**The Reverend William Bell: One Emigrant’s Adjustments to Upper Canada**

In the early 1840s William Thompson, a Scottish textile worker, came to British North America in an attempt to improve his health. On returning home he, like many travellers before, published a book on his travels and included in it an account of the dissatisfaction which he found among some of the Scottish emigrants:

As a general rule, I found that those who had emigrated, after arriving at middle life, regretted that they had come out; or at least thought that they could have done well, and been more comfortable, if they had remained at home....Those who had arrived at middle life are not the best subjects for emigration. Those who had come out early in life, or have been born here, all liked it.¹

The focus of this paper, the Reverend William Bell, is a man whose life makes a lie of Thompson’s generalization.²

From the time of his arrival in Upper Canada in 1817, and after his personal arrival “at middle life”, until his death in Perth in 1857, William Bell showed a remarkable ability to adapt to his new home, and also to alter constructively the society around him. Yet as Thompson’s comment suggests, in many ways Bell did not seem like ideal material for a happy emigrant. At 37, he was entering middle life, and had all of the responsibilities of a large family. He was never, he claimed, “robust in stature, or vigorous in health.”³ An additional problem lay in the fact that in the months before he left
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Scotland, his wife Mary had indicated that she would rather stay in Scotland without Bell, than move to the savage new land with him. Despite these unfavourable factors, Bell and his family came to Upper Canada, adapted and prospered. In part it was due to the remarkable personality and immense will power of the minister and in part it was due to his Scottish and family traditions.

Obviously the ease or difficulty with which Bell, his family, or any individual emigrant adjusted to the new conditions in Upper Canada was undoubtedly a product of many factors. Personal experience, private expectation, and individual personality were probably of equal importance to the actual physical conditions and social milieu faced on the frontier. Some settlers were more resistant, more capable, or more flexible and therefore accustomed themselves to a new situation which might force another emigrant to return to Britain or to move on to the United States.

William Bell had been born in 1780, in Aidrie, near Glasgow, the eighth and youngest child of an architect and builder. He had less than a year's formal education before apprenticing as a carpenter. Nevertheless he was a voracious reader when he could get books and became remarkably well read. In 1802, with two friends, Bell left for London where he became a carpenter's assistant, and where he joined the Secessionist Church. He brought a new wife into London in 1803 and for the next seven years his business prospered and his family grew. In 1810, however, he embarked on a long contemplated new career. He returned to Scotland to attend university and to become a Presbyterian minister. Five years later, years in which he supported his family by teaching school, he was at last licensed by the Presbytery of Glasgow. For the next two years he had to preach in scattered points in the Presbyteries of Perth, Glasgow and Kilmarnoch. In 1816, the settlers in the new military settlement around Perth, Upper Canada, requested a minister, and on March 4, 1817, Bell was ordained by the Presbytery of Edinburgh and assigned "the pastoral charge of the Settlement on the Rideau in the Province of Upper Canada." One month later Bell, his wife Mary, and their six children sailed for Upper Canada.

Bell's adjustment, as revealed in his journal, was remarkably smooth in many regards. On the most basic level, the minister adapted well to the harsh physical surroundings which he faced right

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from the start of his migration. The Bell family's passage to Perth was not an easy one. The vessel they were on was a returning timber ship, and the captain was an irreligious drunkard. The porridge which they received was "sometimes so abominably dirty that it was impossible to taste it, and sometimes shamefully burnt." The beef was "so old and ill-preserved that it was black, stinking rotten and bitter to the taste." Mrs. Bell was so sick by the time they reached Quebec that she was confined to bed for four days. The trip up the St. Lawrence was full of difficulties, and their living conditions were only slightly better than when they were on board the ship. After Bell left his family at Prescott and walked the rugged trail into Perth, he was so badly bitten by mosquitoes that, in his words

My cranium was so covered with bumps that a phrenologist would have been at no loss to discover the bump of anything you pleased."

Despite all these problems, and many more, when Bell summarized the whole long journey, he was remarkably optimistic

"Nearly twelve weeks had now elapsed, since we took leave of our friends in Scotland. The difficulties we had experienced on our way to this place were numerous, but not more so than we had anticipated. With a family of six children, the eldest only fourteen years of age, we could not reasonably expect it to be merely a pleasure voyage....we were poorly accommodated, but we had the comfort of reflecting, if it was any comfort, that we were as well off as our neighbours, and we studied contentment."

During the next forty years Bell established a church in Perth, and travelled widely in both summer and winter to preach to his congregation and to attend the Synod meetings in Prescott and Brockville. His diaries mention numerous journeys in blizzards and desperate cold, or in scorching sun and summer heat, but seldom or ever are they presented as remarkable, or even very unusual. In fact the only aspect of the climate which Bell was constantly amazed at was the rapid shifts of weather, the temperature rising or falling 40 or 50 degrees, and the violence of some storms. One of his typical
On Saturday, 14th July, very early in the morning [3:00 o'clock], I set out, accompanied by Mr. Holliday, for Beckwith, to assist at the communion. The morning was cool, and the ripening grain, spread over many a smiling field, gave a look of plenty to the country. The road, for the first 12 miles, was tolerable, and our ride was pleasant. The swamp, at McLellan’s however, was very bad, and we got through with much difficulty, by driving our horses before us. They were to the belly in mud, in most places, for there was no solid bottom, and they were repeatedly thrown down by getting their feet entangled in roots of cedar trees. This swamp was only half a mile, but there was another, a little further on, a mile across, and much worse to pass. We were told however it might be passed at a particular place; but after making the attempt and getting both ourselves and horses rolled in mud, to say nothing of the danger of losing them altogether, for it was as bad as any peat bog, we were forced to turn back and leave them at the next farmhouse. We then proceeded on foot, and got through, by the assistance of logs and bushes, the best we could. The heat was excessive, and the mosquitoes, which are always more numerous in swamps than anywhere else, annoyed us dreadfully. At 10, A.M. we reached Mr. Buchanan’s, where we met a kind reception. A 12, I preached in the barn, to about 150 people. In the afternoon, the heat and fatigue having made me unwell, I went to bed, but the evening breeze revived me and I got up and spent some hours among my friends.7

Bell appeared to accept, equally calmly, the crude condition of life and worship in his first decade on the frontier. Two incidents, of the many which he records, are typical of his ability to see humour in his rugged new lifestyle, even when it touched upon so serious a matter as his ministerial duties (and for Bell, nothing was more serious than that). In the first episode, Bell was holding a meeting at the home of one of his parishioners when a stranger’s dog

which had been shut out to prevent his quarrelling with another inside, took the opportunity of entering. The one belonging to

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the house, being rather pugnatically inclined, flew at him and a
desperate battle ensued. In the struggle the combatants ap-
proached rather too near a cat, which was nursing her family in
the corner, for her ideas of security. Being alarmed for the safety
of her children, she flew at the strange dog and scratched
unmercifully, and though beat off repeatedly, she returned to the
charge with a fury and a perseverance I have never seen
equalled. Though the dog did not seem willing to bite her, yet he
was at last compelled to do so in his own defense; but when he
did so he did it in good earnest for she roared out murder, in
her own language, ran through the fire, which was on the floor,
and up the corner by the logs of which the building was
composed. But, in her hurry, she missed her hold, and fell
directly into a barrel half full of flour. Her colour, previous to this
dip, has been mostly black, but upon her again emerging from
the barrel, which she did with all convenient speed, it was
considerably altered. This however she did not mind, but again
flew up the wall, and being more successful in her second
attempt, she reached a small shelf on which lay a cheese, on top
of which she seated herself threatening vengeance against her
enemy. In the mean time, a hen which at my entrance had been
quietly seated on her nest in a corner, seemed at first very
unwilling to be disturbed. But the war which raged in her
neighbourhood having alarmed her for her own safety, she fled
as fast as her wings and feet would carry her across the fire
place, by which she raised so much dust that it filled the house
with a shower of ashes. It is not to be supposed that we were idle
while this was going on. Sticks and umbrellas were quickly
employed upon the belligerent to bring them to reason and
submission, for its was evident that the non-intrusion principle
was not recognized among us. But the end of all wars is peace.
Tranquillity was at length restored, and all being seated I
proceeded to discharge the duty for which I had come.8

A similar incident took place not too long after in his very
church. Bell had been upset by dogs playing, albeit quietly, in front of
his pulpit during a sermon. As a result he discouraged his
congregation from bringing their dogs into church and requested
that the doorkeeper throw out the more troublesome of the canines.

The doorkeeper, thinking that this was a general order to put every dog out that came his way, carried on indiscriminate war against them. Some of them having bit him in his attempts to catch them, he became more furious than before. He sometimes squeezed them so hard that they howled with pain. At one time he made some of the people laugh. He had got hold of one by the neck and was dragging him out when another attempted to enter when the door was opened. This he laid hold of by the tail and the figure he made carrying the both out, the one by the head and the other by the tail, while both complained loudly of the treatment they were receiving, was too ludicrous for the time and place.9

It was not simply the physical conditions which Bell faced which were new to him. The settlement on the Rideau which was just filling up presented the minister with a religious and ethnic pluralism which he had not encountered in Scotland. Bell was somewhat surprised when he arrived at the cosmopolitan nature of the settlement.

An opinion prevails at home that this settlement is inhabited chiefly by Scotch people, but this is not the case. There are people from all parts of Europe, but the majority are discharged soldiers.10

Bell fully understood that the soldiers and their families, some 1100 odd, were often not "the best members of society", and that because they came from various religious groups at home "everyone wished to introduce their own sect." Moreover Bell realized that "much prudence and caution will be necessary in order to unite them into one community."11 Apparently Bell followed his own advice because his life in Perth over forty years was marred by relatively few clashes with other religious or ethnic groups.

It is perhaps not surprising that a minister whose first priority was to bring religion to an area sadly lacking in any clergyman, should see a positive benefit in any religion. When Bell preached in Elmsely and Wolford Townships, 20 miles from Perth, and found a
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Methodist already there, the Scot was content to focus his future energies elsewhere. In 1823, Bell helped start an inter-denominational Sunday School. The Episcopalians, Presbyterians and the Methodists each provided 3 male and 3 female teachers and the ministers took turns taking to the children. His willingness to work with other ministers and to give credit to other religious efforts, did not mean, however, that Bell did not find fault with the other churches. Recounting his experience while attending a Methodist camp meeting, of well over 500 people, he wrote:

Brother Hood was addressing the congregation when I arrived, in his manner nothing extravagant — excepting his screaming at the top of his voice, much declaiming in a desultory and confusing way .... His language often disgusting, sometimes profane — at all times very incorrect, and his regard of arrangement, it set all rules of composition in defiance.\textsuperscript{12}

Bell saw the same lack of intellectual and social rigour in the Catholic church. The Christmas Eve service always provided him with evidence of clerical toleration of "debauchery". In order to get ready for the service, the Roman Catholics visited Mrs. Cameron's tavern. Many got drunk, quarrelled and began to fight.

But the landlady turned them out of the house and they fought in the street by moonlight. At first there was only one quarrel, and only one pair of combatants, but a crowd having gathered, and most of them being drunk, they took different sides, and instead of one battle, there was a dozen ... But the time of meeting in the Church being at hand they all proceeded thither. Some of them could sit upon benches, but others preferred lying upon the floor, where in a few minutes some of them were fast asleep.\textsuperscript{13}

The priest woke them for the sacrament.

In the Rideau settlement Bell was in contact with a variety of ethnic groups, in part because of the presence of the disbanded De Wattville regiment recruited on the continent of Europe during the Napoleonic war, and offered land in Upper Canada at the end of hostilities. Bell's assessment of most of these groups seems well-
balanced and mild, and in sharp contrast to statements made by some of his colleagues. The French Canadians, Bell found, although rough looking, were "pious" and "in general very civil and accommodating"\(^{14}\) (in contrast with the claim by some that they were "such a set of brutes, they would make a saint swear"\(^{15}\)). Although the few Indians living in or near the settlement "all carry the tomohawk", Bell felt that they "seem to be very quiet and inoffensive"\(^{16}\).

There were only two ethnic groups about whom the minister always wrote despairingly — the Irish and the Americans. After recounting an anecdote of a Roman Catholic Pole who wanted his wife to become a Presbyterian, Bell concluded with only partial toleration "all Catholics I have met with discover some liberality, except the Irish".\(^{17}\) Bell complained that beggars were becoming more numerous in the mid-1830's. Predictably "they were chiefly Irish. Not a week lapsed without one or more of these applications —not for coppers, or bits of bread, but with a subscription paper for dollars or half dollars."\(^{18}\) Bell identified the Irish with violence and intemperance. In one typical passage he described the death of a man named Kelly.

The funeral of this unfortunate man like most Irish funerals, was attended by a motley crowd of men, women, and children, horse and foot, in dresses of all colours and conditions. About an hour after the body was committed to the grave, about a dozen men rushed out of the grog shop of Brooke's from which a great noise of swearing and fighting proceeded. Two of the foremost in the fight fell grappling upon a rock in front of the house. But I passed on and knew not how the battle ended.\(^{19}\)

In fairness to Bell several things should be pointed out. He was equally critical of the violence, or intimidating behaviour of the Orange order. Also, the Irish selected in 1823 by Peter Robinson and brought to the Perth settlement were chosen specifically on the basis of their destitution and their reputation as trouble-makers. The Irish brought in later to work on the Rideau Canal were an equally tough bunch. They may have behaved exactly as Bell described them. Finally, Bell's description of the Irish rioting in Ramsay township in
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1824 was much more objective than most contemporaries writing on the subject.

Nevertheless one anecdote written twenty-two years after Bell arrived in Upper Canada suggests that he never completely rid himself of his cultural biases.

This winter I had a good many marriages to perform. One day I had two which formed a strong contrast in dress and appearance, one Irish, the other Scottish, and both very numerouslly attended. Both of them had eight or ten sleighs well loaded. Among the Irish party there was not a well-dressed individual. The Scotch party were all well-dressed, some of them even elegantly and expensively. And yet the Irish couple threw away six dollars for a special license, which the wiser and more cautious one saved by being published in the church, thus contrasting the prudent economy of the Scot with the thoughtless extravagance of the Irish.20

The second ethnic group with whom Bell never felt comfortable was Americans. His dislike of them is revealed in numerous brief passages. In 1832, during the cholera epidemic

the governors of both provinces, with great propriety, set apart a day of fasting and humiliation. This .... was reverently observed by all excepting the Americans.21

A few years before, Bell had paid the inevitable trip to the Niagara Falls. There he came as close as he ever wanted to American society, and to American women who "talked so incessantly." The cultural gulf which he felt between his style of life, and that of those to the south of Upper Canada, was clearly revealed at one stop he made. Here he found the inn which

like most American inns, was a lodging house as well as a tavern. Here, and all along the frontier, I found that the greater part of the inhabitants were from the United States. Hence the manners and customs of that country prevailed, and I began to feel the difference in the rudeness and incivility of the tavern

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keepers and their servants. The company too came together with a silence, and dispatched their meal with a degree of haste, I had never witnessed before. They retired as abruptly as they had come in, without noticing one another.22

In fact, Bell felt so uncomfortable that he left the inn and walked around the town until it was time for the stage to leave. Bell's reaction was typical of many British North Americans who saw American society as the very antithesis of all that was good in British government and culture.23

It may well be that Bell's hostility towards Americans was less a reaction to an ethnic group and more an unconscious protest at many of the new social values created by the frontier. Old world authority and deference clashed with the lack of constraints and the social fluidity in the newly opened settlements. Along the Rideau it took some time for the new political and social roles and values within the whole society to be defined. During this period Bell came in conflict with both what he saw as the authoritarian forces in control of the local government and with an overly democratic spirit among some of the settlers. Both extremes were foreign to Bell.

The cause of Bell's conflict with authority lay partly in the nature of local government in the Rideau settlement. The settlement was a military venture to secure the water route along the Rideau and, as a result, was under the direct control of the Settling Branch of the Military Department of the Provincial Government represented in the person of a Military Superintendent. In addition most of the magistrates chosen in the region were half-pay officers. Bell believed that the military abused their authority, tolerated whole-sale graft within the department, and was supported in their mis-rule by the magistrates. The acting-Superintendent, a man named Daverne was typical, in Bell's eyes, of this group. "He was as haughty and insolent to those below him as he was favoring and cringing to those above him."24 Certainly Daverne deserved criticism, for he shortly thereafter defrauded the government and fled to the United States. However the suspicion remains that Bell's greatest complaint was that the military did not show proper deference to his own authority as a minister of the gospel. The military government was ended in 1822, and while Bell continued to feud with the half-pay officers over local issues in the church and in the town, his complaints of "military despotism" ended.

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The levelling effect of the frontier conditions in the new settlement, however, was a factor with which Bell was forced to live, if not to fully accept for the next four decades. The nature of his criticisms suggest that he may never have fully understood the phenomena about which he was complaining. He gave up farming wheat in 1826 because he claimed that it cost more than it was worth. The real reason, one suspects, lay in the problem connected with farming. Bell revealed that "the difficulty of getting servants, their high wages, and their insolence made me so uneasy that I resolved to give up farming altogether."23 The theme of persons in the new settlement forgetting their proper place in society (at least Bell’s view of their proper place) resurfaced in an account of local politics.

Our township meetings are held .... for the purpose of making regulations, and appointing town officers for the year. For some years at first, these meetings were quiet and orderly, for our settlers were then very modest, not being accustomed to public speaking. I attended the meeting this year [1829] which I had not done for some years past, and was surprised to observe the change that had taken place. All reserve had been thrown aside, and such a confusion of tongues perhaps ancient Babel never exhibited. From twenty to fifty men were all speaking at once, and at the top of their voice too, in the hope of being heard which produced a concert not easy to be described.26

Bell left and did not report attending another meeting for another 13 years. His next report of town meetings makes no mention of disorder. Either Bell, or the people had changed.

One way in which emigrants often seek comfort in a new environment is by attempts at re-creating their old culture in the new surroundings. This was certainly true of William Bell, but it was generally not of the candlelight and silverware in the wilderness variety.

Bell drew great satisfaction from several activities which did serve to preserve cultural ties as well as to give him personal pleasure. He maintained and continually added to a library unusually large for a newly settled region. In addition he cultivated an extensive garden of some two acres, with beautiful walks and
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decorative shrubs and trees. His flowers, particularly his snowballs, were apparently known far and wide. He also had an orchard with far more trees than he could use, "two or three hundred fruit trees" and each fall he gave away 'basketsful to all [his] friends and to each of the schools."^{27}

What was probably of greater satisfaction to Bell, and certainly of greater benefit to Perth, were the changes and alterations which he made in his society based on his intellectual muscularity, and his refusal to make religious or educational concessions to the wilderness. Although he found the society in Perth to be "much more polished and intelligent" than he had expected, he immediately began to restore institutions of European civilization missing in the new settlement. In 1817, after setting up the first Presbyterian Church, Bell opened the first school in the settlement, partly for his own off-spring but open to all. A year later he imported cultures of cow pox and inoculated both his children and others until he was stopped by the military doctor who threatened to prosecute Bell for practicing without a license. In future years he was instrumental in setting up a Sunday School, the Perth public library, a temperance society, as well as serving on the Board of Education and on the Board of Health. Certainly the fact that he was significantly civilizing the society around him gave Bell a sense of accomplishment and a sense of identity with his new home.

An overall assessment of Bell's career in Upper Canada must conclude that he adapted quickly and without too many difficulties. Certainly at no time did he discuss abandoning his mission in Canada as did two of his colleagues, Mr. Boyd in Prescott, and Mr. Smart in Brockville. Although Bell wrote in 1826 that "most emigrants indeed are discontented for some time at first but in general they become reconciled and like the country very well",^{28} his personal diaries showed no sign of that discontent in his early years in Perth.

Only in one area did Bell give sign that he had difficulty in adapting to his new surroundings. His diaries are full of accounts of quarrels and personality clashes which he had with military officers, magistrates, congregation members, and assorted townspeople. Clearly one sign of maladjustment in a new society is this type of personality conflict. It is also readily understandable that as the new society was evolving lines of social control, status, and authority emerged only when the limits of control of each of the community
leaders was firmly established. Bell was buffered somewhat in these conflicts by his own significant ego. He was always the injured party; it was always his persecutor who was in error. Not surprisingly, Bell felt that he often had divine support on his side of an argument. In Scotland, it is reckoned extremely unlucky to have a dispute with a minister and no person is supposed to thrive who uses them ill. I am not disposed to be superstitious, yet I can scarcely help thinking this opinion is not altogether without foundation. One of my elders who, because I reproved him, showed ill-nature, had thirty acres of hay burnt by the spark from the pipe of one of the mowers. Soon a cow died and a horse fell down dead. One of his yoke of oxen got lamed and the other was found drowned in a week. Disorder in his accounts led to several lawsuits with ruinous expenses. His wife disputed with his former family and they were turned out. A raft of his timber on the way to Quebec was seized by the Government for unpaid duty on Crown Land.29

Even the bureaucracy of government turned on anyone who ran afoul of Mr. Bell. Certainly he drew solace from signs that he was quite clearly in the right in any of his innumerable quarrels.

It would be a mistake, however, to read too much in Bell’s quarrels in Upper Canada. He was almost as prickly and pugnacious while living in Scotland and England. Probably the new world, and his new authority, merely speeded his development into a full-blown curmudgeon.

If Bell acclimatized relatively smoothly to life in Upper Canada, and I believe he did, what were the reasons? Why did he adjust with few difficulties while others struggled, complained and in many cases, left? Some of the factors are unique to Bell, having to do with his own personality and experiences, while others may be typical among a large number of Scottish emigrants.30

The first major factor was Bell’s own personality. He was a stubborn, hard-working, and resilient Scot and this was made clear both while he was in Scotland and Upper Canada. He had a remarkable ability to withstand both psychological and physical hardship. When in his thirties he was able to disregard advice from his father and friends and abandoned a prosperous business in London in order to begin formal education in Scotland. Forty-seven years later, after being thrown violently from a runaway sleigh and
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cutting open his scalp, he disregarded help and drove himself home. He was clearly a man of remarkable willpower.

In addition to his own personality, Bell was readied for emigration by his thorough preparation and personal experience. He was financially secure, by relative standards, when he arrived in Upper Canada. He received $100 a year from the government as minister to the settlement, and he had considerable cash reserve from home. His early career first as apprentice carpenter, and then contractor, had inured him to hard work and early rising. It had also given him valuable skills which allowed him to provide more comfort in his own home in the early years.

Both Bell's family and the minister himself had a history of migration. Two of his three uncles had been to the New World — one to the West Indies and one to America. His one brother who survived to manhood had served extensively in the army and had died in Spain in 1815. Bell himself had already, by 1817, undergone a "migration experience". His feelings as he left Leith to go to London in 1802 must have been very similar to later emigrants to Upper Canada. Perhaps Bell spoke for future generations of emigrants when he wrote

On Leaving Leith, the novelty of my situation produced sensations altogether new to me. I felt that I was leaving all the world behind me, with which I had any acquaintance and going among a people, whose manners, customs and even language was somewhat different from my own.31

Even after Bell returned to Scotland he was geographically very mobile. Bell lived for a while in Airdie, taught at Rothesay in the Isle of Bute, attended schools in Glasgow and Selkirk, and then preached extensively in the presbyteries of Glasgow, Perth and Kilmarnock. His experiences as a preacher in these presbyteries, involving long arduous journeys, served him well when he came to Upper Canada, for his duties there were to involve equally difficult travelling as he tried to reach his wide-spread congregation.

A fourth factor which helped Bell face the problems of his new environment was his deep religious motivation. Drawing courage and energy from the belief that he was on God's mission, he never doubted the wisdom of what he had done. Missionary work in North
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America was something which he had seriously considered for over a decade before he came out. His religious commitment served not only as an "anxiety reducing device", but gave purpose and order to his life and caused him to focus in his diaries on the pleasures, not the pains, of his life.

A final factor which must be mentioned in Bell's case, was the continuing ties maintained with Scotland through correspondence, papers, books and contact with new emigrants. Indeed, only six years after the Bell's came out to Perth, his eldest son Andrew was sent back to Glasgow University to be educated for the Presbyterian ministry. Just how fast cultural adjustment had taken place for this Bell must have been revealed in Andrew's letters home, for his father wrote that "in Scotland [Andrew] found himself a stranger in a strange land, and longed to return to this as if it had been the land of his birth."32

In the last three factors mentioned, the experience of Bell probably reflected the experience of a large number of Scottish emigrants. A growing national tradition of successful emigration, and high internal geographic mobility (at least among certain occupational groups) served to reduce the anxiety and psychological stress of leaving "home", however "home" was defined. By the 1820's this helped reinforce the pull of a promising new world, as more emigrants left for positive, not just negative reasons.

The deep religious beliefs of Bell, and the feeling that he was in God's hands, was probably as important a factor to many other Scots. Certainly many in Bell's congregation drew as much support and comfort from their religion as did Bell.

Finally the nature of the Scottish emigration to eastern Upper Canada, and the continuing cultural links to Scotland, undoubtedly ameliorate the difficulties of adapting to the new life. In Glengarry, in Perth and Lanark, Scots came out in large groups of size up to 2000 emigrants. Even when they settled in communities which included other ethnic and religious groups, there was a cultural continuity in religion, in custom, and even in language, from which they would draw comfort. This tie was reinforced by each new group of Scots, often friends or kin, bringing news, and messages from home.33 The travel was not all one way. Many Scots in the Perth settlement, such as Andrew Bell, or William Morris, members from Perth to the General Assembly, returned to Scotland on business, for
education, or merely for pleasure. In doing so they probably
convincing at least some Scots that life in Upper Canada could
probably be for them as successful an experience as it had been for
William Bell.

Perhaps I can add one final comment on William Bell. In an
article entitled "The Scottish Protestant Tradition", Stanford Reid
outlined the ways in which the Calvinist-Presbyterian tradition had
molded the Scottish national character. The outcome of this
tradition, he wrote,

has often been the formation of an individual who is hard-
working, frugal sometimes to penuriousness, but also capable of
acts of considerable generosity when the occasion requires. And
all of this bred a race of people who were inclined to be
independent, sometimes irascible, argumentative, and very often
sure of their own correctness of vision and action. Thus the
Protestant Scot, although by no means always a "lovable"
character, has very often been a person possessing the necessary
drive and self-assurance to make a good colonist.34

It is left to the reader to decide just how close William Bell came
to this archtypal Scot.

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1 G. Craig, Early Travellers in the Canadas, 133.
2 Throughout his adult life, Bell maintained an extensive diary modestly entitled,
The Life of William Bell. At his death, it totalled some 300,000 words, and it is from
this source that the bulk of the paper is drawn (hereinafter cited as William Bell). The
original diaries are now held by the Queen's University Archives.
4 Skelton, Isabel, A Man Auster: William Bell (Toronto 1947), 66.
5 Ibid., 112.
6 Ibid., 115-15.
8 Ibid., VII, 49-51.
9 Skelton, William Bell 158-159.
11 Ibid., vol. II, 46.
12 Ibid., vol. XII, 136.
13 Ibid., vol. IV, 141-142.
William Bell*, vol. II, 36.
Ibid., vol. II, 67.
Ibid., vol. VII, 80-81.
Ibid., vol. XII, 29-30.
Ibid., vol. XIII, 171.
Ibid., vol. VIII, 96.
Ibid., vol. V, 126-127.
In many ways Bell’s attitudes towards the U.S. were identical to those which Carl Berger describes as typically Canadian. See Carl Berger, *The Sence of Power*, 153-176.
Ibid., vol. IV, 154-155.
Ibid., vol. IV, 220.
Ibid., vol. XV, 47.
Ibid., vol. IV, 167.
There is considerable similarity between Bell and those groups of immigrants in certain professions described by Charlotte Erickson in her book *Invisible Immigrants: The Adaptation of English and Scottish Immigrants in Nineteenth-Century America*, 393-483.
Ibid., vol. IV, 168.
One very useful article on kinship ties and new immigrants is Rosemary Ommer’s “Highland Scots Migration to Southwestern Newfoundland: A Study of Kinship”, in J.J. Monion (ed.), *The Peopling of Newfoundland*, (St. John’s 1977).