W. STANFORD REID

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Priscilla and Stanford Reid on board the *Pelee*, 1960 (courtesy the Estate, Stanford and Priscilla Reid, per Hugh Anderson, executor)

W. Stanford Reid

An Evangelical Calvinist in the Academy

A. DONALD MacLEOD

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To the memory of

ALEXANDER NAPIER MACLEOD

To the future of

ALEXANDER NEWNHAM MACLEOD

The heritage and the hope of

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CANADA

"We are not now that strength which in old days
Moved earth and heaven; that which we are, we are;
One equal temper of heroic hearts,
Made weak by time and fate, but strong in will
To strive, to seek, to find, and not to yield."

Alfred, Lord Tennyson, "Ulysses"

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Preface

Writing this book has been very much a labour of love. Stanford Reid was not only my honours adviser at McGill, he was interim moderator when I served the Mille Isles Presbyterian Church from 1957 to 1959 and, over the years, a frequent visitor and trusted friend with whom I shared many projects and interests. Thus, I cannot claim total objectivity in the composition of this book. At the same time I cannot take credit for his opinions, some of which are highly controversial. He was outspoken and opinionated, and his papers demonstrate that quality of strongly held views.

Many people have travelled with me in this seven-year odyssey of discovery. Stanford Reid's papers are scattered in the archival collections of at least four institutions: Westminster Seminary; the University of Guelph; the Institute for Christian Studies in downtown Toronto; and particularly the Presbyterian Church in Canada (PCC), to whose archives he consigned the bulk of his material, including four indispensable scrapbooks. It would be impossible for me adequately to thank PCC archivists Kim Arnold and Bob Anger for their cheerful assistance. Stanford Reid's papers there are in the process of being meticulously catalogued, a boon I did not have in the early stages of research on this book.

I would like to thank the four trustees of the Priscilla and Stanford Reid Trust, who have provided unfailing encouragement and support. Hugh Anderson, Campbellville, Ontario, as Stanford and Priscilla Reid's executor, was most helpful, giving me precious time just before his untimely death only two years after Stanford Reid. Particularly am

I grateful to Dr E.A. Stewart and Barbara Reid, Stanford's brother and sister-in-law, Knowlton, Quebec, who have likewise cheered me on and expressed appreciation. Their encouragement has been pivotal in the completion of the project.

Other names come to mind. Indeed, there are so many people who have entered into my research that some are bound to be left off what can at best be only a partial list of all my sources. I would like to thank Joy Nugent, Kinnear's Mills, Quebec; Rev. Ross Davidson, Thetford Mines, Quebec; Florence L. Reid, Huntingdon, Quebec; Bernard Kellom, Niagara Falls, Ontario; Margaret Griffiths, Surrey County Council Archives; Helen Whittle, the Storrington and District Museum, West Sussex; Rev. Dr Jim Winter, Storrington; the Honourable Charles Stuart, Farnham, Surrey; Douglas, Earl of Moray, Darnaway Castle, Forres, Scotland; Dr John Moll, Sheffield; Sue Mills, librarian/archivist, Regent's Park College, Oxford; Rev. Phil Miller, Sault Ste Marie; A.R.D. Nesbitt, Toronto; Grace Mullen, archivist, Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia; Earl Robinson, Manchester, New Hampshire; Arthur W. Kuschke, Dresher, Pennsylvania; Mark Frazier Lloyd, director, University of Pennsylvania Archives and Record Centre; Eithne Lee Davis, Carrickfergus, County Antrim, Northern Ireland; Moira Barclay-Fernie, former clerk of the Presbytery of Montreal, Presbyterian Church in Canada; Russell Merrifield, Toronto; Rev. Dr Frank Kik, Fort Mill, South Carolina; Mary Pledger, Victoria, British Columbia; Dr Alistair Stewart, Harrogate; Kim Arnold and Bob Anger, archivists of the Presbyterian Church in Canada; Professor Hereward Senior of McGill University; Principal John Vissers, Dr Clyde Ervine, Librarian Dan Shute, and Caroline O'Connor, all of Presbyterian College; Rev. Dr Barry Mack, St Lambert, Quebec; Rev. George Malcolm, Pickering, Ontario; Rev. Peter Bush, Mitchell, Ontario; Don Nisbet, Wardsville, Ontario; Gordon Burr, senior archivist, Records Management, McGill University Archives; Mme Louise Pelletier, Archives de Montréal; Dr Margaret Sanderson, formerly of the Scottish Records Office, Edinburgh; Professors Terry Crowley, Elizabeth Ewan, Margaret Evans, and Mary Rogers, and Deans David Murray and Murdo MacKinnon, and the late Professor Donald Masters, all of the University of Guelph, along with history department secretary Pat Law MacPherson and Ellen Morrison of their archives; Professor Russell Bishop, Gloucester, Massachusetts; Professor Robert Wilson, Acadia Divinity School, Wolfville, Nova Scotia; Margaret Miller, *Presbyterian Record*, Don Mills, Ontario; Margaret Munro, Saskatoon; Professor John Moir, Port Dover, Ontario; the late Rev. Dr Peter Darch, Guelph; Rev. Dr Mariano DiGangi, Ottawa; Rev. Dr Lorna Hillian, Kelowna, British Columbia; Peter Ellis, Fergus,

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Errors must in every case be attributed to the author and not to those who have so freely given of their time. It was impossible to use all the material they generously shared but much of what was provided will rest in the Priscilla and Stanford Reid Family Fonds in the archives of the Presbyterian Church in Canada in Don Mills, Ontario. As a courtesy, I allowed President Samuel Logan, Westminster Seminary, and President Robert Godfrey, Westminster West Seminary, Escondido, California, to read an early manuscript of chapter 15, but I must take full responsibility for my attempt to represent Stanford Reid objectively and fairly in a bruising and bitter controversy. He would not wish, nor would I, to do harm to an institution to which we both owe so much.

I am grateful to Rev. John Vaudry, Montreal, and his brother Professor Richard Vaudry, King's College, Edmonton, both of whom read the manuscript at a very early stage. Dean Stewart Gill, Trinity College, University of Melbourne, read the original chapter 16 and provided useful insights, as did Rev. Dr Allan Harman, Ocean Grove, Victoria, Australia. My brothers in the New England Reformed Fellowship provided insights when chapter 15 was read as a paper at their September 1998 meeting. I also appreciated the friendship and support of my colleague for, alas, only two years on the Tyndale Seminary faculty: Dr Timothy Larsen, now teaching at Wheaton College, Wheaton, Illinois. I am grateful for the encouragement of his colleague, Professor Mark Noll, whose encouragement came at a crucial point. Thanks also to Professor Marguerite Van Die of Queens University, Kingston, Ontario, who read an early draft.

Among a variety of editors that have screened this book I cite Dodie Riggs of Hyde Park, Massachusetts and Lillian Bray of Gravelbourg, Saskatchewan. Copy editor Lesley Barry, now of the Canadian Medical Association, Ottawa, has been superb in her meticulous care for details and inconsistencies. Rev. William Manson, Brighton, Ontario, was enlisted as a proofreader, a service he performed admirably.

Above all, my thanks to my family: my sons Alex, Toronto, with whom I share a common vocation, and Kenneth, Dublin, who pro-

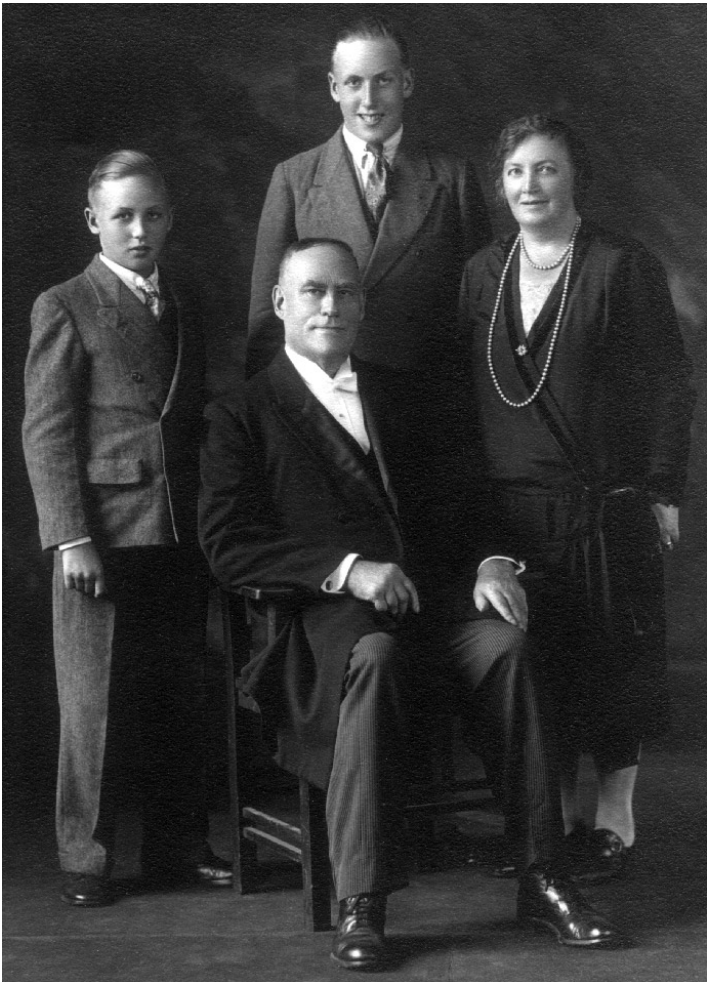
vided invaluable computer help. Finally, completion of this project would have been impossible without the assistance of my wife, Judy, who shares with me the privilege of being adjunct professor of church history at Tyndale Theological Seminary, Toronto. In this case, my profound gratitude is not a matter of conventional etiquette. Without her professional experience as an historian, her patient proofreading, and her unfailing encouragement, this manuscript would never have seen the light of day.

This book is sent out with the desire that those principles for which Stanford Reid stood and which have lapsed in our own day may be rediscovered as the story of his life is told.

A. Donald MacLeod
Brighton, Ontario, Canada
23 February 2004, the feast day of Polycarp, bishop and martyr

Abbreviations

AACS	American Association of Christian Schools
CCF	Co-operative Commonwealth Federation
CRC	Christian Reformed Church
IARFA	International Association for Reformed Faith and Action
IVCF	Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship
LAMP	Life and Mission Project
OPC	Orthodox Presbyterian Church (established 1936)
PCA	Presbyterian Church in America (established 1973)
PCC	The Presbyterian Church in Canada
PC(USA)	Presbyterian Church in the United States of America
RES	Reformed Ecumenical Synod
RPC(ES)	Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (1956/7–1982)
TMR	Town of Mount Royal
UPNA	United Presbyterian Church of North America (1858–1958)
UPUSA	United Presbyterian Church of the United States of America (1958–1983)
WCC	World Council of Churches
WMS	Women's Missionary Society
WSR	William Stanford Reid



The Reid family, 1929: Stewart, W.D., Stanford, Daisy
(courtesy of Dr E.A. Stewart Reid QC)

Stanford Reid in front of the fireplace, Warden's Residence, Douglas Hall, McGill University, 1954
(courtesy Dr E.A. Stewart Reid)

W. Stanford Reid, F. Cyril James, Ray E. Powell, and HRH Prince Philip in front of Bishop Hall at the Residence's official opening 15 May 1962
(courtesy McGill University Archives)

Professors of History Perez Zagorin, W. Stanford Reid, and J.I. Cooper, 1 November 1963
(courtesy McGill University Archives)

Priscilla and Stanford Reid exploring the ruins of Ephesus, summer 1966 (courtesy the Estate, Stanford and Priscilla Reid, per Hugh Anderson, executor)

Stanford Reid made Professor Emeritus at the University of Guelph, 5 October 1979. From left to right: Terry Crowley, Department of History; Chancellor Pauline McGibbon; W. Stanford Reid; President Donald Forster (courtesy Audio Visual services Department, University of Guelph)

W. STANFORD REID

Being a convinced Calvinist I believe that the New Testament clearly teaches that Christ guides his people by his providence. My ministry may be different from most. As a result of my lecturing and writing I am able to take a stand among scholars and since they know my position, I believe that it is a testimony to the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

W. Stanford Reid in a letter, 7 September 1974

Site of Reid's Church, "The Concession" Road, Kinnear's Mills, Quebec (courtesy Sarah MacDonald)

Introduction

There is a large pink granite boulder by a deserted gravel byway in northern Megantic County, rural Quebec. The road to the site has always been known locally as "the Concession," and it lies between the twelfth and thirteenth ranges of the township of Leeds. As one approaches, an inscription on the stone becomes visible. It states simply "This cairn marks the site of Reid's Church, 1854–1952." There is a savage beauty to the Palmer River valley below. Scrub grows where once there were fields of grain. With the help of old photographs and a careful inspection of the topography of the ground, one can stake out the dimensions of a country church once large enough to seat a hundred and eighty worshippers. Alongside the church, the lay of the land discloses the faint outline of a drive shed that once, it was said, could accommodate sixteen horses. There is an eerie silence.

The music of precentor Joseph Reid, who led the church's 1870 Building Committee and contributed sixty dollars for its erection, no longer fills the hillside with the old psalm tunes. The inscription on the cairn serves as an epitaph for a way of life irretrievably gone. Rural anglophone and Scottish Quebec now survives merely as a government-sponsored *patrimoine* for tourists. During summers in nearby Kinnear's Mills, one is greeted by university students dressed in crinoline and hoop skirts attempting to resurrect a past that seems quaint and surreal. Only one family with the name Reid survives of those who filled Reid's Church a century ago. What remains provides an obituary for an era – and a faith – that today seems strangely alien.

Recreating and interpreting the past was the life vocation of William Stanford Reid, Joseph's grandson. "The past is a hobby of Dr Reid's," he stated in a 1950 self-scripted Canadian Broadcasting Corporation program. It was more than a hobby. History was his passion. The study of its history is an obligation on any society, secular or sacred, that seeks self-understanding. Reid did his best to promote such self-awareness and popularize it. As raconteur he could make history come alive. Sometimes the narrative could carry him away. He was at his best providing after-dinner entertainment or livening up a sleepy afternoon lecture with a telling anecdote. Humorous, provocative, irritating, opinionated, no one ever accused him of being boring. But in all that he spoke and wrote there was a sense of loss, an attempt to recapture the significance of events that had been ignored or, worse, misrepresented. He was a champion of unpopular causes, a controversialist who was not afraid to engage even the doughtiest defender of conventional historical wisdom.

That sense of loss was inevitable for a man whose life spanned much of the twentieth century. Stanford Reid was born the son of a minister, his father almost forty-eight, his mother thirty-five, a year before the momentous events of the summer of 1914. Two blocks away from the scene of his birth, in upper Westmount, then home of Canada's business elite, his father's church was being constructed as a powerful – and now mocking – reminder of Canadian Protestant Christendom. The consecration of the new building took place in October of 1914, just as the old certainties were being destroyed by the guns of the trenches in France. The Great War would irretrievably tarnish the shiny new gold leaf of the dome of Stanley Presbyterian Church. Today a thousand new Canadians from the Caribbean sing and sway under it to their holiness rhythms.

Soon there would follow a conflict closer to home. Church Union in Canada pitted Presbyterian against Presbyterian, Unionists against the so-called non-concurring. In these battles Stanford Reid's father, the minister of prestigious Stanley "proudly Presbyterian" Church, became a late entry leader. The decision to stay out of the merger in 1925 would shape and determine his son's future. Once a part of church-going Canada's largest Protestant denomination, the continuing Presbyterians were easily dismissed as a rump, or "stay-outers." Stanford Reid had a cause: keeping the faith of previous centuries, the faith of the Reids for generations, being true to one's roots and history. If he had anything to do with it Moses' bush would continue to burn. As the denomination's motto stated, *Nec tamen consumebatur*: "Neither yet was it consumed."

Like his father before him, by conviction and personality, Reid would become a combative conservative in the new, post–1925 denomination as it searched for an identity. The defining moment for him was leaving Canada and choosing to do academic theological studies at a small American divinity school. His years at Westminster Seminary confirmed him as a confessional loyalist. The Confession was that of 1643, drafted in Westminster Abbey as an ecumenical statement, but in the end defining the Presbyterian – or, as he preferred, "Reformed" – churches. He had been brought up memorizing the Shorter Catechism, as were most Scottish children of his day. At Westminster Seminary his allegiance to that historic creedal statement of Presbyterian belief was affirmed and strengthened. He became an articulate defender of the faith of John Calvin and John Knox, a faith reinterpreted by Abraham Kuyper and Benjamin Warfield. He was one of a small and frequently despised minority of informed and committed Calvinists. He set out to place Calvin and Knox in the context of history. Their lives and legacy became the focus of much of his lifelong historical inquiry and research.

Subsequent education made him unusual at the time among fellow confessional conservatives. Some might dismiss Stanford Reid as "that fundamentalist." They had done that to Westminster Seminary's founder, J. Gresham Machen. Recent scholarship has demonstrated this to be a complete misunderstanding.[1] Machen was no fundamentalist but a confessional Presbyterian. So was his pupil Stanford Reid. The distinction is an important one. Neither man would accept the label "fundamentalist." They did not carry its cultural baggage. Neither, for instance, were teetotallers, and the consumption of alcohol was a litmus test for fundamentalists. They refused to crusade against evolution. Both went to the theatre and had extensive cultural interests. Each was an historian and sought – as Reid said of Machen – "to prove the reliability of the biblical record by a sound historical investigation and analysis of the evidence provided by the documents."[2] Reid agreed when Machen stated categorically: "The centre and core of all the Bible is history."[3] He also approved another statement of Machen's: "The depreciation of the intellect, with the exaltation in the place of it of the feelings or of the will, is, we think, a basic fact in modern life, which is rapidly leading to a condition in which men neither know anything nor care anything about the doctrinal content of the Christian religion, and in which there is in general a lamentable intellectual decline."[4] Neither Machen nor his student Stanford Reid was a fundamentalist.

Even Machen, respected scholar that he was, lacked what Reid went on to gain: an earned doctorate. Reid's came, in 1942, from the prestigious University of Pennsylvania History Department. At the time few who shared his faith in what they called "historic Christianity" had achieved such distinction. Indeed, within that circle there was widespread suspicion of the academy. In the previous half century, Reid's contemporaries had seen their belief system shunted from the heart of American educational life to its periphery. One by one, institutions founded to promote and propagate Christianity had changed course. As a consequence, some orthodox Christians had retreated into anti-intellectualism. Their Bible schools and colleges were often not places of academic inquiry – let alone academic respectability – but rather fortresses in which the mind was regarded as a dangerous deterrent to faith and morals. Always there was a "slippery slope" mentality that looked for certain abandonment of the gospel when an individual went off to study away from a protective cocoon of piety and passion. Stanford Reid was the exception. When *Christianity Today* was founded in 1956 to demonstrate that orthodox Protestantism could be a respectable and responsible option for thinking people, Reid was among the first to be sought out as an editor at large. He had earned a reputation as an academic who had remained true to the "faith once for all delivered to the saints." He could protect the faith of youthful believers in a "pagan" university, be an example and mentor to those seeking a place for head as well as heart, and reverse the brain drain of former fundamentalists who had abandoned their early allegiances in favour of fashionable academic scepticism.

McGill University, where Reid taught for twenty-three years, was one place where a cleric who taught a secular subject would not be regarded as a pariah. In francophone Quebec in the 1940s and 1950s, post-secondary education was dominated by the Roman Catholic Church. McGill, as a bastion of the anglophone establishment, was not averse to sheltering religious professionals even if they taught subjects non-religious. McGill was not like the erstwhile denominational schools of the United States that had shed their faith commitments with relief and in reaction.[5] Reid's Presbyterian commitment was acceptable in a school that owed its existence to the generosity of a Presbyterian benefactor[6] and whose longest serving principal[7] had been sternly and uncompromisingly Christian. Each weekday morning at 9:15 the gates of the university opened for the chairman of the Protestant School Board of Montreal, the minister of First Presbyterian Church, to go from his manse east of the university through its grounds to his office in its McTavish Street headquarters.[8]

Rev. Malcolm Campbell embodied the powerful educational engagement of Presbyterianism.

When the Reids moved to Guelph in 1965, as the Montreal Protestant hegemony was ending, they encountered yet another community where being a Presbyterian minister opened doors rather than closed them. The city's landscape may have been dominated by a church that took its cue from Rome, but Knox and St Andrew's Churches provided a Protestant and Scots alternative. One would expect a man wearing the kilt to follow in the faith of John Knox. In both Montreal and Guelph, Stanford Reid was not penalized by the establishment for his faith, as observant Christian faculty were elsewhere and as he might be today. Within the secular university, he was given the freedom to be unapologetically religious. Ridicule and backstabbing happened but at least it was discreet and muted.

Not that Reid was your typical Presbyterian divine. He stood out against the Christendom model of conventional Protestantism long before Christendom had died. A student founder of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship in 1930, he advocated an evangelical faith that was anything but popular in that era of liberal ascendancy. He turned from what he described as Inter-Varsity's pietism to a sterner, more doctrinal Calvinism, but he was unashamedly willing to count himself an evangelical in the judicatories of his church, as well as in faculty meetings and in the lecture hall. Only two teachers at McGill during his time there were willing to be so numbered: the Plymouth Brother C.P. Martin, professor of anatomy at the Medical School, and W. Stanford Reid. They stood alone.

Reid's faith was anything but defensive. He challenged students (including those who were observant Christians) to be engaged in intellectual pursuits. He rigorously defended the centrality of religious truth in every area of life and refused to ghettoize it. He was fearless in his denunciation of any attempt to marginalize his beliefs. He would take on unpopular causes – such as that of the 1949 Asbestos strikers – and stand out against any form of tyranny, religious or political. A regular contributor to the press, particularly the Montreal *Gazette* and *Montreal Star*, he was articulate and direct, challenging injustice and unafraid of negative reaction. In church assemblies, where he was a frequent participant and irritant, he delighted the laity by exposing the pomposities of ecclesiastical power. His outspokenness aroused strong emotions and exposed profound polarities. In debate he could be formidable.

Throughout his life, Stanford Reid moved in many circles, networking effectively in several milieus: historical, academic, theological, and

cultural. He embraced a wide variety of interests. He was always, almost to the end of his life, in frequent demand as speaker or preacher. He wrote prolifically. He spent much time in research and travel. He would play the piano when asked to at meetings and was willing to preach in French, was passable in German, and taught himself Dutch. He always read the New Testament in the original Greek. But his eclecticism came with a price. As he aged, as with all who have a ready opinion about every subject, he opened himself up to the twin perils of predictability and superficiality.

In spite of the sense of loss that formed a kind of *leitmotif* throughout his life, Reid was a person of confidence and hope. He would frequently state that his theological convictions gave him an antidote to the prevailing pessimism of the times. History provided not a confirmation of downward spiral but a continual reminder of a divine sovereignty that energized the movement of time. So many of his causes appeared to be lost, but he clung to the ultimate purpose of human existence. His achievements were considerable. He taught thousands of students, some of whom he infuriated and a fortunate few he mentored. He goaded associates and students to produce, to research, to write, to publish – always with excellence. The list of institutions that he helped establish is long and impressive: a church in suburban Montreal, a history department in one of Canada's newer universities, a Scottish Studies program, a research facility filled with original sources for Scottish history, graduate programs in several schools.

Stanford Reid, as his life unfolded, was a complex and multi-faceted individual. He was a Canadian original: a man who broke out of the insularity of his homeland and developed an international reputation. His was a significant (if often misunderstood and undervalued) voice in the post-Union Presbyterian Church in Canada. But he was also a typical Canadian achiever: one of a generation who rose to prominence in a post-World War II world of unprecedented opportunity. He not only taught and wrote history, he was a part of the history of his time.

In Australia following retirement, in a publication entitled "Look To The Rock," Stanford Reid would emphasize the importance of maintaining and sustaining a heritage. "Look to the rock" is a quotation from the Old Testament prophet Isaiah. Reid writes: "He is thinking of Israel, the People of God. They have been hewn from a rock, and it is to their roots that he is calling them back. He wants them to realise that they have not come from shifting sand, but from roots which have dug down deep into the soil, which are immoveable and exemplary for them."[9]

Stanford Reid was rooted in everything represented by the old family church on "the Concession Road": family loyalty, a distinctive legacy of intellect and energy, a tradition of disciplined hard work, a respect for educational achievement, a cultural identity as both immigrant Scot and anglophone Quebecker, and, above all, a strong heritage of Christian faith. It is to those roots that we now turn.

1

A Passionate Pedigree
Robust Reids and Second Coming Stanfords

Stanford Reid is best known as a chronicler and preserver of Scotland's history. He proudly wore the kilt and traced his lineage back to a Reid sept of the clan MacGregor. But as always with him, the truth was more complex. William Stanford Reid was half English. While the "William" and the "Reid" represented a Scots legacy, "Stanford," the name by which he was always called, was unmistakably Sassenach. His mother was London born, of working-class stock. His was a dual Scots and English heritage, tempered on his father's side by three generations in Canada, and seasoned with a clear Quebec anglophone identity.

The bloodlines were strong in William Stanford Reid. In him the Reid genes, shaped in his father's case by environment as much as heredity, were unmistakably present. There was a Reid physiognomy that made him immediately visually identifiable. His father was, like all the Reids, an individual of strong opinions, shaped by his rise from rural poverty to leading churchman — an ascent not uncommon in his generation of self-made men. Articulate, forceful, and controversial, his years of leadership in Canada's largest Protestant denomination made him a figure of considerable *gravitas*. Stanford Reid's mother was one of those remarkable Victorian and Edwardian women who shaped an empire. His parents' lives up to the time of his birth were pivotal in forming him. An understanding of who they were and what they had already achieved is essential for grasping the complex and often contradictory man their son became.

William Reid, William Stanford Reid's great-grandfather, came from Scotland to Canada via the United States in 1828. A farmer from

Muthill in Perthshire, he had been evicted when the crops had failed for two seasons and he was unable to pay the rent. With daughter Ann, Will and his wife, Jean, set off for Hoboken, New Jersey, then a peaceful and pastoral village across from Manhattan. After a brief and unhappy time farming there, now with two additional children, the family left for Canada. They made their way up the Hudson River to Albany and then, through Lake Champlain, along the Richelieu to the St Lawrence, finally disembarking at St Basil across from Quebec City. There Will left his family and with two bachelor friends proceeded for seventy miles south along the recently opened Craig's Road to a settlement named Leeds. He built a temporary cabin and then called for his family. Life on the fourteenth range of Leeds, where they had settled, was a hard scrabble. An 1837 petition to the government in Quebec, signed by eighteen heads of family, requested relief in the payment of land rents. The local factor, in a letter accompanying their petition to the governor in Quebec, pleaded with the government to grant a delay because "unless measures of amelioration are held out to them the settlement would speedily return to the original wilderness and their improvements become null and void."[1] Farming was at best marginal, the weather uncertain, the land rocky and barren, and a poor crop meant lean times in the winter.

In Leeds four more children were added to the family. Born in 1838, Stanford's grandfather, Joseph Reid, was the youngest. The children grew up in a tightly knit, interdependent community. Of the eighteen names on the 1837 petition only one separates William Reid from that of Andrew Dunn. Dunn's daughter Janet would marry Joseph Reid. Andrew Dunn was Lowland Scots, from the Border: slow, thorough, and dependable. The Reids were emotional, artistic, and stubborn, or "typically Highland," as Stanford Reid later characterized them.

Joseph Reid married Janet Dunn, described as "a famous beauty,"[2] when he was twenty. Joseph comes across in family lore as larger than life, with a quick temper, a reverence for book learning, an insatiable appetite for work, and a strong piety. He had dislocated his hip as a child and, lacking adequate medical care, used a cane the rest of his life. His share of the family acreage was inadequate to support his expanding family. To augment their income, he took up photography, taking tintypes at county fairs during the off season. At Reid's Church he was both Sunday School superintendent and precentor, leading the praise with his "splendid tenor voice." Joseph Reid's oldest son, William Dunn Reid, remembered him as "a deeply religious man," with family worship observed morning and evening "no matter what the hurry might be or what visitors might be in the home." Sundays between church services were spent memorizing the Shorter Catechism

or reading a sermon, usually by Charles Haddon Spurgeon, or familiar classics of religious devotion such as Baxter's *Saint's Everlasting Rest*, Allen's *Alarm To The Unconverted*, and Doddridge's *Rise and Progression of Religion in the Soul*. "I had read them all before I was eighteen years of age," William Dunn would recall.

William Dunn Reid, Stanford's father, always known as W.D., was the second of the eight children. In his unpublished autobiography, written in his seventies, he described his childhood as "hard but happy." Schooling, in an old log building on the Reid farm, was sporadic. The children might attend for four or five months, but on other occasions there might be no school at all. Much of what they learned was self-taught. After a day in the woods, W.D. went through Sangster's *Arithmetic*, Lenny's *Grammar,* and Goldsmith's *British History*, and worked on his penmanship.

W.D. was accident-prone, headstrong, and impetuous. One incident stands out from his childhood. As was the custom, the minister was expected to make an annual visitation to each home in the congregation. Prior to that visit, a chapter of the Bible would be assigned to the children to study so that when he arrived, he could ask questions as to what they had understood. "On one of his visits he had bungled me up somewhat on the 25th chapter of Matthew," W.D. later wrote. " I made up my mind I would not be caught again." As head of the family, Joseph summoned the children to come to the minister's Bible drill. Instead, W.D. took off to the woods. There he pondered "the many woes of a boy in a home visited by the minister." As he waited, he thought, "I am in for it anyway, so I may as well make it something worthwhile." He took a stone and threw it through the window of the room in which the catechizing was taking place. Retribution inevitably followed: "That night I went to bed counting how many years it would be until I would be able to thrash my father."

In 1880, at the age of forty, nine months after the birth of her eighth child,[3] Janet Dunn suddenly succumbed to mastoiditis. W.D. never forgot the day his mother died: "Getting into my bed that night, I remember saying to myself, 'This is the first night I have ever gone to bed without a mother.'" While Joseph was away on one of his forays to county fairs, Elizabeth, as the oldest and fourteen at the time of her mother's death, cared for the rest of the children. W.D., next in line, assumed responsibility for his siblings. The children became self-reliant and self-sufficient and stayed close throughout the rest of their lives. For the motherless children, whose father was frequently absent, it was "one for all and all for each."

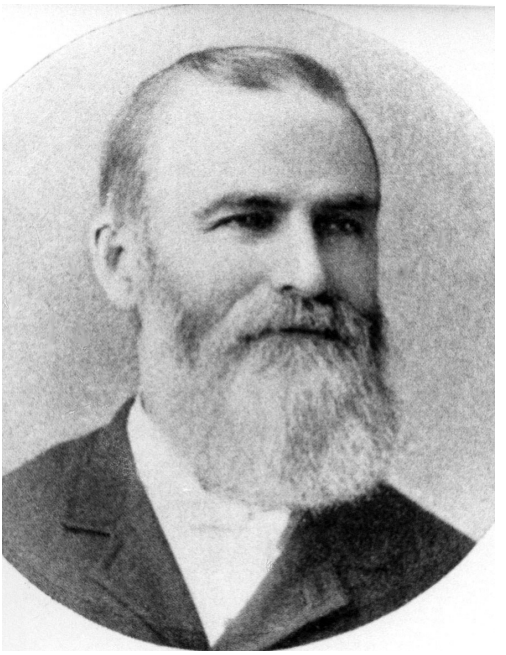
At seventeen, W.D. joined the 55th Battalion of the Megantic Light Infantry, Number 4 Company, and went away from home for the first

time for a fortnight's drill. As the only English-speaking Protestant battalion among 5,000 cadets there was bitter rivalry between them and "the Frenchies." That autumn, living in a deserted house in Leeds village, he prepared for an elementary diploma exam in Sherbrooke. On its successful completion, he applied to teach in a nearby school at fourteen dollars a month but lost out when a local woman outbid him for twelve.

What was he to do with his life? When he turned eighteen, W.D. announced to his father that he would not be staying on the farm. He was the first of the four boys to make the break. Only one son, John, remained on old homestead. The other two, Andrew and Allan, followed W.D. into the ministry and together they became known in the church as "The Quebec Trio."[4] Five years younger than W.D., Andrew was, according to W.D.'s son, "a typical Highlander, high strung, quick to take offence and just as quick to forgive." Allan, the seventh of the eight children and twelve years younger, was more a Dunn, "Lowland with a great capacity for hard work, a consummate ability for organizing and for legal and political strategy and action." W.D., as the oldest and lifelong leader of the trio, combined Reid and Dunn traits, embracing "the vigour and activism of Andrew" with "a large fund of Allan's common sense and logical approach."

Their sister Eva was arguably even more remarkable and went further than any of her brothers. The sixth child, she moved to New York City while still in her teens. A stenographer by day, she took night courses to qualify for medical training. One of the first women graduates of Cornell Medical School, she chose psychiatry as her specialty, working the 4,800-bed St Elizabeth's Hospital in Washington, D.C. with William Alanson White, pioneer of the "new psychiatry." Eva went on to direct a women's mental institution in Talmage, California, and then was superintendent for all psychiatric institutions in the state of California. For her service in France during the First World War, she was awarded the *Croix de guerre* by the French government. Her remarkable career concluded with an appointment as professor of psychiatry at the University of California in Berkeley. On her death, in 1940, the *Montreal Star* eulogized Eva Reid's "brilliant career in medical circles in the south."[5] Eva epitomized the Reid tradition: academic brilliance, professional achievement, public service, and disciplined hard work.

That tradition also stood W.D. in good stead. Leaving the farm at eighteen, he attended St Francis College in Richmond in Quebec's Eastern Townships, working as a janitor to pay his way. It was here, with the encouragement and the preaching of local Presbyterian minister John MacLeod, that W.D. publicly professed Christian faith and joined



Donald Harvey MacVicar (courtesy Presbyterian Church in Canada Archives PCCA)

the church. Two years of study followed at Morrin College, Quebec, a feeder school to McGill. He now qualified for third year arts at McGill but had no money. Increasingly, though, he felt a call to the ministry. He wrote Donald Harvey MacVicar, principal of Presbyterian College in Montreal, which was affiliated with McGill University, and explained his predicament. By return mail, MacVicar wrote: "Come right on into the Presbyterian College, and if you let me know when you come, I will meet you at the station. Don't worry about finances, as I will get you tutoring that will get you through all right."

On 15 September 1888, at the age of twenty-three, W.D. Reid arrived in Montreal. He recalled the day years later: "I saw Montreal for the first time, not knowing a soul in the big city with its 250,000 inhabitants. Little did I think that for the next fifty-seven years it was to be my home most of the time."[6] As he settled at the college, Donald MacVicar dropped by his room. "Next to my father, I don't think any other man wielded such an influence upon me as did Dr MacVicar. He was a great preacher, a fine executive and organizer, and behind a

somewhat severe exterior was a very kind heart and a splendid sense of humour. I shall never forget him."

Nor would he, or his son Stanford, ever lose the stamp Donald Harvey MacVicar left on their theology. W.D. was enlisted by MacVicar to be a strict confessionalist, a position to which he and his son would adhere unflinchingly over the next century. The nature of confessional subscription by those teaching in Presbyterian theological schools was under intense scrutiny. The 1881 General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland had dismissed professor William Robertson Smith, anticipating its American counterpart's removal of professor Charles Augustus Briggs a decade later, both for creedal laxity. When the Presbyterian Church in Canada was formed in 1875, the basis of union (as in a previous merger in 1861) had been "the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, being the inspired word of God, are the supreme and infallible rule of faith and life." Alongside these were placed, as "subordinate standards," the Westminster Confession of Faith, with the Larger and Shorter Catechisms. The only exceptions to the doctrine therein contained were statements in the Confession dealing with matters of church and state. MacVicar, in a symposium article in the *Presbyterian College Journal* titled "The Westminster Confession of Faith," written during W.D.'s second year at the College, after citing attempts for confessional change in other Presbyterian churches, confidently stated that:

> We have said enough to show in a general way the nature and extent of the current movement in favour of revision, reconstruction or relaxed subscription. To Canada belongs the honor of being conservative in this respect. The Presbyterian Churches here have turned their energies in other directions and spent their strength in practical work. They have been engrossed with the care of a great Home Mission field, embracing the larger half of the North American Continent, and have established successful missions to the heathen in the South Sea Islands, and in India and China. They have studied the things which make for peace, avoiding unnecessary debates of all sorts, and, under the guiding power of the Spirit of God, the Presbyterianism of the Dominion presents to the world an unbroken front.[7]

Within only three years MacVicar's boast would have a hollow ring.

At the age of seventy-one, MacVicar was found dead at his desk on 15 December 1902 by students concerned that he had not arrived for a lecture after returning from a meeting of the French Evangelization Committee at Montreal's Knox Church. Reid, in his subsequent tribute to MacVicar as systematic theologian, emphasized the three pillars of his faith. "He held firmly," he noted, "his belief in

the plenary inspiration of the Scriptures. He believed that not only a part, but the whole book from cover to cover, is the word of God." Never was he without a Bible in the classroom. "He would ransack it from end to end, till he was sure that his doctrine was grounded upon its truth."[8]

The substitutionary atonement of Jesus Christ was the "one doctrine which he seemed to emphasize more than [any] other." His classes heard him frequently repeat the words of I Peter: "He bore our sins in His own body on the tree." And, in the last years of his life, W.D. noted a third distinctive: "the work of the Holy Spirit in the world." "He seemed to me" Reid observed, "to emphasize this latter doctrine more and more as the days went by."[9]

These three doctrines identified MacVicar clearly as not only a confessionalist but also an evangelical. W.D. made them his own but he also added a fourth which would tilt him toward fundamentalism. In 1903 W.D. stated, "I have held [premillenialism] strongly for some time."[10] It is not sure when he became a premillenialist. It was not the influence of MacVicar who, in keeping with most Reformed theologians, was an amillenialist. Amillenialists believed when the Bible spoke of a millennium it referred to the time between the first and second coming of Christ, not a future event and they did not get caught up in what they dismissed as fatuous speculation based on far-fetched Biblical interpretation.

Eschatology – the doctrine of the last things, the end of the age – was at the turn of the twentieth century a major preoccupation of many evangelicals. The belief that Jesus would establish, on his return, a thousand-year rule on earth became a litmus test of whether you were truly committed to the fundamentals of the faith. Premillenialism – particularly the dispensational variety – was a new concept to Calvinists and was alien to the Reformed faith. It was first introduced to Canadian Presbyterians by the American Henry Martyn Parsons, minister of Toronto's Knox Church from 1880 to 1901.[11]

W.D.'s son Stanford would inherit from his father the three pillars of MacVicar's theology – the plenary inspiration of the Bible, the vicarious atonement of Christ and the person and work of the Holy Spirit. But in eschatology he followed MacVicar, not his father, dissociating himself from premillenialism, and becoming a staunch amillenialist. In doing so he distanced himself from fundamentalism and all that premillenialism brought with it, accepting an active engagement with contemporary culture to establish the kingdom of God here on earth rather than a pious withdrawal from it in anticipation of an imminent return of Jesus to set up a kingdom for which Christians had no responsibility other than saving souls.

At the end of his first year at Presbyterian College Montreal, 1890, Reid needed employment. Hesitantly, he applied to the Presbyterian Church in Canada for a summer mission field. The morning after he had submitted his application, after a sleepless night, he asked for it to be returned. He was told that it had already been posted. Still, as an arts student, he knew he had little chance of acceptance. But when the list of appointees was put up on the board a few days later, to his "amazement and horror" he discovered that he had been posted to an important three-point pastoral charge near Owen Sound, Ontario. Quickly Reid managed an exchange and accepted a posting to two small anglophone Quebec villages, Avoca and Harrington. W.D. was informed that the congregation consisted of "exceedingly nice people, mostly Highlanders, with a sprinkle of North of Ireland Presbyterians." His two summers there established patterns of ministry that endured for two generations and set not only him but also his son on course.

His diffidence as he came to his first Sunday's service was in marked contrast to the later confidence he projected. The Reids were like that: insecurities lurked below the surface but were rarely admitted. His immediate challenge was weekly sermon preparation. A set of Matthew Henry's commentaries, sold him on credit by Stanley Church elder and bookseller William Drysdale, became his mainstay in preparation and secured his homiletic style of Bible exposition. His first sermon developed a theme for subsequent ministry: "Now are we ambassadors for Christ" (II Corinthians 5:29). For the next forty-seven years, he would meticulously record, on his carefully filed sermon notes, details about the occasion on which the message was preached and how many attended. Fifty years later, he leafed back to that sermon and reported from a notation on it that there were "15 present in the morning" in Avoca Church, and, after a treacherous crossing of the Rouge River, six in the afternoon at "the Maskilunge Schoolhouse." His son would follow the exact same procedure, though Stanford Reid destroyed all his father's available sermons when W.D. died.[12]

That first Sunday he made a resolution: he would never bring his notes into the pulpit. "My ideal in delivering a sermon," he later explained, "has always been for the preacher to stand straight up and look his congregation squarely in the eye, and say what he has to say, with all the power that God gives him." Like father, like son: Stanford Reid never brought a note into the pulpit in all his fifty-plus years of preaching.

In his ministry Stanford Reid would maintain a pattern of systematic annual pastoral visitation learned from his father. That summer in Avoca and Harrington W.D. set about to visit all the homes in the

community, Presbyterian or not. "Methodists, Anglicans, Baptists, Roman Catholics and Presbyterians – from all I received a most hearty welcome." In old age he would say that "I have systematically followed the plan of regular visits to all homes once or twice a year. It pays." In spite of his no-nonsense exterior, W.D., having come up the hard way, was warmly pastoral and demonstrated deep compassion. "During my long ministry, many a night's sleep has been lost because of 'the sorrows of others casting their shadows over me.'"

Unlike many fellow students at the time, he saw the ministry not as a profession but as a calling: "I began to feel the burden of responsibility weighing more heavily upon me day by day." Racked by self-doubt that first summer, he began to question whether his place "was in the ministry after all." Then, although "never emotional nor mystical," he distinctly heard a voice in the darkness. "Go right on, I will be with thee for I have much people in this place." The word left an indelible impression: "It seemed as if I were in the very presence of the Master Himself. A strange joy and exhilaration took hold of me and I made a new dedication of my life to Him and to His service. Never have I had such an experience either before or since, but the influence of it remains with me to this day."

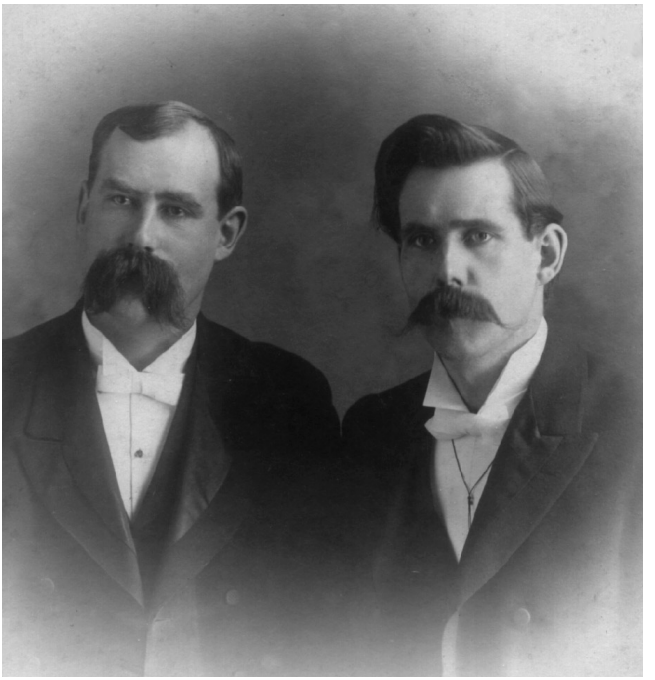
W.D.'s second summer in Avoca and Harrington witnessed an unusual and unforgettable phenomenon not exceptional elsewhere but seldom seen in Canada. "The Revival," as it became known, broke out in his two churches. The experience created an expectation for congregational life that would be a continuing prayer of his for every church he subsequently served. Reports of what happened in the summer of 1890, handed down to his son, also made Stanford Reid long for a similar visitation for the Presbyterian Church in Canada. As a Reformation scholar, Stanford frequently described what happened in the sixteenth century as a "radical renewal of the Church." Toward the end of his life, he would write passionately: "God still is sovereign ... Christ is still King ... as He brought renewal and revival to the Church in the past, so He can and in His own good time will, bring revival and reformation to the contemporary Church."[13] Stanford Reid's pessimism about the future of the Presbyterian Church in Canada as he grew older was tempered by the hopeful prayer that God could do again for the church at large what God had done in his father's ministry in the summer of 1890 in Avoca and Harrington.

"The Revival" started in a quiet way. In August, W.D. invited a friend, a June graduate of the College, to conduct a week of special meetings. The first evening there was no response. True to his pastoral approach, W.D. went out calling the next day to find out why. As he went door to door, a member admitted to him that he held "a terrible

grudge" against another man in the church. He admitted "that is why God could not work last night." Reid persuaded him to state publicly at the start of the second service that he had forgiven the man who had wronged him. The effect on the small community was immediate. The service that night concluded with an invitation: "If there is anyone here who would like to be saved, will you hold up your hand?" The stirring in the congregation was too much for "a real old-time Presbyterian elder," who shot back: "There are lots here who want to be saved, but they don't believe in doing it that way. We are Presbyterian here, and that is only a Methodist trick." But the response was instantaneous and lasting. At the communion service at the end of the summer, some sixty-five new members joined the two small congregations. "I have had many experiences in religious work," Reid later reminisced, "but never have I seen the Spirit of God work as it did during those three weeks of meetings at Avoca and Harrington. It seemed as if the windows of Heaven were opened and the Holy Spirit poured out on both congregations."

"The Revival" made W.D. a man known for bringing life to dying causes. In January 1891 he was asked to rescue a mission that prestigious downtown St Paul's Church had established twenty years earlier in a poor area of Montreal squeezed between the Victoria Bridge, the St Lawrence River, and the Lachine Canal. His work was so successful that the church was formally constituted as an independent congregation. During his six years in the Victoria Church, half as a theological student, half as an ordained minister, the church grew to 300 members. In spite of flattering calls to more prestigious pulpits on graduation from Presbyterian College he stayed with his parish in "the Goose Village." On 3 June 1893, at the age of twenty-eight, W.D. Reid was ordained by the Presbytery of Montreal. He had put himself through arts and theology while pastoring effectively. It was an impressive achievement for a farm boy who had started with nothing but discipline and faith.

At Victoria Church, a significant friendship developed between W.D. and a fellow student at Presbyterian College whom he had invited to come and help share the work. During the winter of 1891 George Pidgeon and W.D. Reid took services alternately and then rotated during the summer to give each an opportunity to go home and help on the family farm. At Victoria Church, George Pidgeon met his wife, Helen Ball. His younger brother Leslie was W.D.'s brother Andrew's roommate at Morrin College, Quebec. The Reids and the Pidgeons had much in common: both families were rural anglophone Quebeckers, both came from the Free Church side of the 1875 merger of the Presbyterian Church in Canada, and both sets of brothers came to McGill



Brothers W.D. and Andrew Reid, students at Presbyterian College, Montreal, *c.* 1892
(courtesy Joy Nugent)

following studies at Morrin College. Their close friendship was a significant relationship that would have unforeseen consequences during the Church Union controversy.

Presbyterian College during W.D. Reid's time was going through profound theological change. His response to these new currents would mark him and affect his son, bringing out the Reids' natural combativeness. When W.D. was a student at Presbyterian College Montreal, there were four on the faculty.[14] Principal Donald Harvey MacVicar taught systematic theology and expected students to return his notes to him verbatim in examinations. John Scrimger was more Socratic in his teaching of the New Testament. Scrimger was also more open to "higher" or textual criticism of the Bible than MacVicar, something that was only apparent after he was appointed principal in 1909. Daniel Coussirat, a Huguenot, had been brought from France to train clergy for French-Canadian evangelization. When enthusiasm waned for this project, he branched into Old Testament studies and became an instructor in Hebrew. His theology has been analysed as "a melange of

evangelicalism and modernism."[15] The views of the professor of church history and apologetics, John Campbell, the fourth member of the faculty, led to the last heresy trial in the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

On 26 February 1893, John Campbell delivered a lecture to Queen's University theological students entitled "Perfect Father or the Perfect Book?" He declared that Biblical passages that spoke of God as vengeful or unloving were imperfectly inspired, advancing the concept of "gradual revelation." In September, shortly after W.D.'s ordination, the Presbytery of Montreal launched a heresy trial with colleagues Principal MacVicar and Professor Scrimger as prime accusers. The charge was upheld. Only three voted to exonerate Campbell, among them, surprisingly (in the light of his later reputation as a heresy hunter), W.D. himself. He obviously held Campbell in great personal affection as "a sensitive, high-strung Highlander ... much beloved by his students."[16] The charge of heresy was subsequently thrown out, on appeal, by the next higher legislative body in the denomination, the Synod of Montreal and Ottawa. Reid attended the two-day synod debate and, at the time, indicated his pleasure that Campbell was restored to the post from which he had been suspended for the year.

In later life W.D. was known as a controversialist. He invited to his pulpit separatist T.T. Shields of Jarvis Street Baptist Church, Toronto and was happy to welcome revivalist evangelist John McNeill, a denominational gadfly, into his pulpit. W.D. was a fighter for orthodoxy, outspoken and at times combative. In the 1930s, one irate professor at Presbyterian College, whose orthodoxy he had challenged, would write: "I should like to advise you personally, however, to look very narrowly at anything that comes from W.D. Reid. Dr Reid was telling preposterous lies about my own teaching,"[17]

W.D.'s increasing concern about new theological trends in the Presbyterian Church in Canada in the 1890s was strengthened by a year spent in Scotland. In the summer of 1896, W.D. resigned from Victoria Church, sailed for Liverpool, and travelled on to Edinburgh and enrolled for the autumn session at Free Church College, which was then becoming known for its advocacy of German Biblical studies. There he audited lectures from two professors: Andrew Bruce Davidson in Old Testament and Marcus Dods in New Testament. Davidson was a compelling and magnetic teacher who made German Biblical critical studies attractive to two generations of Free Church ministers. Dods, equally winsome, had recently jettisoned earlier traditional views on Biblical inspiration. His appointment as a Free Church professor in 1889 and the collapse of his heresy trial in the 1890 General Assembly, signalled an ideological shift in the denomination.