

TORN ASUNDER: T. T. SHIELDS, W. GORDON BROWN, AND THE
SCHISMS AT TORONTO BAPTIST SEMINARY AND WITHIN
THE UNION OF REGULAR BAPTIST CHURCHES OF
ONTARIO AND QUEBEC, 1948–1949

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Seventy years ago the attention of many fundamentalist and conservative Canadian Baptists was fixed on the conflicts over the administration and vision of Toronto Baptist Seminary (hereafter TBS) and control of The Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec (hereafter URBC or the Union). At the center of these controversies were two of Canada's most notable Baptist fundamentalists: T. T. Shields and W. Gordon Brown. Remarkably, while a few brief histories do exist, a more substantive and systematic historical analysis of these events is lacking and long overdue.¹ This article is a first attempt to conduct such a study.²

Essentially, this article contends that there were five primary causal factors that brought about the schisms at TBS and within

1. The best studies to date are found in Adams, "War of the Worlds"; Dozois, "Dr. Thomas Todhunter Shields," 93–99; Davis, "The Struggle For a United Evangelical Baptist Fellowship," 240–43; Haykin and Lockey, eds., *A Glorious Fellowship*, 140–43.

2. I am deeply indebted to many people for their assistance in the preparation of this article. Marina Coldwell, a graduate of Central Baptist Seminary and longtime assistant to W. Gordon Brown, voluntarily served as my research assistant and provided invaluable help in gathering information from many who knew Dean Brown. Glen Richardson generously provided his personal file on the TBS split. Doug Adams kindly loaned me the file kept by his father, Geoffrey Adams, a former student and Principal at TBS. The Deacons of Jarvis Street Baptist Church granted me access to the church archives. Without the assistance of these people and many others, this article would not have been written.

the Union, and ironically, these divisions had both negative and positive consequences that proved to be significant catalysts and turning points in Canadian Baptist history. The causal factors were Shields and Brown's contrasting responses to the personal and institutional effects of World War II, the similar personalities of the two men, the changing nature of their relationship, their differing views of who should exercise power and control over TBS and the Union, and the different ecclesiological perspectives related to the vision and administration of TBS and the future direction of the Union. The primary consequences of the splits at TBS and within the Union were not only a rejection of the Shields type of militant fundamentalism, but also deep sorrow, division, and disappointment for many Baptists.³ The schisms also spawned two new Canadian Baptist institutions: Central Baptist Seminary and The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada. To support the thesis stated above, a chronological and thematic historical analysis of the conflicts is undertaken.

*Postwar Toronto and its Changing Evangelical Landscape,
1945–1948*

Toronto in the aftermath of the Second World War was a city filled with the desire for both planning and progress. With a population of 681,802 in 1945 the city faced many challenges, but the citizenry seemed generally willing to embrace change that modernized and revitalized the city.⁴

In the religious scene, Toronto witnessed its share of transdenominational evangelistic and educational initiatives by evangelicals. In particular, a trend towards co-operative evangelistic efforts by evangelicals to reach Canada's major cities took hold in the late 1940s. In June 1946, for example, 16,000 young people attended a Youth for Christ rally held in Maple Leaf Gardens by the evangelist Charles Templeton. The response to Templeton's

3. For an extensive analysis of Shields' militant fundamentalism, see Adams, "The War of the Worlds."

4. Glazebrook, *The Story of Toronto*, 237.

“old fashioned gospel message,” which was repackaged using contemporary cultural forms such as “jive talk” to appeal to the “bobby-sox” crowd, was in itself impressive.⁵

But the efforts of Charles Templeton and Youth for Christ were not the only successful transdenominational evangelical outreach initiatives underway in postwar Toronto. Another example was found in the work of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship. By the late 1940s, it was a fixture at the University of Toronto and throughout Southern Ontario. The first international missions conference sponsored by Inter-Varsity was held at the University of Toronto in 1946–1947. Five hundred fifty students attended that conference.⁶

Finally, in the area of Christian higher education, Toronto Bible College, founded in 1894 by Elmore Harris of Walmer Road Baptist Church, was by the late 1940s firmly entrenched within “the mainstream of transdenominational evangelicalism.”⁷ Such evangelical efforts in Toronto were indicative of a more co-operative and ecumenical perspective that took hold of many of the city’s evangelicals in the years after World War II.

It was in this fast-changing postwar environment that the Union, Jarvis Street Baptist Church, and Toronto Baptist Seminary sought to maintain and defend their version of militant fundamentalism. But as we will see, this objective was already threatened by the negative effects of events during the Second World War that had taken a high toll on the relationship between TBS’s President, T. T. Shields, and its Dean, W. Gordon Brown. Moreover, postwar institutional pressures deepened the growing rift between Shields and Brown and served as a new threat to the unity within this Baptist fundamentalist camp.

5. The information given in this paragraph is taken from Lee, “Bobby-sox to Bach,” 231–2.

6. Stackhouse, *Canadian Evangelicalism*, 92–96.

7. Stackhouse, *Canadian Evangelicalism*, 54.

*From Allies to Adversaries: T. T. Shields and W. Gordon Brown:
Their Personalities, Leadership Styles and Relationship, 1925–
1948*

The schisms at TBS and within The Union did not happen in a vacuum. Rather, they were the result of the ongoing external fundamentalist fights against modernism, efforts to advance the fundamentalist cause, and changes in the relationships between those who led their Baptist brethren in these endeavors. As noted earlier, two key leaders were T. T. Shields and W. Gordon Brown. Without question, their personalities, leadership styles, and ever-changing relationship lay at the root of the schisms.

One factor that lay at the center of the conflict between Shields and Brown in late 1948 was personality. Both men possessed what would be later classified as “Type A” personalities.⁸ They were characterized by considerable impatience, a severe work ethic, an obsession about their status and image, absolute certitude, and considerable ambition. In public, both men often adopted the postures of the British headmaster, outspoken pastor, and/or militant defender of the faith, which gave them a quasi-aristocratic and authoritarian bearing. Such a public posture invited both support and censure.⁹ This public persona also made them “larger than life” figures in the eyes of many. In private, both men could be overbearing, abrupt, and confrontational. However, both men also displayed a deep love and care for their flocks by dispensing many kindnesses and words of comfort or encouragement as well as taking a sincere interest in the lives of their charges. Both men were feared, respected, loved, and resented.¹⁰ The sharing of such similar characteristics and

8. The theory concerning personality types was first developed and advanced by Carl Gustav Jung in 1921. See Jung, *Personality Types*.

9. For evidence of both support and censure, see the account of D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones’ challenge to Shields’ militancy and the response of the Jarvis Street Baptist Church Deacons Board in Murray, *D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones*, 271–4.

10. For evidence that confirms the analysis offered here, see Tarr, *Shields of Canada*, 157–84; Russell, “Thomas Todhunter Shields,” 263–80; Priest, “T. T. Shields the Fundamentalist,” 69–101; McHale, *History of Central Baptist Seminary*, 2–13.

responses certainly raised the probability of conflict. For men of such large ambition and ability, maintaining a peaceful coexistence was a never-ending challenge.

Closely related to the issue of personality was the leadership perspective and style practiced by both men. Shields believed in the Old Testament paradigm of leadership. He often referred to a pastor as a “prophet” and “father,” and he believed that those so designated by God held positions of authority that could not be challenged or unduly criticized by others. For example, in a sermon given on 21 May 1939, about the early days of King David, Shields used 2 Sam 3:36 to argue that in every area of life—at home, in politics, or in the church—“there must be rule if there is to be order” and “where there is not confidence in the leadership, there can be no progress.”¹¹

In practice this leadership perspective meant that those under Shields, such as Dean Brown, were expected to give their unreserved and complete support and loyalty to their superior. So long as Brown and the other members of the TBS faculty held a similar view of leadership and willingly submitted to Shields’ authority and dictates, the system worked reasonably well. The downside of this leadership style and structure, however, was that it allowed little room for dissent, even in the form of constructive criticism. The same was true of delegation. Often, Shields’ desire to maintain personal control superseded the need to utilize the abilities of others effectively. In the end, the restrictive and authoritarian leadership style adopted by Shields often promoted friction and frustration at TBS.

Much of what Shields believed and practiced concerning leadership was adopted by Brown. Unlike Shields, Brown did not preach or write extensively on the topic of leadership. Consequently, one must rely on the testimony of one who knew Brown well. Rev. John Bonham, a former student and pastoral assistant to Brown at Runnymede Baptist Church in Toronto, became one of the Dean’s “confidantes” in the late 1950s and early 1960s. According to Bonham, Brown’s leadership style was “autocratic,” and “his relationships with people were more based on a

11. *The Gospel Witness* (hereafter *GW*), 25 May 1939, 3–4.

dependency model than a peer model.” Bonham claims that one of Brown’s favorite expressions was “We are democratic, and I am the Democrat.”¹² Essentially, when it came to leadership style and perspective, Brown and Shields were cast from the same mold. This reality was not surprising given the duration and nature of their relationship.

The history of the relationship between Shields and Brown was long and complex before the TBS schism of 1948. Having been allies in the 1925–1927 “fight for truth” in the McMaster affair, both men shared fundamentalist beliefs about the authority and inspiration of Scripture and the necessity to confront the evils of modernism. Throughout the period between 1925 and 1939, Shields and Brown worked diligently together on behalf of the fundamentalist cause. In this partnership Shields took the role of mentor and advisor to the younger Brown. In the Alton revival of 1925, for example, Brown and his friend and fellow evangelist, James McGinlay, relied on the wisdom and guidance of Shields, and when it came time for new converts to be baptized, Shields was asked to administer this ordinance in a local pond in front of five hundred people.¹³ As Brown recalled some years after his break with Shields, “Naturally Dr. T. T. Shields had a great influence on me.”¹⁴

At TBS before World War II, Shields and Brown also appear to have worked well together. Both stayed true to the “educational ideal” articulated by Shields in 1927, that “Christ must be first, the end of all education must be to know Him better.”¹⁵

12. Bonham, “Recollections and Reflections.”

13. For information related to these events see McHale, *History of Central Baptist Seminary*, 3–6. For an analysis of the McMaster controversy and Shields’ role in it see Johnston, *The Toronto Years*, 170–203.

14. McHale, *History of Central Baptist Seminary*, 4–6.

15. Toronto Baptist Seminary and Bible College, *By His Grace to His Glory*, 107. For an analysis of Shields’ “educational ideal,” see Haykin, “Educational Ideal.” For the wider context of Canadian Baptist higher education and the influence and impact of theological changes and controversy on such education before and in this period, one should see Pinnock, “The Modernist Impulse at McMaster University,” 193–208; Hillmer, “Baptist Theological Education in Ontario and Quebec,” 35–43; Rawlyk, ed., *Canadian Baptists and Christian Higher Education*; Rawlyk, *Champions of the Truth*.

Furthermore, Shields stressed that such an ideal could only be realized “in a healthy spiritual atmosphere” where “both the faculty and the Trustees shall be loyal both to the essentials of evangelical faith and to those special principles which Baptists have historically distinctively held.”¹⁶ All of the TBS Trustees and faculty were expected to remain committed to this ideological and theological foundation.

It should be noted that the “educational ideal” of TBS stood in marked contrast to the more open and liberal educational model espoused by TBS’s Baptist rival and competitor, McMaster University. As George Rawlyk astutely observed, “McMaster, in theory and in practice, was emphatically not an introverted, morbidly introspective, and defensive Baptist bible college. Rather, it was a small Christian university, open to new scholarship, concerned with the preservation of Christian truth, but always within the context of ‘liberal culture.’”¹⁷

Brown began his work at TBS as a part-time instructor in Hebrew and Greek in 1927, when the school opened. He became a full-time member of the TBS faculty in 1931, teaching in the areas of biblical languages and New Testament. Many students at both TBS and, later, Central Baptist Seminary would speak of the profit received from Brown’s course on “The Life of Christ.” In September of 1945, just before the opening of the school year on September 25, Brown was appointed as the third Dean of TBS.¹⁸ As allies, Shields and Brown accomplished much for the Canadian Baptist fundamentalist cause. Sadly, one of the effects of World War II would be a fundamental realignment of their relationship.

The relational costs of war are sometimes overlooked or trivialized by historians. In the case of Shields and Brown, the Second World War transformed their relationship from that of allies to that of adversaries. As a staunch British imperialist, Shields

16. Rawlyk, *Champions of the Truth*, 108–9.

17. Rawlyk, “A. L. McCrimmon,” 48.

18. Unfortunately, a number of sources incorrectly give the date of Brown’s appointment as 1946. For accurate information regarding the appointment, see *GW*, 20 September 1945, 14. See also Haykin and Lockey, eds., *A Glorious Fellowship*, 141.

felt duty-bound to focus all of his energies on the war effort. Apparently the war raised serious institutional and personal challenges that took a heavy toll on the Shields-Brown relationship. First of all, the debate over whether or not to close TBS divided the two men. Brown soon found himself in the position of having “to stand alone against the move by Dr. Shields to close the Seminary.”¹⁹ After “Dr. Shields put the pressure on, all yielded except me, and the Seminary was closed.”²⁰ Shields, of course, would later deny that he put any pressure on anyone to close the Seminary.²¹ Regardless of who did what, the decision to enter a three year hiatus between September of 1940 and September of 1943 strained relations between Shields and Brown.²²

Second, the decision to close TBS also had serious personal consequences for Brown. He no longer had full-time employment, and his prospects for the future were highly uncertain. In response to this situation, Shields and the Deacons at Jarvis Street offered Brown a position as the church’s “pastoral visitor.”²³ According to Shields, “We really supposed that we were doing him a service by appointing him.”²⁴ According to Brown, he was “forced by circumstances to accept the invitation,” but he felt uncomfortable and mistreated in his new position.²⁵ For example, while his colleague W. S. Whitcombe was paid \$50 per Sunday for the two Sundays that he preached, Brown was paid \$250 for thirteen Sundays. Also, Brown would later complain that he was saddled with editing “*The Gospel Witness* for weeks” without any additional remuneration beyond what he considered

19. Brown, “An Account of My Stewardship,” 1.

20. Brown, “An Account of My Stewardship,” 1.

21. Trustee Board of Toronto Baptist Seminary, “Official Report.” I have a photocopy of this document.

22. For the decision to close TBS see *GW*, 29 August 1940, 6; *GW*, 17 October 1940, 4. For the decision to reopen TBS see *GW*, 26 August 1943, 10; *GW*, 16 September 1943, 1–8.

23. Trustee Board of Toronto Baptist Seminary, “Official Report,” 47.

24. Trustee Board of Toronto Baptist Seminary, “Official Report,” 47.

25. Brown, “An Account of My Stewardship,” 1.

to be his meager salary of \$1,800.²⁶ Although he worked hard, Brown resented his new role. As a way out of his penury and indignation, Brown accepted the invitation of the Independent Fellowship's Forward Baptist Church to become interim pastor while Pastor Jack Scott served as a military chaplain.²⁷ Whatever view one takes of Brown's circumstances and the attempts to address them, Brown was embittered by the treatment he had received at the hands of his supposed friend and ally T. T. Shields.

Third, Brown's growing sense of injustice and mistrust was deepened further when Shields reversed his earlier decision to allow Brown to finish his Bachelor of Divinity degree. After giving Brown permission "to take a few hours a week" of "classes in theology" towards his degree, Shields, at a personal meeting with Brown on 1 October 1940, announced that Brown was now "prohibited" from taking any classes.²⁸ This decision hurt Brown deeply. According to Brown, the completion of the degree "meant a good deal to me; it must have meant almost nothing to him [Shields]."²⁹ In Shields' defense, he was probably far more concerned about covering all of the gaps left at Jarvis Street because of the war than he was with Brown's personal pride or ambitions. Nevertheless, Shields' mishandling of Brown's wartime situation created a serious rift in their relationship.

By 1946, the relationship between Shields and Brown showed signs of strain. The two men continued to work together, but their conversations grew more adversarial, and their interactions became briefer and less frequent. The postwar stresses of handling the surge in enrollment at TBS and, in particular, the changing nature of the student body served to accelerate the distancing of these two men from each other. According to the late Geoffrey Adams, a former student and Principal at TBS, "there

26. Brown, "An Account of My Stewardship," 2. See also Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, p. 71, Box 1B, File "Seminary Controversy, 1948-49," W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

27. Brown, "An Account of My Stewardship," 2.

28. Brown, "An Account of My Stewardship," 2. See also Brown, "The Truth," 6.

29. Brown, "The Truth," 6.

was a change in the composition of the student body” in the post-war years.³⁰ Students before the war “had been closely identified with the life of Jarvis Street Baptist Church,” but after the war “an increasing number of veterans and others came who had little connection with the host church.”³¹ This change in the character of the student body at TBS would become a point of friction between Brown and Shields.

Finally, another important source of agitation was the nature of the relationships between TBS students, with Brown as Dean and Shields as President. The younger Brown sought to build friendships with the students on the handball courts of the local YMCA and in numerous informal interactions, while the older Shields preferred to maintain a more formal posture and greater distance between himself and his students.³² This reality would also become significant in the coming controversy.

Clearly, by the time Brown was appointed Dean in 1945, all was not well within the hierarchy of TBS. The exigencies of the war and early postwar periods had brought about a rupture in the alliance between Shields and Brown. While both men tried to make the best of a deteriorating situation, their similar Type A personalities, the clashes between them, changes in the nature of their relationship and postwar challenges made their interactions increasingly adversarial. At this point, recognition of the relational problems and the pursuit of reconciliation may have prevented a schism. But subsequent events reinforced old resentments and promoted growing distrust.

Troublesome Signs: The Prelude to Schism

After Brown’s appointment as Dean in 1945, one might be tempted to think that Shields and Brown had found a way to reconcile their differences. In fact, the opposite was true. Their mutual antipathy was growing. Meanwhile, many Baptists in the wider constituency had no idea that the Shields-Brown

30. Adams, “Alumni Serving in Canada and the United States,” 28.

31. Adams, “Alumni Serving in Canada and the United States,” 28–29.

32. Adams, “Alumni Serving in Canada and the United States,” 28.

relationship was in trouble. The two men put on a cordial public face, but their personal animosity was never far beneath the surface.

When Brown decided, soon after his assumption of the Deanship, to become the part-time preaching pastor at the Union's Runnymede Baptist Church, yet another divisive issue was introduced. Shields and a number of the TBS Trustees became concerned about the Dean's ability to carry out his Seminary responsibilities effectively. While they said nothing at the time, a careful watch was put on Brown's actions.

By the late summer of 1947, the first signs of doubt about the strength and health of the current relationships between Jarvis Street and the Seminary and between Shields and Brown became apparent in actions taken by the Seminary Trustees. On 15 August 1947, the Trustees of TBS passed a resolution that called for "every effort . . . to relate the work of the Seminary to Jarvis St. Church as closely as possible, and specifically to make every effort to bring the students under the influence of Jarvis St. ministry."³³ Feeling that the resolution was insufficient to guarantee Jarvis Street's control and influence over the doctrine and direction of the Seminary, a by-law was unanimously passed that required that the TBS faculty "to keep these standards of faith aforementioned, from time to time before the students of the Seminary, in an endeavor to establish them in all the great principles as historically held by Baptists, and especially as now held by the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec."³⁴ Furthermore, "every effort" was to be undertaken by the Seminary faculty to bring those Baptist students who were not "in affiliation with the Union of Regular Baptist Churches . . . into complete harmony with our standards, and so far as possible to enroll them as members in Regular Baptist Churches in affiliation with the Union."³⁵ These policies were clearly designed to end any administrative or institutional "drift" by the Seminary away from its close relationship with Jarvis Street and the Union.

33. Trustee Board of Toronto Baptist Seminary, "Official Report," 9.

34. Trustee Board of Toronto Baptist Seminary, "Official Report," 10.

35. Trustee Board of Toronto Baptist Seminary, "Official Report," 10.

Although the Trustees did not name Brown or any of the TBS faculty or staff, such statements and actions implied that the Dean and some members of the faculty were disloyal to Jarvis Street and the Union and ineffective in carrying out the mission and mandate of the Seminary. These measures also sent a strong message about the President and Trustees' growing unease and their desire to retain full power and control over the Seminary. At the same time, such declarations set the stage for more confrontation and controversy.

Throughout the next academic year, 1947–1948, an atmosphere of increasing tension, dissention, and rivalry began to take hold at TBS. The sources and reasons for the growth of this dysfunctional culture were many, but at its heart were the ongoing power struggle and the increasingly stormy relationship between the President and the Dean. Such realities took their toll on other relationships and undermined the credibility of the Seminary's administration and faculty. For example, after World War II continuous rivalry and infighting between Dean Brown and his former "intimate" friend and ally, TBS faculty member W. S. Whitcombe, became common knowledge within the administration, faculty, and student body. Evidently, the two men were constantly at odds with each other. When, just before the opening of the Fall semester in 1947, Whitcombe decided on his own initiative to announce changes in the Seminary curriculum, Brown was outraged. At a meeting with Shields on 3 October 1947, Brown expressed his displeasure with Whitcombe's actions, and he asked Shields to "inform Whitcombe that hereafter announcements of change of policy of courses in the Seminary would be made either by Dr. Shields or me [Dean Brown]."³⁶ According to Brown, Shields "said that he would speak to him [Whitcombe]."³⁷ This was one of many negative incidents involving Brown and Whitcombe.

Furthermore, when, at a later date, Brown was dismissed from his role at the Seminary, he noted that the once "intimate friendship" between himself and Whitcombe "had been broken

36. Brown, "Interview with Dr. Shields."

37. Brown, "Interview with Dr. Shields."

by him [Whitcombe] for no apparent reason, and I am broken to my great grief for years.”³⁸ This was why Brown asked Shields to facilitate a meeting for reconciliation. According to Brown, the outcome of the meeting was less than he hoped: “We buried the hatchet under a thin layer of top soil.”³⁹ According to Shields, “an understanding was reached” at the meeting and he “hoped that was the end of it.”⁴⁰ Still, in Brown’s view, the relationship remained fractured and distant, and he lamented, “It is an unfortunate fact that the students have to observe this relation or lack of relation. I am sure it has greatly hurt the Seminary.”⁴¹ Although all of the reasons for this internal rift are not entirely clear, its very existence shows that before the dismissal of the Dean, serious opposition to him within the faculty was already established.

Other points of friction also surfaced during the 1947–1948 academic year. These included conflict over the hiring of a Hebrew tutor for the Fall semester of 1947. After the faculty had, by the slim margin of one, voted in favor of hiring the Dean’s wife to fill the position, Shields vetoed the decision. At a meeting with Shields on 3 October 1947, Brown told Shields that he was “embarrassed by being told that Mrs. Brown was not wanted on the day that school opened.”⁴² Shields apologized for any embarrassment of the Dean, and he claimed that he was “very pressed.”⁴³ With the semester already underway, a desperate search to fill the post commenced. According to Brown, Shields “even agreed to have a Jewish Rabbi rather than a Regular Baptist tutor.”⁴⁴ Shields later retorted that “no such proposal was

38. Brown, “An Account of My Stewardship,” 2.

39. Brown, “An Account of My Stewardship,” 2.

40. Trustee Board of Toronto Baptist Seminary, “Official Report,” 55.

41. Brown, “An Account of My Stewardship,” 3.

42. As D. A. Carson has noted, other points of friction included a serious conflict over the purchase of property for the mission work in Drummondville, Quebec, and support for the work of Pastor Tom Carson. Conflict and division over these matters extended to the TBS faculty and to the Union in this period. See Carson, *Memoirs*, 49–60.

43. Brown, “Interview with Dr. Shields.”

44. Brown, “An Account of My Stewardship,” 2.

ever made by the President.”⁴⁵ Again, whatever version of the story one believes, the squabble over who should become the Hebrew tutor deepened the growing divide within the TBS faculty and hardened the breakdown in the relationship between Shields and Brown.

Also in the fall of 1947, the issue of Brown’s dual roles as pastor of Runnymede Baptist Church and Dean of TBS was openly questioned by the Seminary Trustees. In a letter to Brown dated 28 September 1947, Shields put the Dean on notice “that at the last full meeting of the Trustees it was asked how long you expected to remain at Runnymede.”⁴⁶ Furthermore, Shields told Brown that “all” of the Trustees “assumed that when you had accepted the Deanship, your time would be given to the Seminary, and that you would be able to visit the churches on Sundays, to cultivate an interest in the Seminary; but that almost since your appointment you have been tied up at Runnymede.”⁴⁷ Shields concluded the letter with a cryptic comment: “I think we had better have a little talk about the whole matter.”⁴⁸

Operating under the assumption that he was as capable as his former mentor of handling more than one role at a time, Brown found such questioning somewhat surprising. He had only served at Runnymede for eleven months, and according to his account, he served in his “spare time” on Sunday and one afternoon and one evening each week.⁴⁹ In response to the Trustees, Brown submitted a report to Shields and the Trustees on 7 October 1947, showing that he had recently visited seventeen churches,

45. Trustee Board of Toronto Baptist Seminary, “Official Report,” 53.

46. T. T. Shields to W. Gordon Brown, 28 September 1947, Box 1B, File, “Seminary Controversy, 1948-49,” W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

47. T. T. Shields to W. Gordon Brown, 28 September 1947, Box 1B, File, “Seminary Controversy, 1948-49,” W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

48. T. T. Shields to W. Gordon Brown, 28 September 1947, Box 1B, File, “Seminary Controversy, 1948-49,” W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

49. Brown, “An Account of My Stewardship,” 9. For a historical sketch of Brown’s pastorate at Runnymede, see Forrest et al., eds., *Runnymede Baptist Church*, 16–21.

had “held campaigns” and “made several addresses” on behalf of the Seminary.⁵⁰ He also had plans in the near future to preach at Hespeler Baptist Church and to hold a campaign in Spencer, Ohio. He also offered “to visit other churches as needed and requested,” and he did not recall refusing “to visit any major church.”⁵¹

Despite his best efforts to fend off criticism about his dual roles, the pressure on Brown to resign from Runnymede continued. According to Brown, as of 10 December 1948, Shields had “reproached” him “five times” for accepting the call to Runnymede.⁵² Brown’s pastoral role was yet another contentious issue that contributed to the disintegration of his relationship with Shields.

The Dean’s Dismissal

By the fall of 1948, tensions between Brown and Shields had reached the boiling point. Beginning on 1 December 1948, a series of acrimonious faculty meetings brought the conflict to a climax. At the December 1 faculty meeting, called by Shields for the purpose of discussing “certain aspects of the Seminary work,” the meeting gradually degenerated into a fight between Shields and Brown.⁵³ At its opening, Shields offered a long account of his concerns about the relationship between Jarvis Street and the Seminary and the quality of students that the Seminary was producing. At one point in his speech, Shields revealed his misgivings: “I feel sometimes that the Seminary is a parasite, draining our life, and yet making no contribution. When the

50. “Dean Visiting the Churches,” 7 October 1947, Box 1B, File “Seminary Controversy, 1948–49,” W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

51. “Dean Visiting the Churches,” 7 October 1947, Box 1B, File “Seminary Controversy, 1948–49,” W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

52. Brown, “An Account of My Stewardship,” 9.

53. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

Seminary was smaller, and we had fewer students, we had more present [at Jarvis Street's services] than we have today. So far as Jarvis Street is concerned, if we had no Seminary at all, we should get along just as well."⁵⁴ Shields also charged that the Seminary was "not producing real Baptists" and a good many students were prejudiced against Jarvis Street.⁵⁵ Furthermore, Shields was convinced that because of "the attitude of the student body" the Seminary was effectively "an entirely different institution" than "what it was some years ago."⁵⁶

When Shields finished his presentation, various members of the faculty offered their own views. Brown tried to defend the actions and attitudes of the students and faculty. In response, Shields directly challenged Brown's ties to the Independent Fellowship Baptists, and he questioned Brown's loyalty to the Regular Baptist cause. Brown tried to defend his efforts to gain the "interest" and support of Independent Fellowship Pastors and churches.⁵⁷ Eventually, Shields revealed his primary charge against Brown: "To Mr. Brown the Seminary is more important than Jarvis St. Church. . . . The root of the whole matter, Mr. Brown, is that you have no interest in Jarvis Street Church."⁵⁸

54. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, p. 2, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

55. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, pp. 5–6, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives. One should also see Brown's personal notes from the meeting; see Brown, "Notes on TBS Faculty Meeting."

56. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, p. 5, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

57. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, p. 6, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

58. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, p. 7, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

Brown quickly shot back: “That is unjust, sir.”⁵⁹ Brown then cited the sacrifices he had made when the Seminary was closed during World War II. He resented being “forced to become Pastoral Visitor” at Jarvis Street at the meager salary of “\$1,800.00 a year.”⁶⁰ Brown then accused Shields of failing to keep his promise to have “Union representation on the [Seminary Trustee] Board.” Shields retorted, “I refused it because I saw your attitude.” In anger, Shields then spoke about the character of his relationship with Brown: “I have felt for some years that Mr. Brown and I have not had any fellowship.”⁶¹ In response Brown also became angry, and he stated, “If you want my resignation, I have no comeback.”⁶² He further claimed that he “had no appeal” and that “the Trustees do as you [Shields] say . . . You have absolute power.”⁶³ The meeting then went from bad to worse, with both men trying to claim that he had done more than the other for the cause of the Seminary.

Following this exchange, the two men traded barbs over their ecclesiological views of the relationship between Jarvis Street and the Seminary. In this interaction, the stark differences in viewpoint about the control, direction, and vision of the Seminary became apparent. Shields thought that the postwar growth of the Seminary posed a threat on many levels but particularly to the ministry and control of Jarvis Street and its property: “the more I saw that the [Jarvis Street Church] building was being

59. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, p. 7, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

60. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, p. 7, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

61. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, p. 8, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

62. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, p. 8, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

63. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, p. 8, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives. One should also see Brown, “Notes on TBS Faculty Meeting.”

preempted by the Seminary, and that inasmuch as it had no buildings, and while it is dependent upon our buildings, the control of the Seminary must be under the auspices of Jarvis Street Church, for the reason that these buildings must be under the authority of Jarvis St. Church.”⁶⁴

This legally driven and highly centralized local-church perspective did not sit well with Brown. He articulated a much larger vision: “To me the Seminary is not a branch of Jarvis Street Church, but it is the Baptist Seminary of Canada. I think that our views must be wider than this one church, even than the Union. We must have a vision of doing something in the whole country. If we are to confine it to our group of sixty-seven churches, what are we going to do in future years?”⁶⁵ Such statements illustrate the ecclesiological and philosophical divide that had developed between Brown and Shields. It was a breach that would not be reconciled. After further discussions about the type of student produced by the Seminary and about student work on campus, the meeting was adjourned until the following week. Round one of the controversy was over, but more savage rounds were soon to come.

In retrospect Shields was clearly determined to maintain the status quo of Jarvis Street’s control over the theological, spiritual, legal, and administrative affairs of the Seminary. Also, for Shields, the Seminary had to remain an exclusive bastion for the inculcation of Regular Baptist faith and practice. The admittance of outsiders, such as Independent Fellowship Baptists, changed the size and character of the Seminary, and in Shields’ view, these changes threatened to undermine the school’s role as the primary training school for Regular Baptist pastors. For Shields, the costs associated with Brown’s wider vision and the postwar boom in theological education at TBS were too high. What

64. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, p. 9, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

65. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 1 December 1948, p. 10, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

mattered most was the preservation and protection of the tight legal, historical and theological relationship between Jarvis Street and the Seminary and the continued application and realization of the “educational ideal.”

In contrast, for Brown, the postwar boom provided TBS with an opportunity to expand its vision and ministry significantly. Brown welcomed the influx of new students and closer ties with the Independents, and he viewed Shields’ growing opposition to these changes as counter-productive and short-sighted. For Brown, there was no conflict between retaining the core beliefs and ethos of TBS and practicing a more inclusive Baptist Ecclesiology. For him, a wider vision for TBS was not optional but obligatory. Shields’ views were simply too limited to meet the current needs of fundamentalist Canadian Baptists. Moreover, by the late fall of 1948, Brown had come to the conclusion that the existing administrative structure was also inadequate to meet the current needs of both a large church and a growing Seminary. In his view, if the Seminary was going to flourish, serious administrative reforms that included Union representation on the Trustee Board and more independence and control by the Seminary over its affairs were essential. With the positions of both men now firmly established, events moved quickly towards schism.

At the next faculty meeting, on 8 December 1948, many of the issues raised at the December 1 meeting were revisited. This time instead of probing, as he had often done the week before, Shields asserted that he had “found indisputable evidence that I was not without ground for my fears as far as the students were concerned. The students have no idea the Seminary is related to the church.”⁶⁶ He then listed his grievances, which included students “raging” at Shields’ demand that they attend the Jarvis Street prayer meeting, student anger at his non-attendance at their banquet, “Fellowship people” saying that “there will be no Union [between the Union and the Fellowship] until there is a big funeral in Jarvis Street,” and a student who said, “I am not disposed to be dogmatic about the mode of baptism.”⁶⁷ For

66. Brown, “Notes on TBS Faculty Meeting.”

67. Brown, “Notes on TBS Faculty Meeting.”

Shields, such insolent claims and behavior could not “go on.”⁶⁸ Shields gave each faculty member a copy of “The President’s Recommendations to the Trustees” that proposed eight actions related to the Seminary. The recommendations included a re-statement and recommitment to the “educational ideal,” the sale of the Seminary residence, a tightening of admission standards and a stipulation that the Seminary Dean could not “accept an official remunerative position with any other organization.”⁶⁹ He told each faculty member that they should review his recommendations and submit any “amendments” to him.

In his closing comments Shields made his intentions clear: “We are not going to make this [Seminary] a convenience” he asserted, “for interdenominationalists to come here and cut our throat . . . We are training Independents. When they go out to the Independent churches some of them are the worst enemies this church has.”⁷⁰ A discussion over other issues and possible consequences followed. Turning his sights on Brown, Shields lamented that “the Seminary did not have a full-time Dean.” For Shields the moment of truth had arrived, and he was “positive that students [who are hostile] will not be able to remain to the 31st of May in respect to the prejudice.” Furthermore, he flatly declared, “I want them out.”⁷¹ On the issue of his disagreements with Dean Brown, Shields claimed that “there is nothing personal at all” and that he had given every opportunity for things to “improve,” but because, in his view, the situation was “getting worse and worse” he had no choice but to take action.⁷²

In response to Shields, Brown wrote “An Account of My Stewardship,” and on December 10, he submitted this document to the eight Seminary Trustees for their consideration. At their meeting that evening, the Trustees discussed both Shields’ “Recommendations” and Brown’s “Account.” After a “lengthy

68. Brown, “Notes on TBS Faculty Meeting.”

69. The quotations here are taken from Shields, “The President’s Recommendations to the Trustees,” 1–5.

70. Brown, “Notes on TBS Faculty Meeting.”

71. Brown, “Notes on TBS Faculty Meeting.”

72. All the remaining quotations in this paragraph are taken from Brown, “Notes on TBS Faculty Meeting,” 2–3.

discussion” trustee Robert Dowling moved and S. C. McKee seconded a motion that stated, “In view of the prevailing dissension among the Faculty, and reports of disloyalty of some of the students, I propose that this meeting consider the cessation of the Seminary, at the end of the current year.”⁷³ The motion was opposed by all of the other Trustees and defeated. Discussion continued, but both Dowling and McKee left the meeting early. After their departure, Dean Brown’s “Account” was considered. Eventually, the original recommendation related to the Deanship was “deleted,” and a new “resolution” was substituted. The resolution declared that Brown was “not in harmony with the principles and purposes of Toronto Baptist seminary as originally conceived . . . and therefore the Trustees regretfully request Rev. W. Gordon Brown to resign from the Faculty of Toronto Baptist Seminary, and that his resignation shall become effective as of December 31st, 1948.” The motion to accept this resolution “carried unanimously.”⁷⁴ The Trustees then unanimously passed a motion that stated that a joint meeting between the faculty and the Trustees “would not be likely to prove profitable,” but “the Trustees are willing that such a joint meeting be held if the Faculty request it . . .”⁷⁵

Notice of the Trustees’ decision was given to Brown on December 14. On December 15, Brown sent a letter to each Trustee: “This is not my resignation,” he thundered, “nor am I offering it.”⁷⁶ Brown decried the attempt by the Trustees to avoid the joint meeting, and he resented being “asked to resign

73. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 10 December 1948, p. 1, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

74. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 10 December 1948, pp. 1–2, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

75. Toronto Baptist Seminary Faculty meeting minutes, Georgina Lindsay, 10 December 1948, p. 2, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

76. Letter from W. Gordon Brown to the Trustees of Toronto Baptist Seminary, 15 December 1948, p. 1, Box 1B, File, “Seminary Controversy, 1948–49,” p. 1, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

without facing my employers and defending myself personally.”⁷⁷ Brown also demanded “proper notice” to be dismissed instead of the seventeen days given by the Trustees “after twenty-two years of association with this institution.”⁷⁸ He had “hoped that calm counsels might prevail” or, at the least, that he “be allowed to finish the school year for the benefit of the students.”⁷⁹ Brown assured the Trustees “that the report appearing in a daily paper was not of my seeking but these things cannot be hid.” He then addressed an unjust disparity between the salaries paid to Professor W. S. Whitcombe and Professor W. W. Fleischer. Having written to the Trustees about this situation in the summer of 1947, he asked that Fleisher’s salary be raised to match that of Whitcombe’s.⁸⁰

Effectively, Brown flatly refused to resign. He also distributed copies of his own “Account” and copies of the minutes from the Trustees’ meeting on December 10, to all Union pastors and many TBS students. He did not circulate the President’s “Recommendations.” News of the controversy and Brown’s refusal soon became a national sensation in the press, where a war of words and both accurate and inaccurate reports contributed to the conflict.⁸¹ In Quebec, the press and priesthood rejoiced in what they perceived to be Shields’ comeuppance. Brown’s brother, L.

77. Letter from W. Gordon Brown to the Trustees of Toronto Baptist Seminary, 15 December 1948, p. 1, Box 1B, File, “Seminary Controversy, 1948–49,” p. 1, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

78. Letter from W. Gordon Brown to the Trustees of Toronto Baptist Seminary, 15 December 1948, p. 1, Box 1B, File, “Seminary Controversy, 1948–49,” p. 1, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

79. Letter from W. Gordon Brown to the Trustees of Toronto Baptist Seminary, 15 December 1948, p. 1, Box 1B, File, “Seminary Controversy, 1948–49,” p. 1, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

80. Letter from W. Gordon Brown to the Trustees of Toronto Baptist Seminary, 15 December 1948, p. 1, Box 1B, File, “Seminary Controversy, 1948–49,” p. 1, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

81. See, e.g., “90 PC Students,” *Toronto Daily Telegram*; “Take Recorded Student Vote,” *Toronto Globe and Mail*; “Seminary Dean” *Toronto Daily Telegram*; “Overflow Crowd,” *Toronto Daily Star*; “Talk,” *Toronto Daily Star*.

D. Brown, who, ironically, was a Catholic priest, offered Gordon his own special kind of encouragement:

Congratulations! You are making headlines all over Canada and the United States. The priests here in Quebec are 100% behind you. Fight the lion and resist the dragon with all your might. I am indeed proud of you that you refuse to resign and will not leave until "thrown out." Hope *Shields* does not try to throw you from the second story window . . . I have always hated his bulldog personality.⁸²

At this point, as the external battles were beginning to leave their mark, the internal struggles and pain were far from over.

On December 17, the Trustees met to provide further clarity on certain clauses in their resolutions that had come under question, to discuss Brown's actions, and to consider a letter sent that day from the TBS alumni executive. The letter expressed that the alumni executive was "amazed and ashamed to learn of the recent peremptory dismissal of Dean W. Gordon Brown," and it was their "united testimony" that no TBS faculty member "was more loyal to . . . Dr. Shields, to the historical principles for which evangelical Baptists have always stood, and for the maintenance of Christian discipline and deportment in all activities of student life, than Dean W. Gordon Brown." They also claimed that charges to the contrary were "not only unjustified" but "emphatically untrue." Finally, they appealed to the Trustees to "reconsider and revoke your decision of December 10, 1948, and reinstate Dean W. Gordon Brown."⁸³

Instead of replying directly to the letter, the Trustees chose to ignore it and deal with the more pressing concerns of clause-by-clause clarification and Brown's refusal to resign. After stating their positions even more plainly, the Trustees cited a number of Brown's recent actions and statements as justification for their "Final Resolution Respecting the Deanship." The heart of the

82. L. D. Brown to W. Gordon Brown, n.d., Box 6, File "L. D. Brown," p. 1, emphasis original, W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

83. All of the quotations in this paragraph are taken from Executive of the Alumni to the Trustees of Toronto Baptist Seminary, 17 December 1948, Box 1B, File "Seminary Controversy 1948-49," W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

resolution stated, "Therefore the Trustees of Toronto Baptist Seminary do now declare the Deanship of Toronto Baptist Seminary vacant, and Rev. W. Gordon Brown's position on the Faculty . . . vacant as of December 31st 1948."⁸⁴ On December 20, a statement from the Trustees was subsequently forwarded to the TBS faculty and students with the clarifications and final decision attached. On the same day, a letter and the same documents were also sent to Brown.⁸⁵

Meanwhile, soon after December 17, the students of TBS drafted a protest document of their own. Many students objected to "the request for the resignation of Rev. W. Gordon Brown" and Shields' recommendation "that each student in the Seminary be personally interviewed." The students then asked the Trustees to consider their views on four points. First of all, they asked that "the resignation of the Dean be reconsidered." The basis for this request was that "no note of the encouragement of a so-called interdenominational spirit or the fostering of prejudice against the President, Faculty, or Jarvis St. Baptist Church has been heard either in or out of his lectures." Secondly, the students blamed any "prejudice towards Jarvis St. Church and its ministry" on the "public rebukes by our President to the student body." The students expressed their "regret that this spirit of prejudice has been so active in this school year," but they claimed that "such prejudice could easily be overcome by mutual discussion between the student body and the President." Third, the students argued that the "President has not been reliably informed" and that "the newly interpreted Rules for Admission and continuance" at TBS would cause great "personal hardship" for "the great majority of the students." Finally, the students asked that those who could not agree with "the proposals set forth by the President's

84. Trustee Board of Toronto Baptist Seminary, meeting minutes, 17 December 1948, "Final Resolution Respecting the Deanship," p. 1. Glen Richardson File.

85. Trustees of Toronto Baptist Seminary to the members of the Seminary faculty and to all students, 20 December 1948, Glen Richardson File. See also Georgina Lindsay (by order of the Trustees of Toronto Baptist Seminary) to W. Gordon Brown, 20 December 1948, Box 1B, File "Seminary Controversy 1948-49," W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

Recommendations” be allowed to remain “until the expiration of the school year.” The students then met to consider the protest, and after the votes were counted, 58 were in favor, and 8 were opposed. Although the students requested “an immediate reply” from the Trustees, no reply was forthcoming.⁸⁶ Instead, Shields set about the task of creating the one hundred and thirty pages of the “Official Report of Dean Brown’s Dismissal from Toronto Baptist Seminary.”

Although debate about the Dean’s firing dragged on, the schism was a reality by January of 1949. In its wake, the split at TBS left many in a state of anger, bitterness, and confusion. In the couple of weeks over the Christmas break of 1948–1949, both sides tried to rally their forces, pick up the pieces of what remained, and set a course for the future education of students. Ironically, the TBS schism proved to be a catalyst for the founding of a new Baptist educational enterprise.

A Consequence of “Crisis”: The Founding of Central Baptist Seminary

Perhaps the most profound consequence of the Dean’s dismissal from TBS was the founding of the Canadian Baptist Seminary (later Central Baptist Seminary, both of which will be referred to hereafter as CBS) in January of 1949. Even before he had finished his term at TBS, Dean Brown worked feverishly on a contingency plan for disaffected TBS students. At a meeting of Union and Independent Fellowship ministers held on 20 December 1948, in Toronto’s Eglinton Baptist Tabernacle, a five member “Temporary Committee” consisting of Rev. Jack Scott, Dean Brown, former TBS Professor W. W. Fleisher, Rev. Morley R. Hall, and Rev. J. F. Holliday was appointed to “care for the immediate needs of the students who could not continue at the old school” and “make all the necessary arrangements” for

86. All of the quotations to this point in this paragraph are from “The Following Protest is Presented to the President and Trustees of Toronto Baptist Seminary by the Students,” Geoffrey Adams File. For the student protest and vote see Pickering, *Toronto Baptist Suicide*, 4. Glen Richardson File.

a school to be known as “The Canadian Baptist Seminary.” Also, “an invitation to use the facilities of Forward Baptist Church” was “accepted” at this meeting.⁸⁷

With the help and support of Union and Independent Fellowship pastors and lay people and of students and former co-workers from TBS, Brown and the temporary organizing committee assisted students in their search for new housing, hired faculty, and created a curriculum that was virtually identical to that of TBS. All of this was accomplished in a few weeks, and classes began at 8:30 a.m. on 4 January 1949, in the basement of Forward Baptist Church in Toronto.⁸⁸ As Brown later recalled, these were challenging days: “We started with nothing except thirty dollars which was in my hand and in my name. We had not a pencil.”⁸⁹ In the early days of the new school, a generous cash gift of \$1,000 from Margaret McLean, an elderly member of Runnymede Baptist Church, provided the funding needed to get this new educational venture started.⁹⁰

Other efforts were also undertaken by the Temporary Committee in January of 1949 to solicit the help and support of churches and individuals. For example, in a letter to the First Baptist Church of Sault Ste. Marie dated 6 January 1949, the committee requested that the church “write to Toronto Baptist Seminary” asking that the portion of the “food supplies” donated by First Baptist to TBS now be given to CBS.⁹¹ In a more general appeal to potential supporters on 12 January 1949, the committee noted that “the needs of the new school are many,” and

87. All of the quotations in this paragraph are taken from the Temporary Committee of Canadian Baptist Seminary to the Constituency, 12 January 1949, personal copy from Marina Coldwell.

88. “Canadian Baptist Seminary, Courses of Study, January to May, 1949,” Geoffrey Adams File.

89. McHale, *History of Central Baptist Seminary*, 7.

90. McHale, *History of Central Baptist Seminary*, 7.

91. The Temporary Committee of Canadian Baptist Seminary to First Baptist Church, Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, 6 January 1949, Glen Richardson File.

they called for prayer, friends, money, and “opportunities for students to minister and gain experience.”⁹²

Evidently the efforts of the Committee were successful. On 29 March 1949, at the first CBS “Convention” that included “official messengers” from thirty-one churches, twenty-five supporting pastors, and twenty-six “observers,” it was decided to accept the recommendation of the Temporary Committee “that the Canadian Baptist Seminary be set up on a permanent basis with a group of twelve directors and a chairman . . .”⁹³ The financial report given by the treasurer, Mr. A. E. Payne, “showed total receipts to the amount of \$5,257.82, with a balance of \$909.94.”⁹⁴ By April of 1949, the new school had changed its name to “Central Baptist Seminary,” and its first graduation ceremony for sixteen students was held in Massey Hall, Toronto, on 5 May 1949.⁹⁵

Even though Brown and the majority of students chose to leave TBS and join the newly formed Canadian Baptist Seminary, the controversy between the two sides continued for years. In the year following the Dean’s dismissal, there was a great deal of *ad hominem* argumentation and bickering over charges and counter-charges of wrongdoing, and public campaigns in the press and long diatribes justifying one side or the other were common fare.⁹⁶ The effects of this ongoing infighting were distressing for many Baptists.

92. The Temporary Committee of Canadian Baptist Seminary to the Constituency, 12 January 1949, personal copy from Marina Coldwell.

93. Brown, “Convention.” See also the early CBS publications “Notes,” 5–6.

94. Brown, “Convention.”

95. McHale, *History of Central Baptist Seminary*, 39–40. See also “Notes from the (Canadian),” 3–4.

96. At this stage the vitriolic and disingenuous nature of the rhetoric and the range of the issues debated reached the level of the ridiculous and the regrettable. See, e.g., the entire issue of the *GW*, 10 March 1949; “Dr. T. T. Shields Wins,” *The Fundamentalist*; “Dean W. Gordon Brown,” *The Fundamentalist*; “Lauds Dr. Shields,” *Toronto Daily Star*; “Editorial: Seminary Breaks Up,” *The Fellowship Evangel* (hereafter *FE*); “Jarvis Street Baptist Receipts Yearly Top \$150,000—Dr. Shields,” *Toronto Daily Star*; “Notes and

“A Cause of Great Grief”

Historians sometimes focus exclusively on religious providers and ignore religious participants. While it is impossible fully to document in this short article the extent of the heartache and anguish suffered by all levels of Baptists after the TBS schism, the following narrative and analysis provides some insight into the negative personal consequences suffered by many Baptists.

After news of the Dean’s dismissal became public, hundreds of letters from a wide variety of quarters were sent to both Shields and Brown expressing a mixture of support, disillusionment, anger, and dismay. For example, on 6 January 1949, Mrs. Edith Eastwood wrote from her winter home in Florida to Shields’ personal secretary, Georgina Lindsay. With her letter she enclosed her weekly offering, and she expressed her thoughts about the dismissal of Dean Brown after reading newspaper clippings sent to her from friends in Toronto. In her final comments Eastwood made a common request: “Remember me to the Doctor [Shields] and all in the office. Tell him he is assured of my support and prayers always.”⁹⁷ Despite all that had happened, this letter shows that Shields still retained a good measure of support.

Support, of course, was not the only response. On 28 December 1948, a questioning and disillusioned C. George Spence wrote to Shields, “If Christian folk, whom we all no doubt agree, are all out-and-out Christians, cannot agree on petty matters of procedure how can we ever hope to have an influence for Christ on the world? . . . I have been richly blessed both in reading *The Gospel Witness* and in fellowshipping with various churches of the Union, and to me, as no doubt to many others, this latest

Comments” *Home*, 4–5. The periodical *Home* was published in Toronto by Christian Homes For Children Inc.

97. Edith Eastwood to Georgina Lindsay, 6 January 1949, Shields Correspondence, Box January 1949–December 1949, File E, Jarvis Street Baptist Church Archives.

‘split’ is a cause of great grief.”⁹⁸ Here the toll of the TBS schism on the Baptist laity and witness was clear. Regardless of who was “right,” deep personal pain and damage to the cause of Christ were among the most serious consequences of the conflict.

For Earl Smith and his wife, the dismissal of Brown and Shields’ “attitude and actions” at the meeting of 20 January 1949, when the “Official Report” was publically presented, led to anger and alienation that provided the impetus to withdraw their membership from Jarvis Street. In his letter of 28 January 1949, addressed to Shields and requesting that his “name be deleted from the membership roll,” Smith lamented that “a ministry so blessed by the Lord . . . should be marred by such ruthless action and un-Christlike attitude.” Smith then expressed his unqualified support of Brown: “Mrs. Smith and I are in sympathy with Dean Brown . . .” He also accused Shields of being a “Dictator”: “In Jarvis St. the one and only voice in any matter is that of ‘T. T. Shields.’ In your estimation the attitude of the members counts for nothing.”⁹⁹ Such anger and frustration were not uncommon.

Other writers also gave stinging criticisms of Shields’ words and actions. A Mrs. Wray Doughty of Port Dover, Ontario, for example, castigated Shields for his ill treatment of his fellow Baptists: “Do you think as Christians and in God’s sight you have any right to knock your fellow bro[ther]s around? If that is all you have to fill up the pages of your *Gospel Witness* with, I certainly do not want it anymore.”¹⁰⁰ The charge of brother-bashing was also supported in the press. In his famous 15 June 1949 article for *Maclean’s Magazine*, entitled “The Battling Baptist,” Gerald Anglin claimed that Shields had “lashed out at

98. C. George Spence to T. T. Shields, 28 December 1949, Shields Correspondence, Box January 1949–December 1949, File S, Jarvis Street Baptist Church Archives.

99. All of the quotations in this paragraph are taken from Earl Smith to T. T. Shields, 28 January 1949, Shields Correspondence, Box January 1949–December 1949, File S, Jarvis Street Baptist Church Archives.

100. Mrs. Wray Doughty to T. T. Shields, 28 October 1949, Shields Correspondence, Box January 1949–December 1949, File D, Jarvis Street Baptist Church Archives.

brother Baptists more relentlessly and more vehemently than all other objects of his wrath combined.”¹⁰¹ The Doughty letter shows that what the press claimed publically about Shields’ treatment of his fellow Baptists was echoed in his private correspondence. Shields consistently reserved his severest censure for his fellow Baptists, but as the letter of Mrs. Doughty shows, some members of the laity challenged such tactics and rightly characterized such actions as unchristian.

Shields, however, was not the only one to receive letters filled with anguish, questions, and criticism. In his letter of 5 January 1949, former TBS student Clifford J. Rogers expressed to Brown his pain, questions, suspicions, and disillusionment. “This Seminary affair has greatly upset me,” Rogers declared. “I am deeply grieved about it . . . Believe me, sorrow and anguish have been my puzzled lot.” In addition to communicating his pain, Rogers voiced his questions and suspicions: “Why did you challenge the decision of the Trustees?” Rogers asked. “Did you do so on purpose to make trouble for the Seminary, or Union, or Dr. Shields? Surely not!?” Rogers also suspected that Brown was responsible for engineering “an effort to seize control” of the Seminary, and he called such action “criminal.”¹⁰²

Unlike Shields, who seldom responded to letters from his lower-profile opponents, Brown offered a defense of his actions to Rogers in a letter dated 10 January 1949. Essentially, Brown claimed that he had refused to resign because he felt “duty bound” to “stand by” those students that “Dr. Shields was determined to make . . . quite unwelcome at the Seminary.” Furthermore, he had “no appeal against Dr. Shields except to the Trustees, and I made that, and for the spirit of my challenge was asked to leave.” Brown then gave his analysis of the reasons for the schism: “The trouble is, fundamentally, the set-up was wrong

101. Anglin, “The Battling Baptist,” 15. For a more detailed analysis of Anglin’s article, see Douglas Adams, “The Battling Baptist.” A copy of this paper is in the possession of the author.

102. All of the quotations in this paragraph are taken from Clifford J. Rogers to W. Gordon Brown, 5 January 1949, Shields Correspondence, Box January 1949–December 1949, File R, Jarvis Street Baptist Church Archives.

from the beginning. One man has altogether too much power. Frankly I am ashamed of the disgrace on the work, but I did not start this trouble. Dr. Shields is totally to blame.” After this defense, Brown denied that anyone “was trying to seize control of the Seminary from the Trustees.” According to him, “there was no principle involved.” Instead, “Dr. Shields was merely trying to exercise autocratic authority . . . in his effort to throw me out.” Evidently, Rogers did not fully accept Brown’s explanation, for on 9 June 1949, he forwarded his own letter and Brown’s response to T. T. Shields, and he later sided with Shields in the fight for control of the Union.¹⁰³

Letters from those who suffered through the TBS schism are revealing on many levels. The honesty and spiritual insights of laypeople and pastors trying to make sense of the words and actions of their leaders shows how seriously everyday Baptists took such events. Also, a deep sense of ownership prompted many to follow closely the unfolding of events at TBS in the public press and *The Gospel Witness* and then communicate by letter their feelings and concerns. What is remarkable is that despite not having all of the facts at their disposal, many lay people saw past the pettiness and personal nature of the TBS squabble to the larger issues of damage to the Baptist cause and reputation. Many were tired of the seemingly endless fighting and controversy within their own religious community. Through their intransigence and judgmental attitudes, Shields and Brown disheartened and alienated many of their constituents. For some Baptists, the wounds caused by the TBS schism would never fully heal.

In January 1949, the conflict entered a new stage when it moved beyond Jarvis Street and TBS to the larger forum of the

103. All of the quotations in this paragraph are taken from W. Gordon Brown to Clifford J. Rogers, 10 January 1949, Shields Correspondence, Box January 1949–December 1949, File R, Jarvis Street Baptist Church Archives. Evidently the original letter and Brown’s reply were forwarded to Shields on 9 June 1949. See Clifford J. Rogers to T. T. Shields, 9 June 1949, Shields Correspondence, Box January 1949–December 1949, File R, Jarvis Street Baptist Church Archives.

URBC. Here a second schism, as vitriolic and painful as the first, would, by the late fall of 1949, become a reality.

Stage Two of the Controversy: The Fight for Control of the Union, 1949

The TBS schism served as a catalyst for a second battle between Shields and Brown within the rank and file of the Union. Throughout 1949 both sides rallied their supporters and attacked their opponents. The pattern and outcomes of such events was by now predictable: more denunciations, more attention from the press, and more pain.

Somewhat ironically, the last major event in the TBS schism, which was supposed to lay the issue to rest, actually initiated a new struggle for control over the Union. On 20 January 1949, T. T. Shields took to his pulpit at Jarvis Street to present publicly the "Official Report." At a tumultuous three-hour meeting in front an evenly split audience of supporters and opponents, including Dean Brown and his wife, who arrived part way through the meeting to cheers from some in the audience, Shields defended the decision for dismissal and railed against his former ally and Dean.¹⁰⁴

Calling his opponents "rebels" and claiming that he "deserved the Victoria Cross" for working with Brown for so long, Shields offered, amidst numerous jeers and heckles, both his rationale for the Dean's dismissal and previous and new charges against Brown and his supporters.¹⁰⁵ "The seminary was drifting on the rocks," Shields declared. "It was acquiring modernist teachings, defeating all we'd done in 20 years."¹⁰⁶ But later, Shields contradicted himself by returning to his earlier version of the "drift"

104. For the atmosphere of the meeting, see "Stormy Three-Hour Session," *The Evening Telegram*; "Dr. T. T. Shields Threatens Church Rivals," *The Evening Telegram*.

105. "Shouts Down Hecklers Explains Dean's Firing I Deserve V.C.—Shields," *Toronto Daily Star*; "Shouts Down Hecklers As He Explains 'Dean Firing,'" *Toronto Daily Star*. This is a single article in two parts, with each part having a slightly different title.

106. *Ibid.*

charge that denied any doctrinal variance, and he put the emphasis instead on interdenominationalism: “It was evident to us, and to many others that the seminary had begun to drift—not doctrinally . . . It was established as a Baptist seminary,” and the faculty were obligated to “keep these standards of faith aforementioned.”¹⁰⁷

Shields also charged that “Dr. Brown and student friends” had “poured out propaganda” through their newspaper interviews and in church meetings around Toronto. A picture in the *Toronto Daily Star* on 21 January 1949, showing Bernice Lovelle holding up the pamphlet entitled *Toronto Baptist Seminary Suicide* by F. L. Pickering, a former student and editor of *The Seminarian*, provided visual evidence that seemed to support Shields’ charge.¹⁰⁸

Perhaps the most alarming charge of all was Shields’ claim that while Brown was still “a paid servant” of TBS, he and “his associates” were carrying out “perfidy of the blackest order.” According to Shields, Brown and Pastors like Rev. Sidney Kerr of Briscoe Baptist Church in London, Ontario were “plotting” to found ‘a fellowship within the Union’ and “to bleed the Union’s missionary funds” while they worked “on the inside” to bring about a merger “with the Independents.”¹⁰⁹

Brown’s response to these charges came through his spontaneous statements to the press following the meeting and in his pamphlet of January 1949 entitled “The Truth Is, . . .” In a press interview following the presentation of the “Official Report” Brown called the meeting “a dud.”¹¹⁰ In response to Shields’ charge of “interdenominationalism” Brown argued that Shields had failed “to prove it.”¹¹¹ And he accused Shields of toning down his “extreme exclusiveness” and his “antipathy to working

107. “Dr. T. T. Shields Threatens Church Rivals,” *The Evening Telegram*.

108. “Shouts Down Hecklers As He Explains ‘Dean Firing,’” *Toronto Daily Star*.

109. Ibid. For the letters exchanged between Kerr and Brown see the Trustee Board of Toronto Baptist Seminary, “Official Report,” 108–9.

110. “Dr. T. T. Shields Threatens Church Rivals,” *The Evening Telegram*.

111. Ibid.

in fellowship with others” in the “Official Report.”¹¹² Brown also reiterated his refusal to carry out the by-law “to make every effort” to push students, who were already members of “Fellowship Churches,” into the membership of Union churches.¹¹³ He admitted that he “was ashamed” of the by-law, but “kept the thing as quiet as I could.” Brown devoted the rest of his response to countering what he saw as “the collection of *understatement* of main things, *overstatement* of little things . . . and *misstatement* of the whole thing given out by Dr. Shields . . .”¹¹⁴

As the fight between Shields and Brown continued, a growing division within the Union became more evident. On 14 February 1949, forty-nine dissidents distributed a letter to their fellow Baptists expressing their “profound disagreement” with Dr. Shields over Dean Brown’s “dismissal and official denunciation.” While the signatories, not all of whom were Union men, also noted their “deep debt of gratitude” to Shields for “his past exploits in defense of the Gospel” they now asserted that “their confidence in him as a leader and as President of the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec has been destroyed.”¹¹⁵ This declaration brought the growing division within the Union to the surface. Not surprisingly it brought a strong response from the Shields forces.

When the seventeen members of the Union Executive Board met on 19 April 1949, to discuss plans for the upcoming Union Convention and the actions of the TBS Trustees related to Brown’s firing, the meeting quickly became a battleground for control over Union affairs. In a vote of nine to eight the Executive Board decided that it stood in opposition to Brown’s dismissal. Following this decision on 26 April 1949, “A Communication from Jarvis St. Baptist Church Toronto” was sent to every member of every Union church. Essentially, the

112. Brown, “The Truth Is, . . .” 12.

113. *Ibid.*, 11.

114. *Ibid.*, 3.

115. All of the quotations here are taken from the Letter from W. Hal MacBain et. al. to the Union of Regular Baptist Churches of Ontario and Quebec, 14 February 1949. Personal Copy.

communication condemned the protest letter of 14 February and the decision of the Union Board Executive to support Brown. In addition, the Communication argued that “The new movement, we are convinced, is a movement of Undenominationalism, and contrary to the doctrinal standards of the Union . . .” Furthermore, at a Jarvis Street Congregational Meeting held on 26 April 1949, the members voted by a “unanimous standing vote” to authorize the four members of the Union Executive Board who were also members of the church, “to continue the Church’s membership in the Union, or to withdraw entirely there-from as may seem wise in the light of circumstances . . .” After these decisions became public in the spring of 1949, the stage was set for a final showdown at the Union Convention in the following October.¹¹⁶

In the days leading up to the Union Convention of 1949, Brown and Shields worked diligently behind the scenes to challenge and persuade opponents and rally support for their cause. For example, in a letter to J. H. Winnett, a member of an Independent Fellowship Church in Oakville, Brown countered Winnett’s assertion that Shields was right “on the stand” he had “taken” regarding the Dean’s dismissal.¹¹⁷ Brown retorted that he was “quite surprised” when he read Winnett’s letter in *The Gospel Witness*, and that in fairness Winnett should be willing “to read our defense.” Brown then sent Winnett the relevant documents.¹¹⁸ Such activity gives one a glimpse into the kinds of exchanges that were happening a few days before the Union Convention.

Similarly, on 9 October 1949, Shields sent a “Strictly Confidential” letter to the members of Jarvis Street urging their

116. All of the quotations in this paragraph are taken from Jarvis Street Baptist Church. “A Communication from Jarvis St. Baptist Church Toronto,” April 1949, pp. 4, 7, Box 1B, File “Seminary Controversy,” W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

117. Letter from W. Gordon Brown to J. H. Winnett, 4 October 1949, Box 6, File “Toronto Baptist Seminary,” W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives. See also Letter from J. H. Winnett to T. T. Shields, 25 September 1949, reprinted in *GW*, 29 September 1949.

118. Brown to Winnett, 4 October 1949.

support for him as he sought to counter the actions of “Brown’s henchmen” who opposed “my giving the usual Presidential Address Tuesday night.”¹¹⁹ Shields pleaded with the membership: “at all costs be on hand to support me” and “to stand by me Tuesday evening—or if I am denied the platform, to walk out in protest. . . .”¹²⁰ Evidently, cooler heads prevailed, and Brown’s supporters did not follow through on their threat to bring the matter to the Convention floor for a vote.¹²¹ Such activities were indicative of the ongoing infighting between the two sides on the eve of the Convention proceedings.

The Union Convention at Waverly Road Baptist Church in Toronto on 11–13 October 1949, was the culmination of a public and private battle that had raged for almost a year. On the Convention floor the atmosphere was heated, and political posturing and maneuvering were tactics used by both sides. The climax of the meeting centered on the issue of whether Shields should continue as President of the Union. When the tumult of debate had subsided and the votes were counted, both President Shields and Secretary H. C. Slade, Shields’ pastoral assistant at Jarvis Street, had lost their bid for re-election. One third of the votes cast were for Shields while two-thirds were for Brown’s ally, Rev. E. C. Wood of Timmins, Ontario.¹²²

Shields’ supporters were outraged by the decisions taken at the Convention. Calling the victors “a bunch of pigmies” and “power-hungry people” who were “so bitterly prejudiced that they can’t always see straight, and don’t always tell the truth.” Shields and his supporters engaged in all manner of character ascription. “Rev. Gordon Brown,” Shields declared, “hasn’t the

119. Letter from T. T. Shields to Jarvis Street Members, 9 October 1949, Box 6, File “Toronto Baptist Seminary,” W. Gordon Brown Papers, Canadian Baptist Archives.

120. Ibid.

121. See the article by W.S. Whitcombe entitled “Dr. Shields ‘Ousted’ From Baptist Union (?),” *GW*.

122. The information in this paragraph is based on “Wolves in Full Cry to Devour Themselves Says Rev. T.T. Shields,” *Toronto Daily Star*.

judgment of a tomtit.”¹²³ Rev. John Byers of Hamilton went so far as to claim that “It may be that we have lost a battle, but the war is not over.” Shields also claimed that he was anxious to leave the Presidency and that Jarvis Street would not withdraw from the Union.¹²⁴

Yet the next day an “Emergency Committee” staffed primarily by Jarvis Street members was created to run all of the Union affairs of which Jarvis Street was a part. Although Jarvis Street and some fifteen churches that supported its position remained in the Union, they pursued their own course and were effectively divorced from the Union. Eventually, in 1951, Jarvis Street and a few other churches, seceded from The Union to form “The Conservative Baptist Association of Canada.”¹²⁵ In 1953, this organization was renamed “The Association of Regular Baptist Churches.”

The division in the Union in 1949, provided yet another catalyst for the formation of “The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada” in 1953. Pastors from the Union, such as Rev. W. H. McBain of Temple Baptist Church in Sarnia, and the Independent Fellowship pastors such as Rev. Jack Scott of Forward Baptist Church in Toronto desired co-operation, and they sought to put an end to the incessant “wrangling” and the patterns of confrontation and controversy that had plagued the Union under Shields’ leadership.¹²⁶ As Kenneth Davis has noted, “weariness with the continuing crises, contentions and divisions became a prime motivator for change.”¹²⁷ This change of perspective was particularly true of younger pastors. Many of them openly voiced their opposition to Shields and called for a broader Baptist ecclesiology and more cooperation in areas such as

123. “Union ‘Reckless’ Won’t Get Cent Shields’ Retort,” *Toronto Daily Star*.

124. All quotations in this paragraph are taken from “Wolves in Full Cry,” *Toronto Daily Star*.

125. “The Conservative Baptist Association of Canada,” *GW*. See also “Jarvis Street Baptist Church Leaves the Union,” *FE*.

126. Haykin, *A Glorious Fellowship*, 142.

127. Davis, “The Struggle,” 241.

evangelism and theological education.¹²⁸ Brown, of course, had held such views for some time, and after Shields was replaced in October of 1949, he encouraged and promoted, through his personal relationships with pastors and his work at Central Baptist Seminary and Runnymede Baptist Church, closer ties between the Independent Fellowship and the Union.¹²⁹

Between October of 1949 and October of 1953, a slow and cautious process leading towards the creation of a new Baptist entity became evident. At first co-operation between the Independent Fellowship and Union churches was informal, with individual churches agreeing to work together on specific outreach initiatives, include articles from the other group in their papers, hold joint services and Pastor's Conferences or put their support behind the efforts of Central Baptist Seminary where cooperation was already a reality.¹³⁰ In 1951, the pace of events quickened. After "fraternal messengers" were sent from each body to the other's Convention, a Liaison Committee was struck in June 1951 to discuss the possibility of a union.¹³¹ In October of 1951, Jarvis Street officially withdrew from the Union. This development served to hasten the drive for amalgamation. By November the Liaison Committee had submitted their "Report" to the executives of the URBC and the Independent Fellowship recommending the adoption of a "seven-point programme" designed to move the process of a merger forward.¹³² In 1952, the push for unity became more formalized when both sides passed resolutions calling for a "coming together" of the two groups.¹³³ The final step in the merger process came in Toronto on October 20–23, 1953, when the two sides met separately on October 20–21

128. For evidence that substantiates this view see the comments of Clifford Rogers in "Wolves in Full Cry," *Toronto Daily Star*. See also, Haykin, *A Glorious Fellowship*. Davis, "The Struggle," 241.

129. McHale, *The History of Central Baptist Seminary*, 7. Watt, *The Fellowship Story*, 49.

130. See, for example, "The Union Baptist," *FE*; "Union and Fellowship," *FE*; "The Courtship Continues," *FE*.

131. "The Courtship of Union and Fellowship," *FE*.

132. *Ibid.*

133. Watt, *The Fellowship Story*, 45. "Moderator Reports on Fusion," *FE*.

to conclude any outstanding business and then together for the first time on October 23 as “The Fellowship of Evangelical Baptist Churches in Canada.”¹³⁴

The creation of “The Fellowship” represented a significant turning-point in Canadian Baptist history. The Shields variant of militant fundamentalism was rejected in favor of a less strident, more cooperative, more inclusive and less tightly organized expression of conservative evangelicalism. This change in both approach and direction set the fundamentalist Baptist witness in Canada on a new course.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this article has demonstrated that five causal factors lay at the root of the schisms at TBS and within the URBC. Within a fundamentalist subculture that emphasized personality, position, and power, the personal and institutional pressures created by the Second World War were a source of disagreement that resulted in a serious rift in the relationship between Shields and Brown. Similarly, the stresses associated with the postwar religious boom that created an influx of new students at TBS and trends in Toronto’s evangelical community towards cooperation and away from confrontation helped to cement the growing division between Shields and Brown. Also crucial were the hard-driving and uncompromising personalities of the two men and the wartime shift in their relationship from a partnership in which Shields dominated to rivalry where Brown sought to assert his independence. Furthermore, the quest for power and control by both Shields and Brown and their disagreements over management and vision at both TBS and within the Union also promoted the rancor, infighting and factionalism that ultimately produced both schisms.

The consequences of the schisms at TBS and within the Union were both ironic and monumental. Certainly the personal pain experienced by many and the harm done to the Baptist cause were regrettable and significant. Ironically, the split at

134. “Merger Convention in October,” *FE*.

TBS provided a stimulus for the creation of Central Baptist Seminary while it also served as a catalyst for the rejection of militant fundamentalism and closer cooperation between the Union and the Independent Fellowship. Moreover, the split within the Union in 1949 also provided a catalyst for realization of a merger in 1953 between the majority of churches in URBC and the Independent Fellowship. This development fundamentally altered the course of Canadian Baptist history.

While this article has analyzed a couple of key events in Canadian Baptist history, many topics related to fundamentalist and conservative Baptists remain shrouded in obscurity. Future studies will need to broaden the focus to examine in more depth and detail the role and contributions of individuals, groups and institutions. There is still, for example, no published academic biography of W. Gordon Brown. Also, serious historical studies that examine many aspects of the life and development of the URBC, The Independent Fellowship, and The Fellowship of Evangelical Churches in Canada are lacking. The role and views of women and everyday congregants also remain largely unexplored. Although the list of historical studies needed to fill these gaps is long, one hopes that this article will serve as a stimulus for further scholarship and discussion.

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