene. While these people often come to us battle scarred and disillusioned and in need of spiritual refreshing, they are usually moulded into soul winning churches.’ This ‘nucleii [sic] of shifting Methodists’ led to a conversion growth of 37.5% over the decade 1974-1983. This period saw a 253% increase in the number of congregations (26 new churches opened), an 845% increase in AM attendance, and a 756% increase in full membership figures which placed the church in the Fuller School of Church

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Growth’s ‘super-incredible’ range. The per capita giving increased from $161 per member in 1974 to $835 per member in 1983.

In 1988, Tom Blythe estimated that growth in the Wesleyan Methodist Church was made up of 70% transfer from other denominations and only 30% of new converts. A concerted attempt was made to increase the new convert ratio and in June 1991 there were 935 reported conversions in the previous three and a half years. By 1992 the ratio of transfer to new convert growth had shifted to 50/50. During the quadrennium 1988-1992 the church saw a 64% increase in membership from 1,049 to 1,799. Thirteen new congregations and six new preaching points were established. Total giving increased by 81% to $2.3 million.

The Church of the Nazarene experienced a somewhat similar growth pattern. In 1978 the Australia District had grown to the point where it was divided into two districts, ‘Australia Northern Pacific’ and ‘Australia Southern,’ and between 1977 and 1982 the church grew by a 54% increase in members. The work in the west later became a separate Western District. In 1982, the Nazarene Bible College had an enrollment of 52 ministerial candidates. By 1985 there were 26 organized churches in Australia, 12 in the north, 12 in the south, and 2 in the west. Membership of these districts was 318, 393, and 52 respectively, for a total membership of 763. Growth seems to have stagnated since this time as today, 23 years later, there is a total of 35 churches in the same three districts.

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36 Blythe, ‘Report on Australia to the Wesleyan World Fellowship, p. 5.
37 Blythe, ‘Report on Australia to the Wesleyan World Fellowship, p. 3.
The growth of Queensland Wesleyan Methodism in the 1980s coincides with a period of considerable tension in the Uniting Church. The 1985 Assembly forbade ‘rebaptism’ of those baptized as infants, leading to several high-profile defections on the part of former Methodists who had adopted a ‘Baptistic’ view of such things and the 1980s and 90s saw the Uniting Church embroiled in considerable discussion over homosexuality. The fact the Wesleyan Methodism has seen its best growth in Queensland may also have something to do with that state’s religious culture, which has its origins in John Dunmore Lang’s immigration schemes in the 1840s. Lang imported a large number of evangelical Presbyterians, Methodists, Congregationalists and Baptists ‘whose family names can still be found on the membership rolls of those denominations and the Uniting Church today.’ South-East Queensland is probably the closest thing Australia has to an American-style ‘Bible-belt.’

Summary Conclusions

This thesis has traced the way in which a group of conservative churches have, if not thrived, at least survived and extended themselves beyond small beginnings in a context of rapidly changing religious outlook. Their story demonstrates that churches which stay socially and culturally distant from their ‘host’ culture have little hope of survival. On the other hand, if they accommodate to their surroundings completely, to such an extent that they do not place demands of any kind upon their members, and fail to hold out the promise of transformative spiritual experiences, they will lose their appeal to religious seekers.

41 Breward, p. 381.
42 In 1999, a Wesleyan Methodist Church was formed in New Zealand, partly over the issue of the ordination of homosexual clergy, and this group is now affiliated with the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Australia.
An important strategy of survival for the Wesleyan-Holiness churches has been active co-operation with other evangelical Christians, and, to a lesser extent (and in more recent times), with Pentecostals, the two religious groups with which they have the most in common. An attitude of sectarian exclusion from others would not have provided the support mechanisms needed to prosper. Friendly relations with fellow Evangelicals, though necessary for survival, were hard-won, especially while the label of ‘sinless perfectionism’ clung to the early pioneers. Reformed evangelicals were suspicious of the Wesleyan stress on ‘Spirit-filled’ individualism and Pentecostals believed Wesleyans had the opposite problem in ‘quenching the Spirit’ by rejecting the ‘gift of tongues.’ But Wesleyan-Holiness churches experienced growth largely through ‘switchers’ from these two groups, leading to an inevitable dilution of Holiness distinctiveness. The student body at Kingsley College (formerly Wesleyan Methodist Bible College) has always been overwhelmingly non-Wesleyan, and it is likely that neither Kingsley College nor the Nazarene Theological College could have kept their doors open if not for students from other denominations.

Wesleyan perfectionism was an important part of Australian Methodism from its early nineteenth century beginnings, and it was from this matrix that Australian Pentecostalism was born. But Australian Methodism did not give rise to the kind of interdenominational Holiness revival that emerged out of the Methodist Episcopal Church in mid-nineteenth century America. There were Holiness conventions, Holiness sermons, and Holiness articles in the Spectator, but nothing like the National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Holiness to launch an American-style Holiness movement. If the American Holiness Movement churches could have established a strong denominational presence in the 1920s, they may have been able
to capitalize upon what was left of the Methodist interest in Holiness and of the
Keswick Convention movement. The fact that they emerged in the 1940s, at a time
when such interest had considerably waned, meant a lost opportunity.

Anti-American sentiment, however, had abated in the immediate post-war
years with Australians generally viewing things American more positively, after a
shared victory in the War in the Pacific. Certainly there were American
‘peculiarities’ that would take some getting used to, but the relationship between the
American ‘mother churches’ and their Australian foster children was an
overwhelmingly positive one. Critics of the Holiness churches often accused them of
being unwanted American imports, but there has been little internal strain in the
relationships between Australian and American Holiness people themselves. The
emergence of the Wesleyan-Holiness denominations in Australia is not an example of
American cultural and religious imperialism. It has been a creative partnership
between like-minded evangelical Christians from two modern nations sharing a
general cultural and social similarity and a common set of religious convictions. In
the case of the Wesleyan Methodists and the Nazarenes, the early vision and energy
came from Australian leaders, principally Kingsley Ridgway and Albert Berg. These
were the authentic pioneers of their respective movements. American missionaries
came only as ‘support staff,’ and mutual respect characterized the relationship
between Australian pioneers and their American sponsors. The Church of God
(Anderson) and the Church of God (Cleveland) do owe their beginnings more to
American initiative but even they did not emerge as a result of any aggressive
Mormon-style plan to evangelise Australia. Instead, ordinary adherents such as Carl
and Lova Swart and Bill and Winnie McAlpin came with a personal sense of calling
to share the Holiness message with Australians. In fact, they found it impossible to

O’Brien, North American Wesleyan-Holiness Churches in Australia 230
raise the interest of their Missions departments, who could not think of Australia as a ‘mission field’ at all and so came as self-funded workers. In 1918, during the ministry of E. P. May in Sydney, visiting Church of God (Anderson) ministers F. G. Smith and E. A. Reardon wrote to the Missions Board in Anderson stating that Australia was too much of a Christian country rightly to be called a mission field.\(^44\)

There has been an absence of paternalism, especially in the case of the Wesleyan Methodists. From the beginning, an attempt was made to train and appoint Australian leadership and to provide the new churches with self-sustaining autonomy. Americans made numerous blunders, of course, as happens whenever a person from one culture visits another. There was a tendency to view Australia as having had no history or experience of revivals, to see Wesleyan perfectionism as something entirely new, and at times to belittle the contribution of others to Australia’s religious heritage. But Australian Holiness leaders often shared these skewed assumptions. They often exhibited an exaggerated sense of their own importance in God’s plans. Revival was going to come to Australia through them or it wasn’t going to come at all! Such attitudes have changed as the reality of the situation has become clearer. The kind of growth and influence early Wesleyan-Holiness pioneers dreamed of, prayed for, and worked toward has happened among Pentecostals rather than among themselves, a fact that has led to much soul searching and greater humility. The exception to this would be the Church of God (Cleveland), which, in identifying as a Pentecostal denomination with a Holiness heritage, would see itself as participating in the Pentecostal success story.

Emotional preaching, altar calls, and the boisterous singing of hymns to contemporary tunes were once things seen as typical of ‘Americanism’ in religion.

\(^{44}\) Hughes, p. 19.

Today they pervade Evangelical and Pentecostal Christianity. Holiness churches are no longer held in suspicion for such things. However, as they have adopted a ‘generic evangelical’ style they have become harder to distinguish as distinctively ‘Wesleyan.’ A Wesleyan Methodist or Nazarene congregation today is as likely to be found singing a ‘Hillsong’ chorus originating from Australia’s largest Assemblies of God congregation as a Charles Wesley hymn. A sermon is more likely to end with an invitation to come forward to be ‘filled with the Spirit’ or ‘touched by God’ than to be ‘entirely sanctified.’ ‘Second blessing’ holiness as an identifiable transformative experience has to a large extent been replaced by a generalised call to holy living or to the more pedestrian ‘purpose-driven life.’

While the Wesleyan-Holiness churches have not spearheaded a widespread spiritual awakening as they had hoped they would, they nonetheless represent the continuation of the (so-called) ‘Arminian’ theological tradition within Australian evangelicalism. They have certainly moved toward the ‘church’ end of the church-sect continuum, with a lessening of religious fervour in their worship style, and a lessening of lifestyle demands upon their members. However, they have remained strongly conversionist in outlook. While remaining welcoming toward ‘switchers,’ they have also sought to engage secular Australians with the claims of the Christian faith. Like most other Evangelicals they no longer think of the Bible (if they ever


did) as something ‘dictated’ by God word-for-word and thus above all scholarly
enquiry. But they have remained committed to the authority of the Bible’s message
and to an essentially traditional reading of it that results in an orthodox theological
position, and an adoption of traditional Christian moral standards. In these respects,
the Wesleyan-Holiness churches in Australia remain ‘old time Methodists.’

Hilary Carey, referring to sects such as Mormons and Seventh Day
Adventists, suggests a reason for the appeal in such groups. Her words might also be
applied to the Wesleyan-Holiness churches.

The smaller Christian groups demonstrate a coherent internal philosophy
which has a particular attraction for many Australians in these post-modern
times. The traditional bonds of family, ethnic identity and cultural fashion are
loosing their grip. Where religion was once the preserve of the private world
of the family and the household, it has now become the internalised choice of
the individual… [Such] religious belief has become one of the truly
democratic choices available, liberated from the constraints of tradition, class
and family. Old-fashioned religion seems to have considerable resilience
even while Australians continue their traditional practice of experimenting
with the cultural fashions displayed in the world market place.47

If the Wesleyan-Holiness churches can continue to attract people who are
looking for religious movements with strong convictions and certainty about the truth
they claim to possess, they will in all likelihood negotiate the ‘new world’ they
inhabit with some degree of continued success.

47 Carey, Believing in Australia, p. 195.
Appendix A

The Apostolic Church (Nazarean)\(^1\)

Though Ward and Humphreys list the Apostolic Church (Nazarean) under the section entitled ‘Holiness Tradition,’\(^2\) my research has shown that this group does not belong to the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition at all. Its roots are in the Anabaptist and Mennonite tradition, and it stems from the ministry of the Swiss evangelist S. H. Froehlich (1803-59). Ward and Humphreys state that Froehlich ‘taught a doctrine of entire sanctification as a post-conversion experience.’\(^3\) If this were so, and if the church descended from his teachings continued to teach this, then it might be possible to include it in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition. My understanding of Froehlich himself is limited, but the material I have been able to garner on the Nazareans today is that they teach something more akin to the Moravian doctrine of sinlessness which John Wesley found cause to disagree with in the 1740s. This is the idea that a person who is born again does not sin at all. No real distinction is made between justification and sanctification, but the latter is collapsed into the former. The one who is justified does not sin. For the Nazareans this state is linked more closely with baptism than was the Moravian doctrine. The new believer is baptised and then receives the ‘sealing’ of the Holy Spirit (or ‘Holy Spirit Baptism’) through the laying on of hands.\(^4\) This experience brings with it freedom from actual sin. Technically this sanctifying work is not a ‘second work of grace’ but a package deal, more or less concomitant with baptism and the new birth. In a section entitled ‘Fundamentals of

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\(^{1}\) The spelling is correct, ‘Nazarean,’ rather than ‘Nazarene.’
\(^{2}\) Ward and Humphreys, p. 140.
\(^{3}\) Ward and Humphreys, p. 140.
Faith and Fellowship,’ the *Apostolic Christian Church History* includes the following statement.

In regeneration, we should not only receive forgiveness of sins, but also be redeemed from the bondage of sin so that we no longer sin, but are able to walk before God without sin, as followers of the Lord. The conscience, cleansed by the blood of Jesus, shall not again be stained with guilt.\(^5\)

After this ‘spiritual regeneration’ comes the ‘Baptism of faith.’ Though it may be subsequent to regeneration, baptism is not to be thought of as optional, nor is it to be distinguished from the ‘Baptism of the Spirit’ spoken of by John the Baptist (Matthew 3:11). ‘The Baptism of the Spirit…is fulfilled in the Baptism of faith. Both are in harmony with the completion of the work of redemption.’\(^6\)

In Froelich’s *Salvation of Man Through the Baptism of Regeneration and the Receiving of the Holy Spirit* the inseparable connection between justification and sanctification is made explicit. ‘[T] he baptism of believers contain[s] both, the forgiveness of the old sins (Acts 2:37)…and the destruction of sin itself, in order to cleanse man thoroughly.’ It is true that this ‘internal cleansing of the Spirit from…indwelling sin’ is spoken of by Froelich as ‘subsequent’ to forgiveness.\(^7\) However, in attaching it to baptism, and in stressing the obligatory nature of the rite, it remains closely linked with the initiatory stages of the Christian life in a way that the Wesleyan doctrine of entire sanctification does not.

Froelich sees the Baptism of the Spirit as ‘a complete inner cleansing from the original sin of Adam.’\(^8\) He refers to it as ‘the baptism with the Holy Ghost and fire’ and distinguishes it, theologically, though not chronologically, from baptism.

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\(^6\) *Apostolic Christian Church History*, p. 172.


\(^8\) Froelich, p. 112.
in water. ‘This baptism [with the Holy Ghost and fire] does not exclude the baptism with water, but is connected with it; and the irremissible [sic] condition for both is faith.’

Chapter 15 of Froelich’s *Salvation of Man* is entitled ‘The Second Faith.’ It sounds, in its opening section, quite Wesleyan, with its declaration that ‘out of the first faith of justification…comes the second faith in which the new man must live after Christ and overcome the world.’ The phrase ‘justification by faith alone’ has been ‘grossly misunderstood’ when it has been used in such a way as to exclude ‘the subsequent righteousness of life or sanctification.’ But again the link with baptism as the locus of this experience distinguishes Froelich’s doctrine from the Wesleyan view.

An 1850 ‘Christian Baptist’ confession, given in Bavaria as a summary of Nazarean beliefs also uses the language of two ‘acts’ of faith. ‘The first act of faith, which must precede baptism…avails for the justification of the ungodly sinner…The other faith flows and follows out of the baptism of him who first believed, and gives the baptized one strength in Christ to do the will of God, and to overcome the world and to sanctification unto the day of deliverance.’

According to Froelich, baptism washes away in forgiveness the guilt of ‘previously committed sins,’ and secondly, brings ‘the destruction of the indwelling, original sin, in order that sinning may henceforth not continue.’ Yet Froelich moderates this statement to provide for the possibility, to some degree, of post-

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9 Froelich, p. 115.
10 Froelich, p. 129, italics in the original.
12 Froelich, pp. 143-44.
baptismal sin. ‘But is there no more sinning in the baptized believers? And if there are sins, what shall be done with them?...if they are not sins unto death...then one should pray and he shall be forgiven.’ He then goes on to commend ‘mutual confession of sins’ among the believers, ‘the forgiveness of them where it depends upon us, and intercession where the Lord has been offended and the Holy Spirit grieved.’

Like Wesley, Froelich seems to teach not that it is impossible for a sanctified Christian to sin, but that it is possible for such a person not to sin. ‘[T]he possibility to sin again is present if man does not safeguard his freedom in the Spirit but willingly enters into the temptation which the devil has prepared for him...’

[A] spiritual man through inattention and carelessness can also be overtaken or caught in a fault (Gal. 6:1; 1 John 2:1ff)...even though he otherwise strictly performs righteousness as a child of God and neither secretly nor publicly lives in sin...the momentary stumblings (with which he harms himself most) are not imputed to him who is born of God and who does the will of God; nor must they be redeemed with the blood of Christ (for they are not sins unto death), but he must pray that they may be forgiven.

As to the North American connection, it is somewhat slim. It does not appear to be part of the self-identity of the Australian church. Mrs. Zorica Tutus, in a letter to me stated that ‘we do have some influence from America, they helped us a lot in many different ways, but our background is Europe, Yugoslavia. That is where our influence originated and naturally the Bible.’

Many Nazareans emigrated to America from Switzerland, Germany, and Eastern Europe, due to persecution from the state churches in their homelands.

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13 Presumably this means sins leading to apostasy.
14 Froelich, p. 182.
15 Froelich, pp. 185-6.
16 Letter to the author from Zorica Tutus, secretary to the Chadstone Apostolic Church (Nazarean), 10 May 1999.
17 Apostolic Christian Church History, 149-58. See also Mountain Tops Along the Way: Essays in the History of the Apostolic Christian Church of North America (Nazarean) (Apostolic Christian Church Foundation Publications Committee, n.d.).
first Apostolic Christian Church, Nazarean in Australia was formed in Adelaide in 1957. There are now 9 churches with a total of 300 members. These churches have also benefited from European immigration. The strong organizational link with North America, such as we find with the Wesleyan Methodist Church and the Church of the Nazarene does not exist. The relationship seems to be more fraternal than organizational in nature.

Furthermore, where Wesleyans and Nazarenes understand themselves as belonging to the broader evangelical tradition, and have sought to be seen as belonging to that tradition, Nazareans do not. Mrs. Tutus made it clear to me in a conversation that ‘we are not evangelicals, we are Anabaptists.’ Elder Robert Freund from Syracuse, New York, makes this same fact clear in a very stark fashion.

There is a difference [between evangelicals and Anabaptists]. I want you to know that the evangelicals are not the promoters of holy living as the Anabaptists are…The basic difference is evangelicals are very ardent and very anxious to go out and preach the gospel. The Anabaptists did the same but believed that their lives, the lives they lived, the testimonies they were in the world was [sic] their gospel to the world. Of course they preached but their lives preached first. [Not living holy lives] has been the scourge of evangelicalism – and still is.\(^\text{18}\)

The greatest threat to the church…is the mingling of God’s people with other folks in spiritual things… ‘Fraternization’ is a fancy word which means that we are working together in a brotherly manner with others not of like precious faith for the cause of Christ. Young people who go to school get sucked into Campus Crusade, the Navigators, Word of Life, Students for Christ – all Christian organizations in colleges today. Everyone of them that has gone astray – believers [sic] – that has gone astray has gone astray with involvement with some of those organizations, or one or all of those organizations. God told Israel that they were not to mingle with their neighbours because if they did they would take on their idolatrous customs. God, in the old covenant, told David to go out and slay the Moabites, the Amalekites, and many others who were idol worshippers, so that Israel would not become involved with idol worship. The truth and the doctrines that we have talked about become adulterated when we begin to listen to other similar persuasions and, loved ones, ‘similar’ is not ‘the same as’…Do I think there are other Christians out there who are not in our fellowship? Of course there

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\(^{18}\) Bob Freund, *Our Church History: Apostolic Christian Church, Nazarene* (Cassette tape 1).
are…God’s family is bigger than the one I am privileged to know on earth but [the Bible] does not say that it is good for me nor right for me to try to find who they are so that I might be ‘brotherly’ to them…Fraternization is ecumenism in its infancy. The task of Satan in the final deception of the world has already been begun [sic].  

Brother Henry Michel, speaking at the 1948 Brothers Meeting in Mansfield, Ohio, in a thinly veiled denunciation, demonstrated a similar distaste for evangelicalism.

We don’t want to have an alliance with other congregations…We don’t want to have the way of making Christians easily or quickly. Sometimes just the signing of a paper, or the signing of a Bible or Testament, or the raising of the hand is a proof that they have accepted Christ as their personal Saviour. We are not in agreement on this. There is much more behind new birth than a just a moment of emotion where under the pressure of a fiery preaching we stretch out the hand and say we have accepted Christ. It is a sign of the times to have such quick and spectacular results. We do not believe in such a way of making conversions. We believe in the slower, more difficult way of going through repentance, confession, and so on. We believe in an absolute, sincere, complete conversion.

This sectarian attitude contrasts strongly with the Wesleyan-Holiness denominations, all of which have taken an active role in broader evangelicalism, though sharing a similar dislike for ‘ecumenism’ of the mainline variety.

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19 Freund, (Cassette tape 2)
Appendix B

The Christian and Missionary Alliance

The Christian and Missionary Alliance was formed in New York in 1887 by the Presbyterian minister Albert B. Simpson as an international missionary society. Over time it developed into a denomination in its own right, though not formally until its revised by-laws and constitution were adopted in 1974. Globally, the Christian and Missionary Alliance has a worldwide membership of 2.5 million people in over forty countries.¹

There have been numerous early contacts between Australians and the Alliance. On 25 June 1897 an Alliance publication made reference to a certain ‘Doctor and Mrs. Warren’ starting a ‘missionary home’ in Australia and sending out twenty candidates over a four-year period. Rev. Will Fletcher, a Victorian, and his wife, were Alliance missionaries in India between 1903 and 1926, after which they returned to Australia, along with another missionary, Mrs. Charlotte Rutherford, to establish the Christian and Missionary Alliance in Doncaster, Victoria. They moved from a home in Doncaster to the Friends Meeting House in Russell Street, Melbourne. This work only lasted two years, however, and Fletcher returned to India. The Rev. Edgar Carne, of Melbourne, studied at the Alliance missionary training college in Nyack, New York before serving as an Alliance missionary in South China. After the Second World War several other Australians became Alliance missionaries and Alliance speakers visited Australia from various mission fields, thus raising the profile of the Alliance among evangelicals.²

¹ ‘Who We Are,’ http://www.cmalliance.org/whoweare/whoweare.jsp
The work proper commenced in Sydney in 1969 under American missionary Robert T Henry and his wife Svea, the first public meetings being held in Chatswood. Four Australians were appointed to serve under Henry’s leadership as a temporary Governing Committee. As with the Wesleyan-Holiness churches, the first churches were made up of disaffected evangelicals from other denominations, who had formed concerned by what they perceived as a liberal drift in their own churches. Rev. and Mrs. Gordon White were added to the team and were, with the Henrys, ‘the first of a significant number of North American personnel to arrive on Australian shores to work with the Alliance.’ However, from the beginning it was planned that Australian leadership should take the reins as soon as possible, as Henry made clear in his 1970 Report to the Alliance Council.

[One of our targets is the] development of Australian leadership to bear the full responsibility of the operation and direction of the movement. This is the Christian and Missionary Alliance of Australia….I must…utterly reject…and resist every suggestion that the control of this Society under God should rest in the hands of people other than Australians.

Twenty Alliance churches were established in the first eight years of the movement. The Australian website currently lists forty-seven churches, seventeen in NSW, ten in Victoria, eight in Western Australia, six in Queensland, three in South Australia, and three (and a Bible College) in the ACT. Twenty-one of these churches have emerged since 1985, a rate of one new church per year over a twenty-

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3 Independent churches which became Alliance churches included Seafor (NSW) Church of Christ, Hobart (Tasmania) Free Christian Church, Scoresby (VIC) Church, Warnken, ‘The Alliance Under the Cross,’ pp. 4-5.
6 ‘Missionary is Our Middle Name: The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Australia’ (1956), p. 12, a paper later published in M Hutchinson and G Treloar, eds. This Gospel Shall be Preached (Sydney, Centre for the Study of Australian Christianity, 1998), pp. 263-276.
year period. These are positive growth statistics but well short of the hope expressed in 1979 at the 10th Anniversary Council that ‘within a few years there should be an Alliance church in every Australian city of 100,000 people.’ As with the Wesleyan-Holiness churches the C&MA reflects a great deal of ethnic diversity, with congregations currently including Aboriginal, Arabic, Cambodian, Chinese, Hmong, Vietnamese, and even a Russian Messianic Jewish congregation. In 1995 ethnic membership (mostly Chinese and Vietnamese) made up 67% of the total in the C&MA Australia.

Even though the church has its origins in the United States, first commenced work in Australia in 1969 through American missionaries, and is listed by Ward and Humphreys as in the ‘Holiness tradition,’ I have chosen not to include it in this thesis. The primary reason for this is theological. Even though its founder was profoundly influenced by the Holiness movement, the teaching of the C&MA is not as heavily influenced by the teaching of John Wesley, as Ward And Humphreys concede.

Though the Alliance describes its position on sanctification in similar ways to the Wesleyan-Holiness churches, in its statement of ‘Alliance Values and Distinctives,’ there is no explicit reference to the Holiness movement, to John Wesley, or to ‘entire sanctification,’ nor is there any identification of the church as...

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8 Comparing the statistical information in Ward and Humphreys, p. 139, to the church’s current website.
9 ‘10th Anniversary in Australia,’ brochure from the Tenth Annual General Council of the Christian and Missionary Alliance of Australia, Burton and Garran Hall, Australian National University, Canberra, 14-18 February 1979.
12 Ward and Humphries, p. 139.
13 Ward and Humphries, p. 139.
belonging to the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition. Interestingly, however, the Church’s official doctrinal statement does include an essentially Wesleyan definition of sanctification

It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and be sanctified wholly, being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to the will of God, thereby receiving power for holy living and effective service. This is both a crisis and a progressive experience wrought in the life of the believer subsequent to conversion.

In spite of this statement, according to Russell Warnken, Principal of the Alliance Theological College in Canberra, the idea of Holiness as a distinct second blessing is not widely preached in Alliance churches in Australia, the theological outlook of members is quite diverse within an overall evangelical framework, and there is no real sense of belonging to the Wesleyan tradition among members. The Alliance’s global website indicates its theological stance in the following generic way.

The C&MA maintains a ‘big tent’ stance in reference to many doctrinal matters, encouraging believers of diverse backgrounds and theological traditions to unite in an alliance to know and exalt Jesus Christ and to complete His Great Commission.

Lloyd Mackey places the C&MA into the ‘mainstream evangelical’ rather then ‘holiness’ category. According to Krysia Lear, ‘in the past some writers classified the C&MA as fitting in a holiness grouping…The denomination still emphasizes the “deeper life” and “fullness of the Spirit” and officially believes in all the sign gifts, but, according to president Arnold Cook, manifestations [of spiritual

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14 ‘Alliance Values and Distinctives,’ http://www.cmalliance.org/whoweare/distinctives/distinctives.jsp
17 ‘Who We Are,’ http://www.cmalliance.org/whoweare/whoweare.jsp
18 Lloyd Mackey, These Evangelical Churches of Ours cited in Krysia P. Lear, ‘All in the Family,’ Christianity.ca http://www.christianity.ca/church/history/2004/06.000.html
gifts] are “rare” today.19 This would seem to indicate a distancing of Alliance churches from both Wesleyan and Pentecostal churches, again indicating a general evangelical, rather than explicitly Holiness, stance.

19 Krysia P. Lear, ‘All in the Family,’ Christianity.ca http://www.christianity.ca/church/history/2004/06.000.html
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