

The Beginning of the Camp Meeting Movement in Upper Canada

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THE FIRST CAMP MEETING in Upper Canada occurred at Hay Bay September 27-30, 1805—about five years after the initial event at the Red River Sacramental Service in Kentucky and less than two years after the beginning of the movement in New York State.¹

It is not easy to determine the specific reasons for holding this formative gathering—the spring and source of the most dramatic evangelistic movement of the century. Nathan Bangs, the earliest Methodist historian of the Methodist Episcopal Church of Upper Canada, an eye witness to the Hay Bay camp meeting, describes it in detail—the place, the time, the attendance, and the programme—but is silent concerning the reason for its occurrence.² Through personal experience he had every reason to suspect the nature and validity of such crisis-making events.³ Nevertheless, we cannot help wondering why this young preacher, so zealous for the propagation of the Gospel, so conscientious in reporting the order of the days, and so convinced ultimately of the significance of this method of evangelism, should neglect the story behind the inauguration of the movement. Neither John Carroll⁴ nor Abel Stevens⁵ has any contribution to make to the thinking behind the Hay Bay camp meeting. The former merely follows Dr. Bangs's account without variation; the latter casually comments that the movement was so successful in the United States that it was copied in Upper Canada.

Thomas Webster credits the people of the Bay of Quinte Circuit with instigating the first camp meeting.⁶ They had been longing and praying for one like those that had been successful in New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania.⁷ Now the appointment of two young and vigorous preachers, Henry Ryan and William Case, provided the spark. George Playter empha-

1. John Atkinson, *Centennial History of American Methodism* (New York: Phillips & Hunt, 1884), p. 492. A letter written by Bishop Asbury to Mr. Myles in 1804 is quoted.

2. Abel Stevens, *The Life and Times of Nathan Bangs* (New York: Carlton & Porter, 1863), p. 136.

3. Letter from Bishop Asbury to Mr. Myles, August, 1804.

4. John Carroll, *Case and His Cotemporaries* (Toronto: Rose, 1867-1877), I, p. 113.

5. Abel Stevens, *The Life and Times of Nathan Bangs*, pp. 150, 28-34.

6. Thomas Webster, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada* (Hamilton: Canada Christian Advocate Office, 14 John St., 1870), pp. 102-3.

7. Dougall Papers, Letter from Joseph Jewell, Genesee District, May 2, 1805, pp. 99-102 (The Ontario Department of Public Records and Archives, Toronto: unpublished).

sizes the decision made by the preachers attending the New York Conference of 1805.⁸

J. E. Sanderson assumes that it was the idea of the two young preachers themselves stationed on their first circuit in Upper Canada.⁹ Other writers believe that the impetus lay in the social, moral, and political degradation of the time.¹⁰

When all suggestions have been studied the most persuasive motive can be discovered at the Conference at Ashgrove, New York, June 12-17, 1805. It is regrettable that conference reports of that time exclude memoranda of proceedings and debate. Motions only are recorded along with the names of preachers received, dropped, or deceased. We can conclude from the spirit of this conference that the current hindrances to the expansion of religion in the states of New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania were sabbath marketing, rum, and horse racing. Need for dramatic evangelism was evident. Bishop Asbury had stated that 1804 was the greatest year for the Church that had been known in America. Camp meetings, increasing in number and influence, undoubtedly had a special part in this success.

Consistent with a growing pattern, a camp meeting was called for June 7-10, 1805 at Stillwater, about twenty-five miles from Ashgrove. Bishop Asbury writes in his journal that the preachers were expected to attend the camp meeting on their way to Conference the next week. He especially mentions "preachers from Canada, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey."¹¹ Briefly he describes the gathering by saying that there were "many people, many sermons, many prayers, many sinners, many saints. There were few intermissions from labour and praise, either by day or night."

What a prelude to an annual conference! Since Bishop Asbury's expectation was actually a command, all the preachers from Canada would be present as well as Henry Ryan and William Case. Apparently none of them had taken part, although all must have been deeply impressed. The presence of the Bishop, who rode long and hard to arrive, would lend authority to the method. The wonderful results in conversions as well as the warmth of Christian fellowship would establish it as a successful venture. If the itinerants to be stationed in Upper Canada District had not previously attended a camp meeting they must certainly have been at the one in Stillwater.

Under the inspiration of the camp meeting the preachers from the Canadian district proceeded to the Annual Conference.¹² Glowing reports would come in of the greatest year ever to be experienced in Methodism.

8. George F. Playter, *A History of Methodism in Canada* (Toronto: The Wesleyan Printing Establishment, 1862), pp. 84-5.

9. J. E. Sanderson, *The First Century of Methodism in Canada* (Toronto: William Briggs, 1908), I, p. 44.

10. Rev. M. A. Garland, "Some Phases of Pioneer Religious Life in Upper Canada Before 1850," Ontario Historical Society: Papers & Records, XXV (1929).

11. *Journal of Francis Asbury* (London: Epworth and Abingdon Press, 1958), III, p. 170.

12. William Phoebus, *Memoirs of the Rev. Richard Whatcoat, Late Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (New York: 1828), p. 43.

The needs inevitably would be outlined. In this electrifying atmosphere William Case of New York State and Robert Perry of the Bay of Quinte Circuit, along with four others, were received on trial.¹³ A call for volunteers to go Upper Canada was sounded. Mr. Case at once responded. To him, his appointment at the Bay of Quinte Circuit rested not merely on the decision of his brethren, or on the needs of the people there, or on his own inner urging—rather it was founded upon the voice of God. Even so, he experienced deep misgivings as he rode northward towards his new charge. His misgivings could not restrain him from the enterprise of evangelism that lay before him. It is quite possible that Henry Ryan with his dynamic zeal and spirit did much to support his more timid assistant as they proceeded towards organizing and carrying through the first camp meeting in Upper Canada.

The Presiding Elder of the Canada District, Samuel Coate, may have been a strong voice in originating the first camp meeting. He was older in the work than the others, having been received on trial as early as 1794. He held a place of prestige among the brethren because of his striking personal appearance, natural eloquence, and educational accomplishments. A popular preacher, "he swept like a meteor over the land and spellbound the astonished gaze of the wondering new settlers. . . . He was the heaven-anointed and successful instrument of conversion of hundreds."¹⁴ He had laboured in New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and in Baltimore where the fame of the camp meeting was now established. As an enthusiastic supporter of camp meetings, his passion contained in his letters, of which we have a number, may have been a significant factor.¹⁵

Thus the camp meeting at Stillwater, the Conference at Ashgrove, the inner urge to win souls, the encouragement and confidence of the brethren, and the unique qualities of leadership and daring possessed by Messrs. Ryan and Case, together with the enthusiasm of the Presiding Elder, all served to help the Holy Spirit as he prevailed upon these preachers to hold a camp meeting. Once the decision was made, prayers offered, and plans completed, each itinerant went to his own task—William Case with tears and a deep sense of personal inadequacy, Henry Ryan with zeal and a genuine expectation, Samuel Coate with the restraint of a wise administrator.

Neighbouring preachers would be pleased that the Bay of Quinte Circuit was chosen. Thomas Keeler, who had been stationed there in 1795, 1800, 1801, and 1804, knew the situation and the people. Daniel Pickett had served this circuit in 1801, Nathan Bangs in 1802, and Thomas Madden in 1803. Even the Presiding Elder had been the itinerant on this historic charge in 1796–1797 and 1799. As these faithful men thought of the

13. *Minutes of the Methodist Conferences Annually Held in America of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (Daniel Hitt & Thomas Ware for the Methodist Connexion in the United States), I, p. 326.

14. J. E. Sanderson, *The First Century of Methodism in Canada*, I, p. 43.

15. *Methodist Magazine* (May 1804), pp. 234–5; (June 1807), pp. 284–5; (May 1810) (London: Printed at the Conference Office North Green, Worship Street, Finsbury Square).

twenty-seventh of September, they would remember days past and look hopefully to a fruitful harvest time. Everyone could pray specifically because he knew the people and fervently desired that they might be awakened and converted. Surely this was the season when the Holy Spirit would come in power upon the people.

THE CAMP MEETING BEFORE THE FIRST CAMP MEETING

No record challenged the primacy of the Hay Bay camp meeting until the Diary of Benjamin Smith, a pioneer Methodist farmer of the Ancaster District, created a disturbing problem by noting a camp meeting held some six weeks earlier.¹⁶ His chronicle, the earliest by a Methodist layman, allots a line to each day with almost no omissions from June 20, 1799 to February 22, 1850. In it he simply tells of daily events from his early manhood to within two years of his death. The entry that engages our interest is lifted from the month of August, 1805 and reads as follows:

August 17th Went down the mountain to Camp Meeting Come St
 August 18 Sunday Do Sacrament give out St all night
 August 19 Home split and hewed for a harrow

Obviously Mr. Smith attended on Saturday, came home at night, returned again on Sunday, stayed there all night, and came home on Monday in time to get some of his farm work done. He uses the term "Camp Meeting" *for the first time in his diary, though it appears frequently after this entry.* Could he in his pioneer isolation employ a name that did not come into prominence in Upper Canada until after the Hay Bay event nearly six weeks later—even though it had been current in the United States for nearly five years? Surely he made a mistake or meant something different from what was subsequently understood by this term. It is unlikely that a simple pioneer would coin a phrase independently which, though widely used elsewhere, was little known in the Ancaster area. Since no confirmation of his claim for a camp meeting in the general area is mentioned in the history of Methodism or in the comments of its critics, we must rest the case on the basis of Mr. Smith's diary alone.

It is possible, however, that Mr. Smith was familiar with the term because he had heard it mentioned by friends and relatives still in the United States. He may have decided to dignify an ordinary Quarterly Meeting with this new but intriguing term. Indeed, Quarterly Meetings held out-of-doors were not unknown. Certainly on many occasions people had to stay overnight. On the other hand, it must be remembered to the despair of this suggestion that nowhere before or after this entry does Mr. Smith confuse the Quarterly Meeting with the camp meeting. Prior to this date he refers to

16. The Diary of Benjamin Smith 1799-1850 (The Ontario Department of Public Records and Archives, Toronto: unpublished).

Quarterly Meetings when held. Subsequently, he differentiates specifically between the two types of gatherings. It does not seem possible that only once in fifty years would he interchange the name of a current operation in Canadian Methodism with a technical term used in the United States concerning which the little he knew was probably derogatory. His exactness in detail concerning farming and pioneer life is such that if he had made a slip he would have taken pains to correct it. There is no example that I can find in his diary to parallel the suggestion that he attended a Quarterly Meeting and chose to call it a camp meeting.

There are two possibilities as to the location of this camp meeting. One is near Dundas, which would involve going down the mountain in a north-easterly direction. The other is at the mouth of the "Fifty" which would bring him to the shore of Lake Ontario in a southeasterly direction from his house. The latter would involve a longer trip, but it did become a site for many camp meetings in days to come. At the same time Quarterly Meetings were usually convened near the main preaching point which, in this case, would certainly be Dundas. Ralph Morden's farm, a little north of Dundas, was favoured for these gatherings.

During 1805 and 1806 this circuit was served by Gershom Pearce and Andrew Prindle. Their nearest neighbour and colleague was Luther Bishop, the itinerant preacher on Long Point. Undoubtedly these men attended the Stillwater camp meeting and the New York Conference at Ashgrove. They would have had as much experience in evangelistic technique as Mr. Ryan and Mr. Case. We have no record of any of these preachers assisting in the Hay Bay meeting at the end of September. This looks odd in spite of distance—unless they were exerting their energy in a similar project of their own. It seems realistic to assume that these three would feel somewhat isolated from the centre of things, which at that time was established in the Bay of Quinte area. They might have agreed, without notifying their brethren in the centre or even their Presiding Elder in Montreal, to turn a Quarterly Meeting into a camp meeting—giving it a new name and using the American technique of mass evangelism. Certainly this area of the province produced more camp meetings than any other during the next quarter of a century.

Fortunately there is yet another obscure source which has something to say about "the camp meeting before the first camp meeting."

In *The Christian Guardian* (May 28, 1862), Young Humphrey tells of seeing an ancient document which connects the Goodhue family with pioneer Methodism in the Niagara area at the turn of the century. He is considerate in reproducing the notice in its entirety:

July 22nd, 1799—This may certify that Ebenezer and Anna Goodhue are acceptable members of our society in Niagara Circuit.

(Signed) JAMES COLEMAN—Elder M.E. Church

The value of this card lies not only in its identifying the Goodhue family as settlers in the area and as Methodists in good connection, but also in its giving authority to a subsequent assertion that Mr. Humphrey makes:

. . . The daughter of Mr. & Mrs. Goodhue, Mrs. Cowell, who has been in the Methodist Church since she was ten years of age, nearly 55 years since, has given us some account of the Camp Meetings in the beginning of the present century. We think it very interesting and will give it in her own words—"I remember the first Camp Meeting in 1806, held a little north of Dundas, on Ralph Morden's farm, since being in the possession of the Hares. I was not at it, but our preacher Luther Bishop went to it. It was the same year there was an eclipse.

This testimony is open to normal dangers and limitations of memory, but contains information which could support the date in Benjamin Smith's diary. She specified that the first camp meeting was held in 1806 on Ralph Morden's farm just north of Dundas, that it was attended by her preacher, Luther Bishop, though not by herself, and that it took place in the year of the eclipse. If all her recollections *except the year* were true it could have read 1805 instead. Here would be a strong verification of the camp meeting mentioned by Mr. Smith and firm contention for a gathering earlier than that held at Hay Bay.

Although Mr. Smith mentions the camp meeting of August 17-19, 1805 near Dundas, and the camp meeting at Thirty Mile Creek of Tuesday, June 30, 1807, he makes no reference to any camp meeting held in 1806. Why should he be so explicit in his day-by-day report in regard to camp meetings in 1805 and 1807 and omit the one which Mrs. Cowell remembers—especially as it would have taken place as near to him as Ralph Morden's farm? Both must be speaking of the same event. Weight of circumstantial evidence favours Mr. Smith's entry over Mrs. Cowell's recollection—the daily log of a practical man over Mrs. Cowell's wistful, childhood nostalgia.

There is more than circumstantial evidence to support Mr. Smith's statement. Firstly, Mrs. Cowell reports that her preacher, Mr. Bishop, was present. She does not say her *former* preacher but her terminology might be a possessive expression of affection. Mr. Bishop served the Long Point Circuit in 1805 and thus could have been her preacher that year.

Statistics show that Mr. Bishop served both Niagara and Long Point in 1804 and 1805—but in 1806 he travelled the Smith's Creek Circuit. The latter would not be a prohibitive distance from Dundas but would be a significant one and far removed in association. If the camp meeting took place in 1804 or 1805 it would be within his immediate area. As no one has suggested 1804 and Mr. Smith has noted 1805—while no one supports Mrs. Cowell's 1806, which laid on Mr. Bishop an almost impossible task in attending, the internal evidence directs us to the 1805 date as most likely for Mr. Bishop's participation.

The final word is Mrs. Cowell's remark that an eclipse occurred that year. In this she uses the recognized device of associating an idea and an

event. She may be uncertain of numerical designation but she knows what happened about that time. An eclipse is still an outstanding event and Mrs. Cowell serves us well by identifying the first camp meeting held the year of the eclipse. Like many a chance statement, seemingly unrelated to the issue under discussion, this one verifies her date beyond reasonable doubt. The eclipse of the sun on June 16, 1806, was the only total eclipse of the nineteenth century visible in Upper Canada.¹⁷ It was reported to be a fine eclipse of more than four and one-half minutes' duration—considerably longer than the usual two or three minutes. This distinction, along with the dramatic quality of the event, would not be forgotten. About noon observers in Albany and Ogdensburg, N.Y., reported "total eclipse." We can be assured that the Niagara area would see it to perfect advantage.

Mrs. Cowell has the year and the eclipse agreeing. It was not impossible for Mr. Bishop to come from Smith's Creek Circuit although it would be inconvenient. Perhaps, having set up the camp meeting before shifting from Long Point, he obligated himself to return to assist in conducting the meeting. Further, she locates her camp meeting at a specific and recognized place. Against her statement is the isolated and unverified reference of Mr. Smith to a camp meeting before the first and his silence regarding this one so close to him in 1806. It is strange that he missed the latter if it were held at the same place. Inability to attend would not account for his silence, for his diary shows that he was also absent from the one that began June 30, 1807, at the Thirty Mile Creek.

Reluctantly we must leave the notation in Mr. Smith's diary standing on its own merit. Mrs. Cowell has established her date by the eclipse. The camp meeting at Morden's farm could not be identified with the one attended by Mr. Smith. Neither is mentioned by another writer, but we need not conclude that they did not occur. Therefore, we can accept the probability that a camp meeting was held at Ralph Morden's farm in August, 1805, and another about the same time in 1806.

THE PROGRAMME OF EACH DAY

We know the leaders of the first camp meeting were the two itinerants on the Bay of Quinte Circuit assisted by their fellow preachers, east and west.

There is some difference of opinion as to the number of people, wagons, and tents on the field of Paul Huff just across the road from the Hay Bay Methodist Church, then thirteen years old. However, the estimate of Playter and Webster as against Bangs and Carroll seems much more reasonable—two hundred and fifty as the top attendance at any one time.

The order of the days derived from the detail recorded by Dr. Bangs is set down below in our present style with specific timing noted:¹⁸

17. *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 11th ed., VIII, p. 892.

18. John Carroll, *Case and His Cotemporaries*, I, pp. 114-8.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 27, 1805

About Noon	Gathering of the people, preparation of dinner, pitching of tents
2.00 p.m.	The official opening of the camp meeting with singing and prayer
3.00	Sermon: "Brethren Pray"
3.30	Exhortation
4.00	Intermission
4.20	Sermon: "Christ Our Wisdom, Our Righteousness, Our Sanctification and Our Redemption"
5.00	Exhortation
6.00	Supper
8.00	Prayer meeting and gospel singing
9.00	Preaching (No text is given)
9.30	Exhortation, prayer, singing
12.00 Midnight	Retire to tents for private prayer and sleep

SECOND DAY, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 1805

5.00 a.m.	Rising call (before dawn)
5.30	Prayer meeting
6.30	Breakfast
9.00	Gospel singing and prayer
10.00	Sermon: "My People Are Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge"
10.30	Exhortation and prayer groups
12.30 Noon	Dinner
3.00 p.m.	Sermon
3.30	Intermission
4.00	Sermon
4.30	Exhortation
6.00	Supper
8.00	Sermon: "Behold He Cometh with Clouds and Every Eye Shall See Him"
8.30	Exhortation, prayer groups, singing
12.00 Midnight	Closing time. The people retired to their tents

THIRD DAY, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 29, 1805

6.00 a.m.	Rising call (at dawn). Prayer meetings and singing
7.00	Breakfast
9.00	Love Feast
10.00	Sermon and exhortation
11.00	Prayer in tents
12.00 Noon	The Lord's Supper
2.00 p.m.	Dinner
4.00	Sermon
4.30	Exhortation and prayer
6.00	Supper
8.00	Preaching (with great urgency)
9.00	Exhortation, prayer, singing
12.00 Midnight	The people reluctantly retired

FOURTH DAY, MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 1805

5.00 a.m.	Rising, prayer meetings
7.00	Breakfast and packing up
10.00	Closing service, marching around the camp grounds, dispersal for home
12.00 Noon	Camp grounds deserted

In studying this time-table certain conclusions regarding the nature of the events and the personnel of the leadership are inevitable. Henry Ryan would be the logical and proper man to open the meeting with singing and prayer. He was the Superintendent on the Bay of Quinte Circuit and in every sense the host. He was gifted in speaking and singing. It was his place to call the gathering to order, to unite the people in song, and to lift their hearts to God in prayer. Mr. Ryan was not backward in assuming a prominent place of leadership.¹⁹

The subject of the first sermon, "Brethren Pray," suggests William Case. He was the junior man on the host circuit, but he had been most zealous in promoting the camp meeting and preparing the people through prayer. Mr. Case was not then, or in later years, recognized as a great preacher.²⁰ However, the sincerity of his life and the genuine quality of his prayers together with the sweetness of his nature endeared him to the multitude. This was his chosen subject—one that would lift the people up to the throne of grace in the traditional and orthodox fashion without the spur of the unusual, the shock of exposed sin, or the stimulus of hell-fire. A quiet, spiritual, simple, faithful sermon opened the camp meeting to the inspiration of the assembly, the glory of God, and to the disappointment of subsequent critics.

In the period of exhortation that followed, some of the other preachers would take charge.²¹ It would be their purpose to awaken the complacent and to urge sinners and backsliders to consider their ways and repent. Always the promise of free grace was proclaimed, offered, and even forced upon the wavering penitent.

Who preached the "heavy" sermon of the first afternoon? It must have been the most mature and experienced, the recognized "dean" of the preachers present—one prepared with a great message and with a background of knowledge and faith. Such a man was Sylvanus Keeler. He had been received in 1795 and had served that year on the Bay of Quinte Circuit. He had since been stationed three times in that same area. His spirituality, homiletic ability, and oratorical skill were recognized.²² This was his assignment—undertaken with a judicious mixture of humility, confidence, ability, and dependence on the Holy Spirit.

19. Thomas Webster, *History of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada*, pp. 107-10.

20. John Carroll, *Case and His Cotemporaries*, I, p. 113.

21. For a type of exhortation see B. W. Gorham, *Camp Meeting Manual. A Practical Book for Camp Ground* (Boston: H. V. Degen, 1854), pp. 81-2.

22. John Carroll, *Case and His Cotemporaries*, I, p. 21.

Thomas Madden, Daniel Picketts, even Darius Dunham, as well as some of the others, may have joined in the exhortation with vigour and directness.

After supper Mr. Case probably took charge of the prayer meeting and the gospel singing. Who preached that Friday night? No suggestion of the theme is given by Dr. Bangs. This would eliminate him as the probable preacher. Surely if he had chosen the text he would have included it in his account. The preacher was probably Thomas Madden or Daniel Picketts—with heavier weight on the side of Thomas Madden—not only because he was the next neighbour to the west, but also because Dr. Bangs and Mr. Picketts had been together the previous year on the Niagara Circuit and Dr. Bangs would not likely have forgotten the text of his recent colleague. With the exception of this sermon and the two on Saturday afternoon, Dr. Bangs had been meticulous in his reporting of the texts. Possibly he was engaging in private counselling or prayer at the time and missed these sermons.

At the close of the first day the exhortation and singing would go forward without prompting. One would finish and another would begin. So the revival grew in power. After a minimum of sleep the "campers" would be up and ready for a prayer meeting before dawn. The tone of Saturday was set by a great sermon preached in mid-morning, almost certainly by Mr. Ryan, from the text: "My People Are Destroyed for Lack of Knowledge." This would enable him to use his evangelical fire, his biblical knowledge, and his disturbing power to arouse, discomfort, and accuse the people. He would forcefully direct them to Christ—the way, the truth, and the life.

We now face the great sermon at 8 p.m. on the text: "Behold He Cometh with Clouds and Every Eye Shall See Him." This appears to have been Nathan Bangs's contribution to the preaching. In addition to having the text mentioned, we find reference to the glory of the night²³ which, to him, was the climax of the day and the true preparation for the Sabbath with its Love Feast and Sacramental Service. One cannot miss the mystical quality in this text which reminds us of the spiritual pilgrimage of a young school teacher, far from his home, who found God's love through his Son while he restlessly roamed the wilds of the forest or gazed in wonder at the mighty cataract of Niagara. His eyes had not opened suddenly to the presence and power of Christ but with the help of Mr. Coleman and Mr. Warner the great transaction had taken place. Now he could witness with power to the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

Regarding the afternoon sermons, I suspect that Dr. Bangs was absent and that Mr. Picketts preached one and Mr. Dunham the other. Darius Dunham, who lived on a farm in the district, is reported to have assisted in the camp meeting. This may have been only in regard to exhorting and prayer meetings. It seems reasonable to assume that he would be asked to preach out of courtesy if for no other reason. His popularity in the district

23. John Carroll, *Case and His Contemporaries*, I, p. 116.

and the memory of his ability in the pulpit are sufficient to extract all the daring from this suggestion.

The two great spiritual events of Sunday morning, the Love Feast and the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, would—one must suppose—be in the hands of Messrs. Ryan and Case. It would be Henry Ryan who would preach on Sunday night, since this was the climactic session of the whole gathering. Although his text is not given, we can be assured that it was the offering of Christ to those who were being given their last chance to accept him. Those who dare to unleash their imagination cannot remain unmoved by the powerful sequence of stirring events of that Sabbath. From prayer to the Love Feast—from that rich, warm, fellowship to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; from that mystical experience to the practical exhortation, prayer, and singing of the unregimented afternoon; from the informality of Christian friendship to the powerful proclamation of the gospel; and on to exhortation, singing, and prayer. The people were led by the Spirit. "God was in the camp." "The sound of the trumpet was heard."

The "leave-taking" impressed Dr. Bangs deeply as it has moved almost every writer who has experienced the strong emotion of separation at the close of a meeting. When the wagons were packed, fires extinguished, and everything in readiness for departure, the farewells took place. Prayers were offered, containing happy thanksgiving and fervent requests for help and support. There was weeping and also rejoicing. At the last the whole company marched around the camp ground singing and weeping. Then, as the leader reached the road, the people divided in their different ways and set their faces towards home. The richness of the fellowship was but a memory. The glory of the association with "God in the camp" was past. The rugged road of life was before them. This was more than an expression of body and mind. It involved the deepest emotion and truest fellowship.

In spite of the dynamic nature of this first camp meeting only twelve were held in Upper Canada during the next decade, of which one was at Hay Bay. The second decade yielded no more than eighteen, none of which took place at the scene of the first. In the face of this discouraging growth the promoters refused to panic, holding to the original plans, programme, messages, participation, and leadership. Because of the patience, tenacity, control, and faith of these pioneer preachers the foundations of mass evangelism were well laid.