Preface

In these postmodern times, a historian ought to declare his or her stance from the outset. One of the ways one can do this is to make substantive statements. So I shall say that I write about Canadian evangelicalism as an insider, as one raised in this tradition and still personally involved in it. Yet I undertook much of the research for this book while studying in the United States under American supervision, so that on research trips I encountered Canada as something of a foreign country, and examined Canadian evangelicalism as a network of which I was not, at the time, a part. The revision of the original doctoral dissertation towards the present form then took place first while I taught European history at Northwestern College in Iowa, another experience that provided some appropriate personal distancing from the subject. The book came to final form after I returned to Canada in 1990. And my subsequent contacts with Canadian evangelicalism, both scholarly and personal, provided new material and insights towards this end. The result, then, bears some of the marks of a 'family history,' for good and for ill, while my personal peregrinations have provided more than a simple 'insider' angle of vision on the matter.

Another way to make one's authorial position more clear, though, is to acknowledge the debts one has accumulated during the project. And this is by far the more pleasant path of the two. It was a conversation with George Rawlyk on his back porch one summer afternoon that convinced me that there might be something in twentieth-century Canadian evangelicalism worth my studying. George has offered his characteristically incisive advice at key points since. Ian Rennie put his extraordinary mental database and personal library at
my disposal several times. And conversations with a number of other friends greatly improved the shaping of this study, particularly those with Doug Anderson, Bob Burkinshaw, Matthew Floding, Bryan Hillis, Larry Hurtado, Brian McKenzie, Rebecca Nelson, and Ron Sawatsky.

More than a dozen librarians provided guidance and materials, often well beyond the call of their already high duty. The staffs of the following libraries provided notable help: the Joseph Regenstein Library of the University of Chicago, the National Library of Canada, the J. William Horsey Library of Ontario Bible College and Ontario Theological Seminary, the Prairie Bible Institute Library, the Regent College Library, the Vernon Strombeck Library of Trinity Western University, and the Billy Graham Center Library and Archives at Wheaton College. Extraordinary help, especially in obtaining a quantity of interlibrary loan materials, was given cheerfully by the staffs of the J.O. Buswell Memorial Library of Wheaton College, the Ramaker Library of Northwestern College, and the Elizabeth Dafoe Library of the University of Manitoba.

Robert Wright and the late Keith Clifford contributed copies of their wide-ranging bibliographies on Canadian religion at key points in my research. Leaders and staffs of the seven institutions studied provided a broad range of help, including the opportunity to examine historic documents of their institutions. The following individuals in particular deserve mention: President William J. MacRae of Ontario Bible College and Ontario Theological Seminary, President Ted S. Rendall of Prairie Bible Institute, General Director James E. Berney of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship, President R. Neil Snider and Executive Assistant Jackson McAllister of Trinity Western University, Principal Carl E. Armerding of Regent College, and Executive Director Brian C. Stiller of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada. It is most encouraging to note that at least some of these institutions have begun to catalogue and store such materials in archives for future researchers.

Pursuing such a study over a country as vast as Canada required many weeks away from home. For companionship and accommodation, I thank the proprietors of the following worthy establishments: the Annan-Cuthbertson Arms, the Barnard Barn, Enns' Inn, the Hillis Hilton, the Humbervale Hideaway, the Lunau Lodge, and Randy's Rest. Upon return, a lot of sorting, filing, data entry, and retrieval of still more material had to be done, and I have enjoyed the services
of several excellent research assistants: Michael Haverdink, Crystal Dykstra, Jena Dukes, Gordon Richardson, Mary Massel, and Jacqueline Klassen.

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Anatole France once pronounced, ‘All the historical books which contain no lies are extremely tedious.’ The fewness of lies in this study can be traced to the careful reading of some portions of the book by the following colleagues: Ian S. Rennie of Ontario Theological Seminary; James E. Berney and Melvin V. Donald of Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship; Keith A. Price of ‘Sermons from Science’ and the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada; Kenneth R. Davis of Trinity Western University; Carl E. Armerding of Regent College; Brian C. Stiller of the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada; and George M. Marsden of the University of Notre Dame. Jerald Brauer and Langdon Gilkey of the University of Chicago evaluated the original dissertation with exemplary care. Later drafts of the book were improved by the comments of several anonymous reviewers associated with the University of Toronto Press and the Canadian Federation for the Humanities. And editors Ron Schoeffel, Anne Forte, and John St James of the University of Toronto Press refined the manuscript still further. The blame for the lies that remain in this study, therefore, as well as for the tediousness thereof, must be placed upon whom it belongs, and not on these helpful souls.

It is a privilege to gain a mentor, and a rare privilege to gain two. Mark A. Noll and Martin E. Marty have been instructing, prodding, provoking, consoling, and inspiring me now for more than a decade. And they have done so with wisdom, humour, firmness, and (a favourite word of Marty’s) disponibilité. ‘The lif so short, the craft so long to lerne,’ Chaucer observed, and I look forward to walking farther down the road they have marked out.

Family members contributed much-needed sums of babysitting time, prayer, and financial assistance: thanks to Jayne and David Gaddy, Cindra and Daniel Stackhouse Taetzsch, and Colleen and Jerry Sleeth. My parents Yvonne and John Stackhouse, who introduced me (in)to Canadian evangelicalism, have provided extraordinary encouragement in this regard. From their adopted home of
Abilene, Texas, they have whimsically appeared in the acknowledgements of previous publications as (at last it can be told) the ‘Abilene Foundation,’ and no foundation was ever more supportive of its client.

Our two sons, Trevor and Joshua, at ages six and four have passed the stage in which they literally followed Lord Bacon’s dictum that ‘some books are to be tasted, others to be swallowed, and some few to be chewed and digested.’ It is a measure of their mother’s stewardship of husband and home that, unlike many authors, I have few apologies to render to my family for evenings and weekends spent on this project: the boys, happily, have no idea that this book even exists. For that stewardship – strong, sweet, constant, and necessary – I am gratefully delighted to dedicate this book.

JGS
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