ALL THINGS MADE NEW:
THE EVOLVING FUNDAMENTALISM OF HARRY RIMMER,
1890-1952
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1890-1952

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By

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PREFACE

Ten years ago a Presbyterian pastor in rural, northern Minnesota gave me my first Harry Rimmer book, *The Last of the Giants*, the story of the rugged lumberjack "sky pilots" of the north. I have fond memories of the devout people of the region, their commitment to the Christian faith, and their eagerness to share memories of Harry Rimmer, a pastor and leader they loved.

Many people have assisted me in this project. Gene DeGruson at Pittsburg State University, Jean Hovda at Northwestern College, and Anna-Marie Hett at Duluth's First Presbyterian Church helped me with various archival sources. David Sloan and Elizabeth Payne, members of my dissertation committee, offered helpful advise and criticism. I am indebted to Ronald Numbers of the University of Wisconsin for his gracious hospitality, suggestions, and for sharing the fruit of his research. I would especially like to thank Willard Gatewood, my adviser, who first suggested the projected and helped me at every step.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife Ann, to whom this work is dedicated, for her encouragement, patience, and continual reminders that there are things in life more important than dissertations.
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ABSTRACT
In 1940 Harry Rimmer was sued for believing in biblical infallibility. Past generations of Christians, he said, had suffered persecution, torture, and death for their faith, but he had the distinction of being taken to court for believing in God's Word. For fifteen years prior to the trial, Rimmer had offered prizes of up to a thousand dollars for a documented, proven, scientific mistake in the Bible. A self-professed "freethinker" accepted this challenge in late 1939, and, when he failed to receive the prize, sued Rimmer in a New York court. The trial, which attracted national media attention as "Scopes II" and "Monkey Trial, 1940," had a touch of vaudeville. To prove a scientific error in the Bible, the plaintiffs called upon a director of Freethinkers of America, a liberal Jewish rabbi, the vice president of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, and a Unitarian minister who had been a defense witness at the Scopes Trial. Rimmer's lawyer was a Baptist Sunday School teacher; the judge was an Orthodox Jew. When the case was dismissed, Rimmer was ecstatic, claiming that the courts had legally established the doctrine of biblical inerrancy,
and concluded that "it is all right for Christians to go right on reading and believing the Bible! In face of this court decision we bless God, take new courage and press on." The famous trial was representative of Rimmer's whole career: he not only defended that Bible against scientific and higher critical attacks, but did so in colorful, public confrontations with his opponents.

Born in San Francisco in 1890, Rimmer spent his childhood on the closing frontier of the West. After serving in the Army, studying medicine, and working as a prize-fighter, he was converted to fundamentalist Christianity in 1912. From 1912 to 1920, Rimmer served as an evangelist at bowery missions and logging camps, an Indian missionary, military chaplain, and Quaker pastor. From 1920 to 1925, he was a youth evangelist for the Y.M.C.A. in the western states, which led to a brief career in city-wide crusade evangelism in the mid-South. After forming the Research Science Bureau and studying science in the early twenties, Rimmer, motivated by the World Christian Fundamentals Association and the Scopes Trial in 1925, launched an anti-evolution crusade in schools, state legislatures, books, and conferences that lasted until 1934. From 1934 to 1939, Rimmer pastored the First Presbyterian Church in Duluth, Minnesota, focused on the problems of biblical higher criticism, and fought modernism within his denomination. After he resigned from the church in 1939, Rimmer returned to student and military
evangelism, spoke at popular, fundamentalist Bible conferences, authored numerous devotional works on theology and eschatology, supported foreign missionary endeavors, and encouraged evangelical ecumenism. Rimmer was an outstanding spokesman for conservative evangelicals at the time of his death in 1952.

The Frontier Legacy

The earliest influence on Harry Rimmer and a horizon for his entire life was the Western frontier. Through both experience and literature Rimmer absorbed the ethos and myth of the frontier. Born in San Francisco in 1890, his first memories were of a remote mountain ranch outside of Angel's Camp in California's gold mining district, where his mother ran a Wells Fargo way station. The area, made famous by outlaws such as Joaquin Murieta and Three-fingered Jack, was a favorite refuge for bandits and crooks. Young Rimmer once stumbled on the corpse of a bandit and on another occasion observed a stagecoach robbery while traveling in the region. After the family moved to Stockton, he had a chance to meet Wyatt Earp. Rimmer resolved to become a U.S. Marshal, was fascinated with guns, and became a crack shot. During a hunting expedition years later his partner, after observing
Rimmer's marksmanship, said that he now believed those stories about "Western gun men." Rimmer described himself as a "gun crank" with a "boyhood ambition to own as many guns of as many different varieties as possible." His gun collection, later given to the Pittsburg State Teachers College museum in Kansas, included a 750 year old Japanese matchlock, an automatic weapon from one of Al Capone's bodyguards (whom Rimmer had converted), and representative guns of the American frontier.

The frontier symbolized American characteristics such as individualism, freedom, self-reliance, autonomy, and independence, traits Rimmer sought to embody as a young man. As a young adult he traveled throughout the West and Alaska working as a prospector, miner, blacksmith, construction operator, logger, and sawyer. He acquired a reputation for being as "tough as nails" when, after being bitten by a rattlesnake as a teenager, he cut open his leg, sucked out the poison, and cauterized the wound with a red-hot rifle barrel. As a virtual orphan, Rimmer learned to survive in a harsh world, picked up different trades, and successfully, epitomized the self-made man. He was an excellent woodsman, loved to to hunt and fish, and in his last years went on a spectacular African safari. Family vacations were usually camping excursions; once Rimmer took the family on a year long cross country expedition where they lived off the land. Experiences and friendships in backwoods work camps helped Rimmer sympathize with poor and
vicitized workers. When he toured logging camps he usually displayed his saw mangled finger as his "union card." These frontier experiences, then, were a part of Rimmer's development, defined his character, inspired an affinity for the common working man, and provided a rich mine of sermon illustrations.

Rimmer knew the literature of the West. A voracious reader of dime novels, he quickly exhausted the local library's collection. His first novel, given to him by a friendly stagecoach driver, was about Deadwood Dick, who became his favorite Western character. According to Henry Nash Smith, Deadwood Dick was the quint-essential western hero, the self made man from humble origins who, though lacking wealth or education, succeeded through his individual courage, strength, and determination. Such was the story of Rimmer's life. He was also influenced by Ralph Connor's The Sky Pilot, a story of a Christian minister of great strength and vision who gave his life to the people of the West. Familiar with the mythology of the frontier, Rimmer perpetuated it through his own writings, and became a living example of the self-made man.
Rimmer's life was filled with violence and struggle. As a young boy he was subjected to physical abuse by his stepfather. In his early teens he was forced to defend himself in construction, logging and mining camps and earned a reputation as a fighter. While in the Army, he was known as a bully, began prize fighting, and ultimately became the welterweight champion of the West Coast. Rimmer even claimed to have been an Olympic welterweight boxer for the United States in the 1919 Belgian games, who was undefeated in thirty-nine bouts before turning down a $10,000 purse at a Madison Square Garden championship fight to become a preacher. He initially used his renown as a fighter in advertising his crusades and meetings, although later in his career he avoided the more blatant forms of such publicity. On a trip to Memphis, for example, he refused to don boxing gloves for a newspaper promotional picture for which the caption was to read "From Prize Ring to the Pulpit," since he believed, following II Corinthians 5:17, that "old things have passed away."

Even after he left the ring, Rimmer's behavior occasionally became violent. He was always capable of intimidating people with his fists. After his son was taunted in a barber shop for being a minister's kid, Rimmer decided to pay the barber a visit. His son vividly
recalled the confrontation:

My father was not a typical minister. His youthful career as a successful welterweight prizefighter had left its mark on him: a cauliflower ear, a badly broken nose, and bulging muscles. Dad looked around the shop slowly—no takers. We left. There are times in a boy's life when there is nothing as good as having an ex-prize fighter for a father.14

Rimmer could also use his physical power for the sake of the gospel. He recalled that in his six years of experience as a lumberjack "sky-pilot" he was often "forced to argue religion with both fists." Rimmer admired the Minnesota sky-pilots, quick-fisted Presbyterian evangelists in the logging camps of the north, and was especially fond of John Sorenberger, a former prize fighter and felon-turned-Presbyterian preacher, who, in his religious services, would offer to "lick any man in the crowd who didn't believe in Jesus." In one altercation Sorenberger entered a tavern, beat the bouncer senseless, broke the bartender's arm, destroyed the tavern, and ultimately, with the help of the governor who had originally pardoned him, made Bigfork a dry town. Rimmer noted with approval that John would "fight at the drop of a hat. . .in defense of himself, his religion, the underdog, or a friend. . . . John's fists were always cocked and ready to explode."

Rimmer brought the feisty, combative posture of the ring into his ministry. The physical violence of ring and logging camp sometimes became verbal assaults or a belligerent attitude in crusades, debates, and
ecclesiastical meetings. His city-wide crusades were marked by tenacious attacks on modernism and harsh, relentless denunciations of his enemies. Debates were often described in martial terms, portrayed as "battles," filled with shouting and tumult. Rimmer recalled one debate with a University of Pennsylvania professor as "a walkover, a massacre--murder pure and simple." He was proud of his Scottish forebearers who fought with the Bible in one hand and claymores in the other. Even fellow creationists were concerned about his critical, sarcastic, and derisive spirit. A friend in the Duluth Presbytery remembered that Rimmer "liked to fight"; he was a "theological pugilist." Rimmer was about to enter a battle to defend the fundamental truths of Christianity. His ring experience produced a bellicose nature and the resolve to join the battle.

The Neurosis of Evangelism

What evidence remains of Rimmer's early life suggests that he had an unhappy childhood in an emotionally unstable home. His life was dominated by the oppressive presence of an abusive stepfather who terrorized Rimmer and his siblings. As a child he tried to avoid the stepfather, knowing that the man despised him and looked for any reason
Rimmer later noted the stepfather's emotional tyranny by saying that:

real torture is not always physical. It is having [the threat of physical pain] hang over your head, day after day, week after week, never knowing when, or how, or why it will land on you, or what little insignificant reason will tip the scale in favor of brutal violence. 

The threat of violence often led to savage beatings, where Rimmer was left bloody or unconscious. A younger sister had had little human contact, was "terrified of her unpredictable father," and became unobtrusive and introverted, knowing that "silence would cause her to be ignored, and that while she was being ignored she was not being abused." This sister sympathized with Rimmer so much that she would leave the house to vomit after he was beaten. An older sister may have been sexually abused by the stepfather. Rimmer's mother was so concerned about the family's safety that she initiated a move into Stockton, hoping that the presence of neighbors would restrain her husband's behavior. Throughout the marriage she was scandalized by his "sinful rioting" and marital infidelity.

Even after the stepfather abandoned the family, his memory remained. Rimmer's hatred for him became a vendetta. When he was fourteen Rimmer started working for a farm family that showed him kindness and affection. He wanted to stay, "but the drive [to find his stepfather] that was becoming an obsession compelled him to leave."
He subsequently traveled throughout California, and went as far as Alaska, trying to find and kill the man. He later described his "intolerable hatred" for stepfather, saying:

I carried a gun three years for that man. Then I discarded the gun and went into the lumber camps. I learned every trick of rough and tumble fighting; every hold to wrench and tear a man's muscles. I hunted him for six years. If a man ever hated another, I hated that man.32

When Rimmer was involved in fights, at first in work camps and then in the boxing ring, he visualized his stepfather's features on his opponent and vicariously punished the person who had caused him so much pain. Concerned acquaintances warned him that his thirst for vengeance would destroy him. His sister cautioned him that his hatred and obsession with revenge would enslave him and transform him into the character of his father. During his boxing career Rimmer began to worry about his stepfather's memory. As long as he was winning fights, visualizing his opponents as his father was satisfying. But the fantasy was a Pandora's Box. He feared that if his father-opponent began beating him in the ring it would psychologically demoralize and crush him. Only with his religious conversion could Rimmer forget the specter of his father. In fact, one proof of his conversion was that "old things," including even "the vengeful hate of his stepfather. . .fell away as discarded garments."35

It is impossible to determine the degree to which Rimmer's character was shaped by his brutal father and
harsh homelife, but the severity of his upbringing suggests long term effects. Temperamentally, Rimmer could be resolute and uncompromising, perhaps because he inherited his mother's stubborn Scottish disposition. He was impetuous, brash, and unpredictable. His wife claimed her husband was never known for indecision. He may have been rejected from missionary service, in fact, because his disposition was inadequate for the routine of mission life. His behavior was sometimes reckless and unrestrained. Whether riding falling trees to the ground, climbing flagpoles, or hanging from watertowers, Rimmer seemed oblivious to danger and treated life as a constant adventure. A member of his evangelistic team, after observing his antics on a team outing, commented that "Mr. Rimmer will try anything once." He acknowledged his improvident conduct by telling a story about guardian angels returning from earthly duty. The one which was last in line, tired looking with drooping wings and missing feathers was "Harry Rimmer's angel--completely worn out." Throughout his life Rimmer initiated clownish pranks to the delight and horror of family and friends. As a Bible school student, for instance, he smuggled a donkey into the chapel. As an evangelist he enjoyed disguising himself with disheveled hair and hideous false teeth, and as a pastor he delighted his parishioners by playing silly tricks on his wife. His garish conduct might reflect an underlying insecurity. If Rimmer was denied attention and
affirmation as a child, he might have sought it as an adult. As a popular speaker he often received compliments, adulation, and recognition from national leaders. At one point Rimmer wrote his wife about the praise he had received from G. Campbell Morgan, the influential Philadelphia minister.

[He said] that I was 'God's most powerful voice in this generation! He actually did! He spent minutes eulogizing me, while my ears lit up like cigar lighters.42

A quest for security may have led to his conversion to Christianity. He was originally drawn to the faith because he admired an evangelist's "peace and self assurance." In his biography of his father, Brandon Rimmer hints that in God Rimmer found the father he never had as a child. Rimmer later explained that "my father died when I was a prattling lad and I never knew a father's love and care until I put my life in the keeping of Jesus and learned of my father in heaven." It is possible, then, that Rimmer's Christian faith and ministry was rooted in and a balm for the cruelty, rejection, and lack of attention he received while growing up.

Though Rimmer might have struggled with insecurities, he was a warm, likeable person. Everyone within the sound of his voice and reach of his hand, it seems, found him irresistible. His Duluth parishioners remembered him with great fondness and longing; one woman wept as she recalled the content of a Rimmer message. Fifty years after an
extended series of meetings in another town, the people could still remember not only Rimmer's messages and jokes, but also his humility, kindness, and even the clothes he wore. He was generous, carefree, "bouyant" in the face of trouble, and filled with an "overflow of optimism." Almost everyone commented on his congenial disposition, winsome personality, and "sparkling sense of humor."

Brandon Rimmer noted his father's humor by saying that "[he] never won a debate, but he always won the audience." The Rimmer children cherished memories of a playful, fun-loving father. Though he found it hard to express his paternal feelings, because of the deprivations of his own childhood, he showered his children with constant affection. Evangelist and university president John Brown described Rimmer as "the most loveable, likeable man I've ever known." Any attempt to psychoanalyze Rimmer or discuss the possible insecurities arising from his background must be tempered by this testimony of Rimmer's warm, stable personality. His conversion undoubtedly helped him transcend the bitterness and frustration of his early childhood.

The emotional problems of Rimmer's childhood followed him into adult life. It could be seen in health problems, for he suffered recurrent, stress related illnesses. Throughout his life he struggled with "bilious spells," in which his eyes could not focus, his speech was thick, and his whole frame was wracked with nausea. The strain of
his wife's serious illness, the pressure of fifteen years of constant travel, and the disappointment of the failure of the Research Science Bureau caused a "nervous reaction," "muscle twitchings," and "subcutaneous itchings" which destroyed his rest. After a temporary respite, Rimmer said he was glad to be rid of the "itches and crawls," and the "worms in his muscles," and felt that "nerve strain had got him down." During a brief rest at a sanitorium, he wrote his wife, "I knew I'd end this way! Here I am in a sanitorium!"

Even more peculiar is Rimmer's relationship to his wife and her fragile health. Just prior to their marriage she experienced her first "breakdown," in which she was depressed, unable to eat or sleep, and seemed a likely candidate for an insane asylum. The Rimmers later wondered if their rejection by the African mission board was due to her "uncertain" health record. In late 1932 Mrs. Rimmer suffered a debilitating attack, in which she was bedridden for weeks and "distressed" by any noise. Shortly afterwards Rimmer wrote his wife to say "Nerves, sicknesses, financial reverses, and me--and you can still laugh--Wotta woman!" Mrs. Rimmer seemed overly interested in the emotional difficulties of others, fully describing the emotional collapse of a ministerial acquaintance. In a book suggestive of the Rimmer family's emotional health, Brandon Rimmer complained about the lack of freedom in the home and his mother's dominating
personality, obsession with bowel movements, brainwashing tactics, and ability to make him physically ill by pressuring him to succeed. Harry Rimmer also felt the force of his wife's personality and the pressure to succeed. Their marriage was unstable and unhappy, and Rimmer traveled perhaps in part to avoid confrontation at home. Acquaintances remembered Mrs. Rimmer as "different," lacking warmth and compassion, difficult to get close to, and not much of a spiritual helper. Although he had some Baptist leanings, Rimmer may have remained a Presbyterian because his wife wanted to belong to a more prestigious denomination. She seemed to aspire to high society, noting the fancy family lodgings in Duluth and the fashionable social contacts her husband made while touring. When the family visited with nobility on a tour of England, Brandon Rimmer said that his mother was "in her glory" mixing with the snobs. Though Mrs. Rimmer had strong Christian convictions and was sincerely interested in the success of the gospel, she had serious problems. Her long-term nervous disorder and dominating personality may have been partially responsible for the scope of Rimmer's career by pushing him into a more prestigious denomination, high profile ministry, and extensive travel.
A dramatic change in Rimmer's life came in 1912 with his New Year's Day conversion to Christianity. After a rugged frontier life and hate-inspired search for his stepfather, Rimmer had returned to San Francisco, joined the U.S. Army Coastal Artillery, and prepared for medical school. His aptitude for fighting led to inter-service bouts and then professional boxing, with which he financed his college education. Rimmer, however, remained a bitter man, driven by the hope of revenge. After planning to disrupt a street corner revival, he found a medical school friend preaching. Rimmer collapsed in tears after hearing the message from II Corinthians 5:17 on the promise of salvation and becoming a new creature in Christ. Convicted of sin, righteousness, and judgment during this "remarkable conversion," Rimmer knelt at the curb and accepted Christ as Savior. Mrs. Rimmer described the transformation that occurred in the following terms:

In a twinkling of an eye, old things passed away. He gained a new goal, new motives; swearing, tobacco, alcohol, worldly friends fell away as old discarded garments, and even a vengeful hate for his stepfather which had harbored in his heart for years was no longer allowed an abiding place.

Almost immediately he began preaching. He lost interest in medical school, renounced the ring after his conversion, began to meet with students from San Francisco Bible
College, helped with mission services and street corner evangelism, and even forgave his stepfather. After hearing an I.W.W. activist renounce Christ one day, Rimmer seized the soapbox, offered his testimony, and, in response to a question about his future, declared his intention to preach. Within a year of his conversion he was already a famous preacher.

Rimmer's conversion experience was a dominant element of his new ministry. Testifying to being saved was essential to the evangelist, in order to offer the hope of grace and forgiveness to sinners. As one who had made a dramatic decision to commit his life to Christ, he could call upon others to do the same. Confidence in the gospel, inspired by experience, was evident in his daring, and successful, appeal to a suicidal man to be saved. The testimony and timing of conversion could also be useful to the scientist. It was important for Rimmer to show that his commitment to science preceded his conversion. His repudiation of evolution, for instance, was for scientific, not religious reasons. His commitment to science continued after his conversion to Christianity. Rimmer maintained that "I am a scientist, and a CHRISTIAN. I was a devotee of science before I became a Christian, and remained the same eager student of science after my conversion to Christ." Even the independent, objective scientist could be saved. Rimmer's conversion demonstrated that the gospel message and doctrines of the scriptures were not
incompatible with true science.

At the end of his life, however, the dramatic account of the 1912 conversion was replaced with the testimony of faith and devotion that began in childhood. A few days before his death in 1952, Rimmer penned a piece about the awaiting glories of heaven. He shared how the Lord had "stuck with me through thick and thin since we first became acquainted fifty five years ago." This testimony places Rimmer's conversion in 1897 at age seven or eight. These two seemingly contradictory testimonies can be harmonized.

Rimmer's conversion at an early age is certainly possible, since he was raised by a devout Presbyterian mother who faithfully read the Bible, prayed for her children, railed against sin, and maintained a reputation for "testifying" and "sanctimonious behavior." He recalled an incident in the Army that testified to his mother's influence. Though still "familiar with the ways of sin," when he came into the bunkhouse once in a state of physical exhaustion, without thinking and from force of habit, he knelt and prayed "Sweet Jesus, teach me to love Thee, God bless me and make me a good child!" Rimmer concluded that "education in the things of Christ in the tender years of childhood becomes the stay and the hope of the later years of maturity." After he left home the dominant, positive influence on his life was provided by Christian men who befriended him, offered him direction, and demonstrated a
paternal interest in his development. When his mother died, Rimmer was crushed by her death and his inability to fulfill a promise to deliver her funeral service. Unable to return for the funeral, he dedicated his crusade message to his mother, knowing she would agree with his decision to stay for "the harvest." In view of the piety of his mother, the Christian tone of his early home, and the reaffirmation of Christian principles by men he respected, Rimmer's conversion seems less startling. By the end of his life, he would be emphasizing his lifetime service to Christ.

The shifting focus of Rimmer's religious testimony raises a problem of his credibility. Was his testimony used pragmatically to appeal to or manipulate his audiences, or did his own perception of his religious experience change over time? The story of his dramatic conversion was both meaningful and useful to Rimmer in his career as a scientist and evangelist. For the newly converted Rimmer, the salvation experience seemed like a radical break with the past, especially considering the immorality, bitterness, and helplessness of his immediate past. For a young man who had renounced his old way of life, his emphasis was on being a new creature in Christ. As an evangelist, there was further reason to emphasize crisis conversion—to show the efficacy of Christian conversion and encourage others to seek refuge in Christ. On the other hand, Rimmer's testimony of his relationship...
to God could legitimately change when he was in a
different stage of life, was further removed from the
original crisis experience, or was addressing a different
audience. At the end of his life, he was more prone to
emphasize the continuity of the Christian life and
religious experience. The dramatic conversion was only a
part of his Christian experience, rather than the dominant
feature. The wild days of youth seemed only a brief
aberration from his continuous devotion to God. Rather
than trying to convince his (Christian) audience to make a
decision for Christ, as he had done as an evangelist,
Rimmer now wished to remind them of God's faithfulness over
time. The shifting testimony of conversion, then, is not
due to forgetfulness or base opportunism. Though the
conversion story was useful, its emphasis depended upon
Rimmer's continuing religious experience, stage of life, or
different contexts. Rimmer was raised with a strong
Christian influence, a fact he would recognize later in
life. He was also dramatically converted, and at the
beginning of his ministry, especially as he preached to
others in need of conversion or with intellectual
reservations about the gospel, he would stress his own
"remarkable conversion."
The Harmony of Health

Another curious dimension to Rimmer's life was his interest in unorthodox medical theories, such as homeopathy and osteopathy. Many alternative forms of medicine flourished in the nineteenth century in response to conventional practices, such as massive bleedings and purgings, and crude pharmacology during the "heroic" age of medicine. Homeopathy was devised by Samuel Christian Hahnemann, an early nineteenth century German physician, who emphasized three basic medical principles: the law of similiars stressed that diseases could be cured by drugs which produced symptoms similar to the disease; the law of infinitesimals held that diseased bodies respond most favorably to minute doses of medicine; and the law of dynamization claimed that medicine acquired its own special, dynamic spirit by being struck, or "successed." Homeopathy grew rapidly throughout the century, especially among the urban, upper classes, and homeopathic schools, usually named for Hahnemann, were established in the major metropolitan centers of the country. Osteopathy was developed by Andrew Taylor Still after he was unable to cure his children with conventional methods. He believed that the brain was God's drug storehouse, which was capable of providing everything necessary for good health. When
spinal misalignment interrupted the flow of fluids and energy from the brain, a musculoskeletal adjustment could restore health. Both homeopathy and osteopathy were common in Rimmer's native San Francisco.

Rimmer seemed committed to alternative medicine throughout his life. He chose to begin his formal education, in 1912, at Hahnemann Medical College, a school founded in 1884 to advance homeopathy in the West. His curious "muscle twitchings" and "subcutaneous itchings" are also worthy of notice, since homeopaths refused to treat "the itch." Hahnemann taught the often ridiculed doctrine that medical suppression of itching produced a myriad of chronic diseases, such as skin problems, deafness, asthma, and insanity. It is ironic that Rimmer's most persistent health complaint--constant itching--was a malady for which homeopaths were infamous. When Rimmer contracted shingles during a later preaching tour, he was cured by an osteopath with an adjustment and doses of vitamin B-complex. On another tour he stayed, as a special guest, at the Battle Creek Sanitorium made famous for hydropathy--"water-cure." In 1950, when Rimmer contracted pneumonia in Philadelphia, he chose to go to Hahnemann Medical Hospital, one of the last major American facilities to offer homeopathic treatment. Even when terminally ill with cancer he tried to cure himself by laying out in the desert sun. When his wife finally convinced him to see a doctor, Rimmer said, "Yes, I think I will have to have
some medical help with this. I've always been able to conquer it before." There are indications that Rimmer did recognize the legitimacy of orthodox medicine. He was involved with an African project to find a cure for leprosy which, presumably, utilized conventional methods. When asked about Rimmer's homeopathic allegiances, a family acquaintance said that Rimmer only used those in "emergencies." The spotty evidence available, however, at least suggests that Rimmer had a long standing interest in a variety of heterodox health theories.

Alternative medicine was often tied to strong religious convictions, or sectarian groups. Homeopaths often leaned toward spiritualism. Since homeopathy required an intense belief in "a God who had established natural laws" and the "inter-relationship between spiritual and material aspects of life," its adherents tended toward Swedenborgianism and Transcendentalism. This intense belief in the laws of God and their impact on human health could also be characteristic of more orthodox Christian groups. Seventh Day Adventists were often involved in innovative, and occasionally bizarre health practices. The hydropathic Battle Creek Sanitarium, where Rimmer stayed, was founded by the Adventist corn flake baron, John Kellogg. Coincidentally, some of Rimmer's earliest works were directed toward Adventists and Spiritualists. The concern for health and fascination with new methods of disease prevention and cure were also common within
evangelical circles in the nineteenth century. The most famous of these evangelical health advocates was Sylvester Graham who not only opposed traditional health remedies, but pioneered an alternative system of rigorous exercise, regular bathing, special diets, usually using the whole wheat Graham cracker, temperance, and diarhmetics to promote good health, chastity, and godliness. A large portion of Rimmer's early ministry as a recreation director focused on physical exercise and development, though probably primarily for pragmatic reasons. Rimmer's interest in alternative forms of medicine, such as homeopathy, though seemingly odd, was consistent with the aspirations and systems of nineteenth century evangelical reformers.

Rimmer's experience with homeopathic medicine might have been a pattern for his later engagement with science. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, homeopathy was attacked as unscientific and fraudulent. Oliver Wendell Holmes derided it as a "mingled mass of perverse ingenuity, of tinsel erudition, of imbecile credulity and artful misrepresentation." State medical associations and licensing boards placed pressure upon homeopaths and finally refused licensure to them. Homeopathic schools soon capitulated to the pressure, began offering orthodox training, and ultimately repudiated the homeopathic system. Between 1900 and 1910, nearly half the homeopathic schools closed (from twenty-two schools to twelve schools), while regular medical schools suffered
only a modest decline (from 126 schools to 109 schools). Hahnemann Medical College of San Francisco, Rimmer's school, changed radically between 1890 and 1915, first by repudiating homeopathy, and finally by merging with an orthodox school. Faced with pressure from the powerful medical lobby and the opposition of "orthodox science", Rimmer's medical system was being dismantled. This movement away from homeopathy medicine corresponded, it seems, with a movement toward evolutionary science. In a pivotal experience at Hahnemann, Rimmer asked a professor a question about the theory of evolution, claiming to have found an anomaly in the theory. The professor brushed aside Rimmer's question and refused to entertain any alternative to scientific orthodoxy. The experience taught him to be "[less] enthusiastic about the scientific world." In the early twentieth century Rimmer saw the scientific world abandon and ridicule his version of medicine. When the scientific world later tried to deride and discard his version of the nature and origin of man, he responded.
Scientific Training

Although Rimmer lacked formal schooling and was largely self-taught, he acquired a broad education. After he had exhausted the dime novel collection at the Stockton library, the librarian guided him through the Delphian course in history. By the time he was twelve, for instance, he had waded through Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. Rimmer claimed that he tried to compensate for the lack of a formal education by using tutors, referring perhaps to the friends who supervised his studies of the sciences. A mining camp engineer, eager for intellectual companionship, steered him through geology, biology, chemistry, and physics, and later, Rimmer's commanding officer in the Army assisted him with algebra and geometry. His daughter noted that he read "voraciously" and extensively in all branches of science and religion, had superb factual retention, and was a master of many fields. Homer Rodeheaver, Billy Sunday's song leader and a friend of Rimmer, used to say that Rimmer "knew something about more things, and more about something than any man I have ever known." G. Campbell Morgan recommended Rimmer to his parishioners, said that he was a "master of his subject," and claimed to have "learned more from him than I ever did from one address by any man I ever heard." One should not assume that because Rimmer
lacked formal training he was ignorant or uninformed.

Rimmer's preparation for and studies at Hahnemann Medical College further equipped him for the future. The school's strenuous entrance requirements forced him into a rigorous, systematic course of study. Though only completing a fraction of the Hahnemann program, Rimmer did well in his classes, and gained valuable, albeit not altogether positive, exposure to the scientific community. It was at medical school, he later noted, that he was forced to learn science's "wierd and compound verbiage" of "double-jointed, twelve cylinder, knee action words."

His laboratory work on human embryos, which sparked his first conflict with an evolutionist, grew into larger studies on embryology and was a catalyst for his work with students. The brief stay at Hahnemann, by grounding him in laboratory research, scientific language and methodology, and exposing him to the problems of evolution, helped launch the scientific phase of his career.

Theological Training

The dominant theological influence on the newly converted Rimmer was dispensational fundamentalism. Dispensationalism was a theological system which developed
in Great Britain in the late nineteenth century, was brought to the United States by D. L. Moody and Plymouth Brethren leader J. Nelson Darby, and grew rapidly in American Reformed and Calvinistic churches at the turn of the century. As a system of theology it provided a framework for opposing modernism and gave fundamentalism an "interdenominational cohesion and espirit." The most influential of the dispensationalists was the prominent pastor and Bible teacher C. I. Scofield, author of the Scofield Reference Bible. Selling over two million copies within two decades of its release in 1909, the Scofield Reference Bible became the single most influential fundamentalist and millenarian text. A generation of fundamentalists were educated by Scofield's notes and textual comments which "rightly divided" the Word and outlined God's plan for the ages.

In addition to the main points of orthodox Christianity, Dispensationalists placed unique emphasis on themes of the Bible, the Blood, and the Blessed Hope. They were strongly committed, first, to the inspiration and infallibility of the Scriptures. Drawing on the biblical rationalism of the Princeton Theology, they affirmed the doctrine of inerrancy, arguing that the Bible contained eternal truth and offered instruction in every field. They further emphasized scripture because of their literal or "normal" hermeneutic of biblical interpretation eschewed all symbolism and insisted on the literal interpretation
wherever possible. Rimmer embraced this dispensational principle so completely that the term "Rimmerism" was synonymous with reckless literalism.

The Blessed Hope was the dispensational expectation of the imminent return of Jesus Christ to rapture the Church, launching the seven year tribulation period, and establish a millennial kingdom. This innovative eschatology was not only premillennial, but also included strong expectations of the restoration of national Israel, and the fulfillment of the Old Testament promises to Abraham. This eschatological vision was built around the technical concept of the dispensation, which was a unique covenant between God and man. The seven dispensations—innocence, conscience, human government, promise, law, grace, and the kingdom—were radically separate, were initiated by divine promise, and concluded with human failure. The church age, or age of grace, was a totally unique, unforeseen dispensation that was a parenthesis in human history, bounded by Pentecost and the rapture. Rimmer clearly presented this dispensational framework in *Syllabus of Bible Study*, where he insisted that one must distinguish between Jewish, Christian, and Millennial truths in studying the Bible. The Dispensationalist view of human nature and the course of history was largely pessimistic, in stark contrast to the hopes of evolutionary progress current in liberal denominations.

The "Blood" refers to the dispensational emphasis on
the salvation of Jesus Christ, the spiritualistic call to a higher, victorious life, and the pietistic, otherworldly gospel. Scofield, at a memorial service for victims of the Titanic, described the world as a sinking ship; humanity's ship was doomed, and the only hope was to climb aboard God's lifeboat. The message was pietistic, emphasizing individual salvation and perfection, but ignoring the broader, structural problems of society. It has been argued that in the early twentieth century, fundamentalists experienced a "great reversal" in which they removed themselves from social and political controversies, ceased to speak prophetically, and turned instead to an otherworldly gospel. Charles Trumbull, the great fundamentalist preacher, summed up this retreatist philosophy by warning against "social service" at the expense of creating "victorious soul winners."

Rimmer's first theological training was in the dispensationalism of his future friend, C. I. Scofield. Shortly after his conversion, Rimmer backpacked into the California wilderness to study his new Scofield Bible. As he read and reread the Bible, and presumably the reference notes, the scriptures "unfolded before him" and he "saw God's plan for the ages." It is impossible to underestimate the impact of Scofield's Bible on Rimmer's development. Mrs. Rimmer states that his lifelong theological "foundation" was laid during his retreat. Like Paul in the wilderness, Rimmer developed his
dispensational, fundamentalist theology while in the wilderness with his Scofield. He would keep his faith in that reference Bible. Later in his career, during a Bible Conference in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, he mentioned that a young Methodist pastor was studying a Scofield Bible, and gleefully noted that "that's dangerous for a Modern Methodist." To tutor newly converted soldiers, he gave them Scofield Bibles, showed them how to use the study notes, and "turned them loose on the Word," telling them that they had a "college education" if they cared to "dig it out." Rimmer, then, embraced a theological system that was growing rapidly in the early twentieth century and remained loyal to that system throughout his life.

These dispensational convictions were reinforced during his study at San Francisco Bible College in 1913. The College was a small, struggling, evangelical school with a strong emphasis on missions. The school might have had holiness connections, since the only Bible College on record in San Francisco at the time was started by the Peniel Missionary Society, a Los Angeles based holiness association. Rimmer was converted by a graduate of the school, who was active in street evangelism and was preparing for mission work in Africa. Rimmer briefly attended the school, began outreach work on San Francisco's streets, waterfront missions, local churches with other students, and finally, under the school's auspices, served as a missionary to the Modoc Indians. San Francisco
Bible College rooted Rimmer in the fundamentalist camp and provided training in an intensely evangelistic atmosphere, steeped in the Scofield tradition.

Rimmer's choice of Whittier College, a Los Angeles Friend's institution where he was next enrolled, in 1916, is puzzling, because it seems like an aberration in his dispensational development. The California Quakers, however, had a reputation for being evangelical, and that seems to be the reason for Rimmer's choice. The school was recommended by his friend Levi Gregory, a leader in the California Yearly Meeting and "godly" Quaker pastor of San Francisco. Rimmer was impressed with Whittier's "godly" president, Absolam Rosenberger, a kind, scholarly man, who had previously been president of William Penn College and a missionary to Arabia, and was a leader of California's evangelical Friends. Mrs. Florabel Rosenberger, however, an "incomparable" history teacher, whom Rimmer remembered with "unlimited gratitude" for the rest of his life, shaped his academic mind. Rimmer involuntarily acknowledged his debt to Whittier when his school notes were stolen, by crying out "my education!" In late 1916 Rimmer suddenly decided to transfer to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, where undoubtedly he felt more theologically comfortable. Even after he left Whittier, he maintained his Quaker pastorate, spoke highly of the Rosenberger family, and treasured the school's training.

Rimmer completed his fundamentalist education at the
Bible Institute of Los Angeles (BIOLA), where he was a student from 1917-1918. Since Rimmer was planning to become an African missionary, he felt the strong emphasis on Bible and theology at BIOLA would be the best preparation. He possibly enrolled there because the Bible Institute was gaining a reputation for opposing modernism, about which he was concerned. Most of all, Rimmer wanted to study under William Evans, and R. A. Torrey, one of the "greatest evangelical theologians of all time." In the future he would work conferences with both men, and would be especially close to Evans. When Rimmer came as a student, BIOLA was a hotbed of fundamentalist activity. Founded in 1908 as part of a movement protesting the liberal direction of denominational seminaries, the school had become a leading fundamentalist institution by 1915, due in part to the success of The Fundamentals. Between 1910 and 1915, nearly three million copies of the twelve volume Fundamentals were distributed across the nation. The Fundamentals were scholarly, apolitical, and drew contributors from a broad evangelical perspective. Yet the Fundamentals were part of a transitional phase of fundamentalism. Since many of the contributors were older, leadership would pass into hands of younger men who changed the tone and issues of the movement. The last editor of this Los Angeles funded series which helped initiate and label the fundamentalist movement was R. A. Torrey. Harry Rimmer, then, was present at the birth of American
fundamentalism, and seized the opportunities for leadership within the fledgling movement.
CHAPTER TWO

THE FUNDAMENTALIST EVANGELIST, 1912-1926

Immediately after his conversion in 1912 Rimmer started evangelistic work, which he continued until 1926, when his interest turned to the crusade over evolution. Between 1912 and 1920, Rimmer was an itinerant evangelist at skid row missions, logging camps, an Indian reservation, prisons, and military posts. During that period, from 1915 to 1918, he also pastored two Quaker churches in California while pursuing an education at Whittier College and the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. From 1920 to 1925 Rimmer traveled throughout the western states as a boys' evangelist for the YMCA. He concluded this phase of evangelistic work with a series of mass, city-wide crusades in 1925-1926.

For Rimmer, the entire period was a time of transition and shifting emphases and goals. Rimmer originally planned for a career in foreign missions and prepared for it with different evangelistic enterprises and various schools. He then moved into full-time itinerant evangelism and crusade evangelism when the missionary plans collapsed. In 1926 Rimmer abandoned crusade evangelism to move into scientific work. His creationist crusade represented the
extent to which his preoccupation with evolution increasingly dwarfed his earlier concerns with moral and social problems and theological modernism. Rimmer also developed his own style during the early twenties. Though he had patterned himself after other, successful fundamentalist evangelists in the early twenties, most notably Billy Sunday, by 1926 he had created his own distinctive style and reputation as a scientist-evangelist.

The period between 1915 and 1920 witnessed a theological and ecclesiastical transition in Rimmer, who gravitated to Quaker, then Methodist and Presbyterian denominations. During these years, Rimmer successively tried to establish himself as a Christian evangelist and leader, find denominational allegiance, and, with the failure of his missionary plans, carve out a niche for himself within American fundamentalism.

Though the goals, means, and concerns of Rimmer's ministry changed, his major theological commitments remained constant. His dedication to the fundamentals of the Christian faith intensified during his first decade of Christian service. He also maintained his interest in evangelism, claiming that since the gospel offered forgiveness, salvation and eternal life, converting people to the Christian faith was his most important work.
Rimmer's first career choice, after his conversion, was African missions. American foreign missions flourished at the turn of the century, inspired by Dwight L. Moody's missions emphasis, John R. Mott's Student Volunteer Movement, and, in 1906, the Laymen's Missionary Movement. Evangelicals encouraged this foreign thrust and recruited young people to serve in far flung corners of the world with the slogan of "the evangelization of the world in this generation." Though only 900 Americans served as foreign missionaries in 1890, the number rose to 5,000 in 1900, and to nearly 10,000 by 1915. Rimmer shared the intense, and escalating, missionary zeal of the early twentieth century evangelical Christianity to which he was a new convert.

The challenge of missions was especially strong on college campuses. Every four years giant student missionary conventions issued the call to foreign service. In 1920, for example, at the peak of the movement, 6,900 student delegates from 950 colleges assembled in Des Moines in support of missions. San Francisco Bible College, where Rimmer was a student, shared this student missionary zeal. In addition to supporting home missions, at Indian reservations and skid row outreaches, the school encouraged students to enter foreign fields. Some students went to
China, with Hudson Taylor's famous China Inland Mission, the most popular foreign destination among students, while others, such as Charles Trout, the Bible College and medical student who had converted Rimmer, went to Africa with African Inland Mission. ("Inland" itself suggests the fervent missionary zeal of these societies, since they wanted to penetrate the interior of these countries and go beyond the accessible port cities where older mission societies had established themselves.) Rimmer's early training at and fellowship with students of San Francisco Bible College surely propelled him in the direction of foreign missions.

Rimmer hoped to serve in Africa. He started his early evangelistic work and planned his education to prepare himself for the mission field. At BIOLA he joined the African prayer band, confident that he would soon be serving there. The mission board, however, rejected him for foreign service, perhaps because of Rimmer's disposition, his failure to raise funds, his recent bout with diphtheria, or his wife's uncertain emotional health. Though disappointed in his rejection, Rimmer felt that God must have something different planned for him.

The aborted African mission was thus important as an horizon for the rest of Rimmer's career. He never forgot Africa. Mignon Rimmer included frequent, poignant references to her husband's continuing affection for the dark continent. At their first sight of Africa, off the
coast of Gibraltar in 1938, she described their brief "reveries," as their minds raced back over twenty years to the plans they had, but which "God's hand had blocked." Rimmer's four month speaking and hunting tour of Africa in 1948, she added, was "the realization of a life-long dream." Mignon Rimmer introduced The Fire Inside with a glimpse of Rimmer in Africa during the 1948 tour teaching the natives and "revelling in the consummation of a life-long dream: he was in the heart of the dark continent of Africa." First interested in Africa as a very young man, she explained, "he felt he was to go there and stay as a messenger of Jesus Christ. However, God had other arrangements. . . ." In retrospect Rimmer was thankful for the mission board's decision, since it revealed that "God did not want him in Africa after all," and allowed God to lead him into "his life work and the incalculable contribution he was to make to the cause of conservative Christianity." For Rimmer, then, God closed the door to African missions only to replace it with a more important calling. God had called him to a better mission field—America.
Virile Evangelist

Most of Rimmer's early evangelist outreach was with men. In prisons, bowery missions, logging camps, and military outposts he had a predominantly single, male audience. These men formed loose sodalities; each group had similar socio-economic, marital, age, and vocational boundaries. Since Rimmer grew up in logging and mining camps, lived in seamy sections of cities, and spent time in military service, he probably identified with, felt comfortable around, and had real concern for these men, who, in turn, were attracted by his exciting stories and vigorous preaching style. Converts at his city crusades were predominantly male; one reporter noted that "Rimmer's preaching seems to have an unusual grip on men and boys." Rimmer possibly avoided working with women, since, as his son suggested, he was extremely uncomfortable around women. For whatever reasons, Rimmer, in his early career and throughout his life, was primarily an evangelist to men.

Since he filled his messages with stories and examples of active, rugged, masculine accomplishments, Rimmer's evangelism exalted muscular Christianity. He enjoyed referring to and describing his boxing career, in which he claimed he was a contender for the Welterweight
championship and turned down a $10,000 purse at Madison Square Garden to pursue the ministry. He frequently told about the rough days in the logging camps, and his adventurous life, and service with the Coast Guard. Thrilling events of his exciting past made excellent illustrations and enabled Rimmer to speak, as one newspaper report put it, "as one who knows life."

Rimmer’s gutsy stories also intensified his evangelistic appeal. As a self-professed sinner and man of the world, Rimmer noted first-hand the crippling and debilitating effects of sin and testified to the transforming power of the gospel. In the old days his lumberjack friends claimed that he "could cuss fifteen minutes and never use the same word twice," but, Rimmer added, one day "Jesus Christ came into my life and conquered my Kingdom of foul, unclean speech." A newspaper reporter, present at a revival meeting, captured the moving testimony of Rimmer’s conversion:

He was walking down the streets of a great city several years ago, so full of bad liquor that he hardly knew where he was going. He came upon an evangelist preaching on the street corner. "There I was born again," he said softly. "God moved in; the Devil moved out. God took me out of the filth and into a life of service.

As a man, and one who had sinned like a man, Rimmer assured his audiences that Christianity was not a sissy faith.

The dramatic personal stories from his ministry further showed the effects of sin and Rimmer's activity as a Christian warrior battling the Devil. He offered heart-
rending examples of broken men, their need for salvation, and the life and death nature of working with men who were hopeless and despairing. He told one audience of a man who had committed the unpardonable sin, and how he died, in Rimmer's arms, "in a flophouse on the Barbary Coast cursing God and railing against Jesus Christ." He often told stories of suicides and suicide attempts. To one alcoholic who was threatening to drink a bottle of whiskey and "blow his brains out," Rimmer gave the Gospel of John and urged him to get saved or shoot himself, noting that if he started drinking he would kill himself anyway and that he might as well get it over with. "Don't drink too much of the bottle though," Rimmer advised, "because then you couldn't shoot straight." His service in some of the roughest neighborhoods with some of the most depraved people was a testimony to Rimmer's strength.

In addition to the stories, Rimmer occasionally described himself in rugged, masculine terms or consciously used brash and macho terminology. When Muskogee city leaders did not raise the money they had guaranteed for his revival and it was rumored that the Rimmer crusade would have to leave town, he vowed not quit the campaign, even if the crusade team had "to get guns and raise the money themselves." After describing his athletic accomplishments Mignon Rimmer concluded that "he was a he-man in every sense of the word." An historian, when asked to describe Rimmer "in a word," responded that "he was God's man
amongst men." One of Rimmer's favorite books was *The Sky Pilot*, a story about a tough, self-sacrificing Western preacher, in which the theme was "it is good to be a man." Rimmer often described the Christian faith in husky terms, suggesting that the Bible was a "red-blooded book," and insisting that Jesus was not the "kind of milk-sop that Modernism has painted him." This stress on virility and manly experience was most apparent in Rimmer's 1930 Birmingham conference, where the newspaper announcement underscored his masculine persona:

He has had extra-ordinary personal experience; converted in a street meeting, worker in a rescue mission, missionary to Modoc Indians, athletic director with Army and Navy, swimmer, boxer, wrestler, marathon runner, flier. [He is] a real he man, now devoting his life in defense of the truth as revealed by the Bible and demonstrated by science.

Though this tough-guy image was perhaps valuable in youth evangelism or men's work, it is doubtful that being an athletic, adventuresome, he-man accentuated Rimmer's scientific reputation. Rimmer undoubtedly described himself and his work in vigorous, masculine terms, in large part because his audience was predominantly male, but also because he defined himself as a virile evangelist of muscular Christianity.

Rimmer's first evangelistic work was on the streets of San Francisco. After his conversion he worked with the San Francisco Bible College team that had reached him by singing in street meetings and pumping the organ at church.
services. During a confrontation with a I.W.W. street speaker, Rimmer seized the soapbox, gave his testimony, and, in response to a question about what he would do after renouncing boxing, declared his intention to preach. He preached whenever he could, and soon became famous for a sermon on the suffering of the Messiah in Isaiah 53.

Rimmer especially liked street evangelism, since he was converted on the streets, and was sincerely concerned about people on the streets. He provided "bums" with food and money and, according to Mignon Rimmer, they seemed to know he had a "soft heart." He often used "gospel trucks" as mobile preaching platforms for street evangelism. When he lived in Los Angeles, Rimmer toured the "flophouse section" of town with a band in the back of his Ford truck, and, at one point, preached to 900 men. When he formed the Southern Evangelistic Association in 1929 to evangelize the Atlanta area, he purchased and dedicated a gospel truck to supplement tent meetings, street meetings and radio broadcasts.

Since street preachers had a unique aura because of their vigorous, highly visible, and challenging style of preaching, street evangelism contributed to Rimmer's reputation as a feisty speaker. Street evangelists often employed high pressure, strong-arm tactics. Rimmer had an assistant, for example, well known for his "peculiar methods of muscular and blunt personal work," who would hustle potential converts into the mission, ignoring their
protests. With a degree of respect, Rimmer described the "usual strategy" of his "muscular fellow-conspirator":

He had a very simple system of personal work. When he brought a man into a meeting, he always sat his friend in the aisle seat and took the next seat himself. Then when the invitation was given, this ardent lad would put his hand on the shoulder of his prospect and say, "Friend, won't you go forward and accept Christ as your Saviour?" At the end of the sentence he would straighten his arm out violently and shove the unsuspecting listener out into the aisle, then would follow the man down to the altar, the customer being generally too embarrassed to turn back. This might be described as "Muscular Christianity." At least it worked.

When he organized street meetings during his 1925 Poplar Bluff crusade, the local paper said that he was "strong for street meetings," liked to go "where the people are," has done a lot of evangelism on "the highways and byways of life," and was "in best form" when battling the traffic of the street for attention.

As an extension of his street ministry Rimmer became the assistant superintendent of the Jesse Street Mission, a waterfront rescue mission. At the mission he worked with the outcasts of society and met, in his words, "every kind of diseased, hell-bent, lost and degraded man and woman the world knows." (He also met his wife at the mission, where she came to sing. Mignon Rimmer was deeply interested in and assisted in Rimmer's early evangelistic work.) Rimmer shared moving stories of salvation, describing, for instance, how some of the "poor old hopheads," half dead and dependent on cocaine and morphine, came down the aisle...
for salvation. He also recounted amazing success stories of how addicts and alcoholics were healed and restored. A former surgeon, for example, who was a drug addict and lived in the slums of San Francisco, was marvelously converted and later served for fifteen years as head of a mission hospital in China. When another "half-dead drunk" he had rescued finished college, graduated from a Bible college, and became a pastor and powerful leader in his denomination, Rimmer extolled the "transforming power of the Word of God," which lifted this man out of the gutter and "made him an ambassador of the Kingdom of Heaven." In another example he told of a ruined, suicidal man, half delirious with whiskey, who was converted and became one of the most prosperous men on the Pacific Coast. For twenty years after his brief rescue mission work Rimmer proudly told of his experiences in the trenches battling the worst elements of sin and offering hope and salvation to the helpless. As he explained to one audience in 1925:

"When I was first converted I was a superintendent of a rescue mission. I had a chance to go among...and preach to the down andouters in many of our great cities. On the waterfronts and docks of our port cities I have brought the message of God's grace..." 11

In the Spring and Summer of 1914 Rimmer served as a missionary to the Modoc Indians in northern California under the auspices of the San Francisco Bible College, and in connection with the Zyante Indian Commission. The work gave him cross-cultural missions experience in preparation
for African work. He frequently mentioned his work among the Indians, referred to the Modoc's fierce past, and liked the aura of being an emissary to the "pagan tribes," and described highlights of his missionary activity. Almost all the available information about this mission is in Rimmer's sermon and lecture illustrations.

Rimmer especially used stories about Will Snow, an Indian raised "far from civilization", whom he groomed for leadership, and took to San Francisco to show the "wonders of the modern world." Snow was fascinated with the Pacific Ocean, and bottled some salt-water to take to the reservation, so that no one could dispute his story and say that he "went away good Indian, come back damn liar." (Snow's attempt to prove the existence of the magnificent ocean with a pint jar of salt water, Rimmer argued, was like the feeble proofs of science.) Snow, intrigued by electric lights, refused the accept Rimmer's explanation that there was "fire inside." To prove his point Rimmer persuaded Snow to put his finger in an empty light socket. "The Fire Inside", a motivational message about the spiritual power within Christians which featured the Will Snow story, was one of Rimmer's favorite youth speeches. Mignon Rimmer appropriated the title in The Fire Inside: The Harry Rimmer Story to illustrate Rimmer's restless energy, constant action, and spiritual power.

In his work with the Modocs Rimmer learned of other cultures and religious traditions, which he used in his
apologetics and evangelistic appeals. He was familiar with the Modoc flood myth, for example, which he mentioned in *Modern Science, Noah's Ark, and the Deluge*. In "After Death What," Rimmer described the hopelessness of people without the Christian faith by noting how old women on the reservation would "wail for the dead" at full moon, depriving Rimmer and every other man within a half mile of their sleep. The Modoc experience was valuable for Rimmer, then, in offering cross-cultural evangelistic experience and exposure to other religious traditions, in providing a wealth of amusing and exotic sermon illustrations and stories, and in enhancing his reputation as a rugged, well-traveled evangelist.

In January, 1915 Rimmer joined the Union Lumber Company of San Francisco as a chaplain in the Mendicino region. The company wanted to provide a wholesome atmosphere for its workers and initiated this experimental program to offer recreational, educational, and spiritual development for the men. A generous salary enabled Rimmer to elope and bring his new bride to the logging camp. Rimmer built a gymnasium, began Sunday School and church services, and taught a few lumberjacks to read and write. He also spent a good deal of time fishing, hiking, and shooting, and even taught the Chinese cooks, who were worried about violence in the Tong wars, how to shoot. The logging chaplaincy was not successful, as Rimmer did not make a great impression, received little cooperation, and
produced few results. By the end of the summer of 1915
Rimmer and Union Lumber agreed to close the experimental
15
program.

Though the Union job failed, Rimmer remained committed
to helping the lumberjacks and started his own outreach
works in various logging camps. He worked part-time in
the camps for a number of years, claimed to have worked in
British Columbia as well as the north Pacific states, and,
in 1925, even claimed to have his own logging mission. His
work involved opening Sunday Schools and churches in
remote, rural areas, and preaching in logging camps. He
explained that he used spare funds to support a mission at
the same camp in which he used to work, "so that young men
who work there now will have the advantage [I] did not
have--that of hearing the gospel." In 1925 the mission
failed because of financial difficulties. Rimmer's
dedication to lumberjack evangelism is illustrated with his
explanation that after "years of toil and labor and prayer
and sweat and blood to establish a mission among the
lumberjacks, in the past six months it went on the
16
rocks."

Being a logging camp preacher was an important symbol
of rugged evangelism. Billed for YMCA tours as either the
"Sky pilot to the lumberjacks" or the "Boys' Billy Sunday",
Rimmer enjoyed telling audiences of how, as a "sky-pilot"
17
he was often forced to "argue religion with both fists."
In the Last of the Giants, in which Rimmer alluded to his
own ministry to western loggers, he described the careers of three Minnesota sky-pilots and how, with them, he had "roamed these woods, fishing, hunting, and preaching in the camps where their ministries extended." Since Rimmer read his own experiences into theirs, his romantic account of the Minnesota sky-pilots tended to glorify his own service. The preachers eulogized in Rimmer's _Last of the Giants_ were big, tough men, who lived in the woods and shanties, endured horrible hardships and dangers for the sake of their "boys," and were driven by the desire to "pilot men to the skies."

The most colorful and famous of these sky-pilots was John Sorenberger, later a close friend and fellow presbyter with Rimmer. Sorenberger's career was remarkably similar to Rimmer's. He hailed from stern, devout Presbyterian stock, was virtually orphaned as a child, held numerous frontier jobs, such as logging, briefly studied for a profession (law), was a successful prize fighter and light heavyweight contender, ruined his life (in addition to alcoholism, Sorenberger was a robber and murderer), experienced a dramatic conversion, became a preacher, and even eloped with his wife. As a preacher, Sorenberger worked with loggers, conducted city-wide revival crusades, launched campaigns against vice and civic corruption in cities, and joined William Jennings Bryan's "Flying Squadron" in support of Prohibition. Rimmer's development of the parallel portion of Sorenberger's career underscored what
he thought was valuable in his own work: the debauched life, the dramatic conversion, and the rugged, vigorous evangelistic style. Rimmer's highest regard for tireless, romantic, and stalwart sky-pilots is seen in his laudatory summation of Sorenberger's active career, in which he battled corruption, fought vice, cleaned up the "lewdest lawless town in the North," built a church in the wilderness, and carried on camp work.

Throughout his life Rimmer was sincerely concerned with both the spiritual and physical condition of the lumberjacks. Charging that they were "viciously exploited" by the timber barons, Rimmer criticized the "empire builders" who "raped" the region, "looted" and doomed the forests, stole acreage, and drove men like beasts. The barons "ruthlessly drained their lives away to fatten their profits and enlarge their bank accounts." After working so hard in the woods, Rimmer argued, jacks were "turned out and cast aside like a broken tool that was too cheap to repair." As a former logger, Rimmer identified with the jacks. Though his main goal was their conversion, he tried to ameliorate their condition as much as possible. As a pastor in Duluth, Rimmer tried to obtain additional funding from Presbyterian National Mission Board for lumberjack evangelism, and, that failing, developed an independent home missions program in the First Presbyterian Church in Duluth. Finally, in 1948, Rimmer wrote Last of the Giants to tell the story of the sky pilots.
Rimmer preached as often as possible in prisons. By speaking in such institutions, witnessing to prisoners, and hearing their stories, he collected numerous examples of the effects of sin, moral decline in America, and the promise of redemption. He frequently described his sobering experiences as an observer at trials. He captured one audience's attention, for instance, by describing how he had attended the trial and witnessed the death sentence of a "vicious, degraded, and brutal man." He told another group of a twenty-two year old boy he had met in prison, who was sentenced to sixteen years in prison for stealing $1.75 and some canned fruit. He claimed to know another man who was jailed 192 times, before he was finally saved. By 1926 Rimmer said he had visited numerous jails and prisons and thirty-two penitentaries. Rimmer used these first-hand accounts of criminal behavior and punishment to urge people to avoid sin's slippery slope and to show how even the most hardened offenders could receive grace and redemption. He used the example of the thief on the cross, for instance, to prove that "the most vicious, degraded, and dissolute character" can find "the assurance and possibility of his own salvation." In 1935, during a revival crusade in Flemington, New Jersey, Rimmer preached at the jail where Bruno Hauptmann, the accused Lindbergh kidnapper and murderer, was incarcerated. A Christian jailer had arranged for Rimmer to preach on a Sunday afternoon, and though Hauptmann was not present at the
meeting, the jailer assured Rimmer that Hauptmann was able to hear "every word spoken" through the open doorways. Rimmer felt that this alone made the trip worthwhile, and believed that "God had had a hand in the date setting, so that this one condemned soul might hear and repent, and believe before his execution." As late as 1988, popular radio preacher J. Vernon McGee used a Harry Rimmer story about preaching to the lost in a Massachusetts prison. Prison ministry was so attractive to Rimmer because, through it, he preached to the most depraved, desperate, and needy people.

The last and most important phase of Rimmer's virile evangelism was his outreach to servicemen. As early as 1913 Rimmer preached at military bases. As a former serviceman, Rimmer understood and felt called to work with soldiers. With the United States's mobilization for World War I, Rimmer had growing opportunities for this outreach. While a Quaker pastor in 1917 he preached and distributed Bibles at army camps around Southern California. In June, 1918, Rimmer served as the athletic and religious director for the YMCA at the Arcadia Balloon School outside of Los Angeles.

Rimmer's most important military evangelism came at the end of the war. In November, 1918, the National War Work Council of the YMCA appointed him athletic director at Ross Field in San Diego. He was primarily in charge of recreation and sporting events for servicemen. Mignon
Rimmer recalled that he taught boxing, refereed basketball games, visited ships, and contacted army and navy officials about the participation of their men in these events. Rimmer was so proud of this work that sometimes he inflated its importance. During one YMCA tour, for instance, a newspaper advertisement claimed that Rimmer was "physical director of the entire Pacific Fleet of the U.S. Navy," with 60,000 men under him.

Rimmer never lost his love for servicemen. On evangelistic tours, he frequently stopped at Army YMCA posts to preach, as in his tour of Hawaii. During World War II Rimmer eagerly preached at bases throughout the United States. He was popular with the soldiers. One serviceman who heard Rimmer at Fort Niagara in 1942 or 1943 said that Rimmer had the "total attention of the men," which was "rare," that "the men were "wild" to hear him, and even remembered the theme of Rimmer's message from John 3. Rimmer also helped to establish Morning Cheer, a servicemen's center in New Jersey adjacent to Fort Dix, ran programs for servicemen and chaplain's there, and wrote Miracle at Morning Cheer, a history of this work.

Rimmer's military evangelism was wholistic. In addition to evangelism, he wanted to create a wholesome environment for "good clean fun," recreation, and socialization. His main goal, however, was evangelism. At military outposts and centers, such as Morning Cheer, he taught chaplains how to "win soldiers for Christ." Since
soldiers faced war and death, Rimmer believed that it was imperative to show them the way of eternal life.

In the years immediately following his conversion, Rimmer was an itinerant or peripatetic evangelist. His audience was usually male. His rugged and aggressive style appealed to his audiences by emphasizing manly and husky experiences, and demonstrated that Christianity was not a sissy faith. To many Rimmer was a "he man," a virile evangelist who was "God's man amongst men."

Quaker Fundamentalist

Rimmer's first ecclesiastical connection was with the California Friends. It is ironic that the aggressive, pugilist, ex-prize fighting fundamentalist first affiliated with the placid, pacifistic Quakers. Many western Quakers, however, were fairly evangelical, as represented by their biblical orientation, service by full-time ministers, participation in Christian Endeavor, with which the Rimmers were deeply involved, and openness to revivalism. Rimmer's identity with the Friends was with its evangelical wing. His strange association with the Quakers is a testimony to
Rimmer's first contact with the Friends came through his friendship with Oakland Quaker pastor Levi Gregory, an evangelical leader in the California Yearly Meeting. Described by Mignon Rimmer as a "godly pastor" and "friend of Harry's," Gregory performed the wedding when the Rimmers decided to elope. After the Union Lumber job closed, Rimmer sought advice about the future from Gregory, who encouraged him to attend Whittier, an evangelical Quaker college in the Los Angeles area. Gregory also arranged pulpit supply work for Rimmer on the way to Los Angeles, which led to his first pastorate in Lindsay, California.

From November, 1915 through August 1916 Rimmer pastored the Lindsay, California Friends Church. After he preached at the church on his way to Los Angeles, the leaders immediately, unexpectedly, and unanimously called him as pastor. (Since not all Friends churches had pastors, the call suggests that the Lindsay church was evangelical.) Gratified and humbled by the praise and confidence of these "godly Quakers," Rimmer accepted the call, believing that these "godly men of prayer" could not be misled, and feeling that a year of pastoral work would make college work more rewarding. Rimmer's tenure at the Lindsay church, which he served for a year before enrolling at Whittier, offers insight into his theological formation.
Even as a Quaker pastor Rimmer was evangelistic and had a brash fundamentalist style. At his pastoral inauguration, for example, which other community pastors attended, Rimmer closed the program and probably shocked his new Quaker parishioners with a "declaration of war" on the other churches in town. He immediately initiated new programs characterized by "aggressiveness": the church announced a "complete reorganization," the Sunday School was made "more efficient and ready for an aggressive campaign," while the young people "organized for aggressive service." Rimmer promoted missions work, declaring that "the church that is not a 'missionary church' is dead [and] might just as well cease to exist." In April, 1916, the church sponsored a Sunday School conference with a theme of "The Soul-Winning Sunday School." The lack of soul-winning zeal at the church ultimately disappointed Rimmer. Mignon Rimmer recalled that though he "fed their souls" and "grounded their children in the scriptures," he was not able "to transfer to them his own evangelistic zeal. They were content to grow by reproduction. . . ." The Lindsay church historian briefly described Rimmer as "full of plans" and "enthusiastic," probably a change of pace from the ordinary Quaker parson.

Rimmer seemed primarily concerned with young people. He revitalized the church's Sunday School and Christian Endeavor programs, issued special invitations to young people, and was "enthusiastic" about working with the
area's youth. His speaking style appealed to young people; the church historian recalled that when speaking "he at once got and held the attention of every one--to my mind a great accomplishment." To attract young people to a Halloween party shortly after his arrival, Rimmer turned the Quaker church basement into a haunted house, staged a costume party, for which some one, probably Rimmer, appeared as the Devil, and encouraged lots of "fun and mischief." Rimmer also tried to form a sports league for area churches and Sunday Schools as an "outlet for surplus energy," claiming that he had helped establish a similar league in San Francisco four years earlier which registered 1800 athletes in baseball, basketball, and track and field. While his Lindsay sports league was probably not successful, it does demonstrate his early commitment to recreational evangelism and his persistent desire to reach young people.

Rimmer also dabbled with political topics during this pastorate. He had one series on Socialism, perhaps directed at the active socialist group in Lindsay, in which he showed the differences between socialism and Christianity. With a message on preparedness, "Preparedness: More Than a National Issue," Rimmer probably startled his Quaker audience. His preaching was not just salvation-oriented or pietistic; he addressed social and political topics. Though political themes were always subordinate to the concern for the gospel and eternal life,
and were usually relegated to evening sermons, Rimmer tried to offer comprehensive biblical and spiritual solutions to the pressing issues of modern life.

Rimmer also revealed his staunch fundamentalism during this pastorate. He offered many messages on salvation, assurance, "The Cross and the Blood," and the dispensations. Mignon Rimmer said that he attracted many townspeople (though few members) with his "strong scriptural messages." The best examples of his fundamentalism were a sermon series on "Fundamental Truths," and an article on "The Bible or the Mohammedan Koran." In the latter article Rimmer argued that:

For nearly nineteen centuries the Bible has weathered every storm of adverse comment and has come out brighter from each acid-test of criticism. The men who sought to prove it false have one by one crumbled away to dust and today the Bible stands as God's spoken Word to man. While the Bible was a major issue, Rimmer said nothing about evolution, which, in 1916, was not perceived as a threat to his fundamentalism.

Modernism, however, was a major concern to Rimmer, and his fears of modernism increased during the Lindsay pastorate. Rimmer's concern with modernism was exacerbated, first, by a conversation with a liberal graduate of Hartford Seminary, for whose father-in-law Rimmer preached a funeral sermon. Rimmer was "physically nauseated" by the man who objected to the funeral message of "everlasting life gained through faith in Christ's shed blood, and the
'Blessed Hope' of Christ's return," and challenged Rimmer's belief in Scripture with "man-made dogmas from modernism, Unitarianism, and evolution." Rimmer received his second shock at the February, 1916 Christian Layman's Convention in Fresno on "Rethinking Missions," where he saw dangerous tendencies toward modernism. Even though the Friends churches stood outside militant fundamentalism, Rimmer's Lindsay experiences strongly re-enforced his fundamentalist convictions, and urged him toward a more vigorous defense of the fundamentals.

Though Rimmer left Lindsay after less than a year to return to school, both parties had fond memories. One possible conflict at the church, which Rimmer alluded to in 1926 by saying he had served a church "torn by faction," which had been "healed by prayer." The Lindsay church historian made special reference to Rimmer and his subsequent "good work in the Presbyterian Church." A 1952 History of the Berkeley Quarterly Meeting, which mentioned famous Quaker pastors from the area, started by noting that Lindsay was the first pastorate of Harry Rimmer, "who latter attained eminence in another denomination." Though the Rimmers were disappointed by the lack of proselytizing zeal at Lindsay, and probably felt awkward in the Quaker setting, both had pleasant memories of the town and the "godly" people at the church.

In the Fall of 1916, Rimmer enrolled at Whittier College. Its president Absolam Rosenberger, a former
missionary and leader of the evangelical Quakers in California, deeply influenced him. Rimmer first met Rosenberger in Lindsay, where the latter spoke at the church's Sunday School conference. Rimmer admired the "godly and scholarly" Rosenberger and felt that Mrs. Rosenberger was a superb teacher. Though he liked the people at Whittier, Rimmer's style was decidedly un-Quakerish. As a Halloween prank, for instance, he smuggled a donkey into the school's chapel, and, when efforts to remove the beast proved unsuccessful, the Friends had to conduct their worship service with an unwelcome guest. When Rimmer decided to leave, Rosenberger said "Harry, we shall miss thee. I know things will be much quieter here with thee no longer in our midst." Rimmer decided to transfer to BIOLA in January, 1917 because he wanted more concentrated work in Bible and theology and was attracted by fundamentalist leaders R.A. Torrey and William Evans. Whittier, however, as a stimulus to evangelical ecumenism, was important in Rimmer's development. He not only treasured his education and friends there, but also thrived in its broadly evangelical atmosphere and exhibited his willingness to work with Christians from other backgrounds.

While at Whittier Rimmer preached at Friends churches in the Los Angeles area to support himself. In November, 1916, the Friends Church of Los Angeles called him as pastor, where he served well, judged by his steady salary.
increases and contract extensions. As the pastor of a downtown church, Rimmer was busy with funerals during the influenza epidemic, conducting twenty-three in one record week. Continuing his evangelistic outreach, he established "mission stations" in Armenian and Syrian neighborhoods, and was close enough to one family to be an honored guest at an ethnic wedding. He also organized street evangelism in the "flophouse" section of the city, including the use of a band-equipped "gospel truck," and started servicemen's outreach programs at bases around Southern California. The church offered assistance, collected money for the purchase and distribution of New Testaments, helped fund a motorcycle purchase, authorized travel absences in 1917, and, in July, 1918, released him from all pastoral duties except Sunday preaching. Rimmer's two-year tenure seemed pleasant. His Quaker parishioners liked Rimmer and tried to retain his services, but encouraged him in his growing evangelistic work among soldiers. Rimmer thought highly of these Quakers and their "magnificent record" of support work during the war. Years later Rimmer said that, though "differing with their interpretation of a Christian's duty," he had a "profound respect" for their pacifism and that "the whole world respects them" for their courage, dedication, and service in auxillary military services.

After Rimmer resigned from the Friends Church of Los Angeles, he sought affiliation with another denomination.
The Quakers were probably not sufficiently fundamentalist or evangelistic. He first considered the Methodist church, because of his respect for Lincoln Ferris, the pastor of the First Methodist Church in San Diego, a man who "preached the Word," "exalted the Lord Jesus Christ," and first introduced Rimmer to the wonders of creation. Ferris unwittingly discouraged Rimmer from affiliating with the Methodists, however, by talking about the antagonism within the church between liberals and conservatives. Ferris said that he was feeling "ecclesiastical pressure" because of his "strong" evangelical commitments, and predicted that bishops and district superintendents would become increasingly dominating. The Methodist church was suspicious of the fundamentalist movement and, historian Stuart Cole notes, "organized conservatism found it difficult to survive in Methodism." Bishop A. W. Leonard, for instance, urged superintendents to discipline or disfellowship fundamentalists, while Phineas Breese, a Los Angeles Methodist minister who later founded the Church of the Nazarene, left the denomination because of a hostile bishop. Having witnessed the same "sinister forces" at Lindsay, Rimmer refused to affiliate with a church which in his view was so prone to modernism and hostile to fundamentalists.

Rimmer finally joined the Presbytery of Los Angeles in October, 1920. The Presbytery was arch-conservative and had strong ties with fundamentalists at BIOLA. He was...
recommended to the Presbytery by Stewart MacLennan, a leading fundamentalist minister in Los Angeles. The Los Angeles Friends dismissed Rimmer to the Presbytery with a "rising vote of appreciation" for his service. He felt at home with these fundamentalist Presbyterians, and though he would battle with modernism in the adopted church, he remained with the denomination for the rest of his life.

Rimmer's denominational journey and ecclesiastical ties suggest many points about his theology. Even as a Quaker Rimmer was committed to the "fundamentals" and concerned about the threat of modernism, concerns that continued throughout his career. Other parts of Rimmer's theology were remarkably fluid. He traveled an incredible theological spectrum between 1918 and 1920, moving from Friends, toward the Methodists, and finally to the Presbyterian church. The older theological issues that had separated denominations seemed unimportant to him.

In Rimmer's early preaching there were few doctrinal distinctives, beyond the concern for the fundamentals and evangelism. He was a generic Protestant. He was also ecumenical, moving freely in disparate circles, whether among Quakers or mainline denominations. Rimmer did not have the separatistic zeal for purity so common among some fundamentalists. For him, fellowship with other Christians was assumed, as long as they held to the basics of the faith.

Finally, the Quakers affected Rimmer. He hated
denominational pressure, and maintained an intense anti-authoritarian view of church polity that was more Quaker in nature than Methodist or Presbyterian. He also scorned rigid ordination procedures. While this may have stemmed from his own unorthodox theological preparation, it may also have arisen from the very informal Quaker idea of the ordination by the Spirit. When the Duluth Presbytery balked at, and reluctantly ordained fundamentalist evangelists who lacked formal theological training, Rimmer scoffed at the Presbytery and said that God "alone can commission and ordain men to such a service as this."

Y.M.C.A. Evangelist

Rimmer's first long-term evangelistic ties were with the Young Men's Christian Association. From 1917 to 1925 he served in varying roles as a recreation director in military camps and as an itinerant youth evangelist in the western United States. YMCA service provided him with extensive contacts, ecumenical service, the opportunity for youth evangelism, and, because of the accelerating changes in theology and approach to ministry in the Association, further exposure to liberalism.
The YMCA provides an excellent example of the evolution of evangelical institutions at the turn of the twentieth century. In the late nineteenth century the organization was strongly evangelistic, and included works on college campuses, military outposts, industrial plants, railroad centers, urban areas, and foreign lands. Evangelical and fundamentalist leaders such as Dwight L. Moody endorsed, supported, and worked with the Association.

The YMCA advocated a wholistic gospel. Instead of offering pietist, other-worldly salvation, it tried to work within the social context and minister to the whole individual. In 1924, for example, the YMCA claimed that its activities and goals were "social and economic, industrial, physical and recreative, educational, religious and spiritual," but affirmed the primacy of its spiritual goals by saying that all activities were to lead "up the scale to definitive Bible study, personal Christian interviews, decisions for the Christian life, and uniting with the Church. . . ." Though it emphasized evangelism, then, the YMCA had a broad, wholistic sense of ministry.

This broadly conceived sense of mission led to tension within the Association and kindred organizations. Some supporters were committed to traditional forms of evangelism, while others stressed meeting social, educational, and physical needs, and were more interested in the new Social Gospel. According to one historian, for
instance, after World War I the Student Volunteer Movement became more "social and philanthropic" and less "narrowly evangelistic" in its missions outreach. A leader in the Los Angeles YMCA recalled that he withdrew from the Presbyterian church in the area shortly after the war because it was too "fundamental," and applied himself to YMCA endeavors, where he felt more comfortable. One 1940 introduction to the Association, while expressing loyalty to the Christian gospel, admitted that the YMCA, and its methods and emphases had changed. Though the YMCA retained a religious emphasis, and stressed the Fatherhood of God and the need to follow the pattern of Christ's life, the 1940 guide omitted the theology of redemption so important to conservative Christians. The conflict over the direction and emphases of the YMCA's mission, then, was one more manifestation of the conflict between fundamentalism and modernism in the early twentieth century.

The YMCA was also an important vehicle for Protestant ecumenism. The Association brought Christians of all traditions together into cooperative ventures and allowed people of different denominations to work together. By stressing inter-church unity and cooperation, the YMCA tended to blunt traditional ecclesiastical loyalties.

The best example of the theology, emphases, and direction of the YMCA was long-term president John R. Mott, who for a half century was the "leading American ambassador for missions and ecumenism." Mott encouraged
denominational unity and cooperative ventures throughout his life as head of the Student Volunteer Movement, the World Student Christian Federation, the International Missionary Council, and the YMCA. He was orthodox in theology, affirming the doctrines of the divinity of Christ, special revelation, and the resurrection, but tried to avoid the fundamentalist-modernist controversy of the Twenties. Mott occasionally utilized modernistic terminology, embraced liberal causes, and increasingly accepted the Social Gospel. When Sherwood Eddy, a socialist with modernist leanings, was being pushed to resign from the YMCA, Mott threatened to leave the Association with Eddy. Mott's long tenure coincided with dramatic changes within the YMCA.

When Rimmer joined the YMCA at the end of World War I, the Association faced numerous troubles and divisions. In 1921 YMCA spokesmen admitted that the Association's "spiritual productivity" was at a "rather low state" after the war, and that "energies were withdrawn temporarily from direct religious effort," but noted a hopeful "upward turn" and redirection of the YMCA's effort. In 1924 Mott said that the YMCA continued to feel the effects of an unfavorable economic climate of unrest, contraction, and uncertainty, suffered with a "bafflingly difficult" post-war psychology characterized by questioning, pessimism, and penetrating criticism of the existing order, and noted that "much dissatisfaction has been expressed at one time or
another regarding almost every aspect of our work." Mott pointed to recent Association revenue increases and other encouraging signs, however, to proclaim a brighter future for the YMCA.

Rimmer's first contact with the YMCA was through the military service. He initially learned to fight and began prize-fighting at the Presidio YMCA, while stationed there with the Coast Guard. The only moral or religious dimension that Rimmer remembered about this YMCA was that it did not allow smoking. During World War I Rimmer was a servicemen's evangelist and recreation director at the Arcadia Balloon School near Los Angeles and at Ross Field at San Diego. In addition to gaining experience in evangelism, wholistic ministry, and cooperative outreach, he made important contacts with International Secretaries of YMCA, who boosted his subsequent career.

With the assistance from these contacts, Rimmer was a traveling boys' evangelist for the YMCA in the western United States from 1920 to 1925. Dubbed by one sponsor as "the world's greatest lover of boys," Rimmer frequently billed himself as the "Boys' Billy Sunday." Though he aspired to convert boys, many of Rimmer's messages were on topics of morality and personal fulfillment. He often spoke at Father-Son banquets, for example, where he exhorted fathers to be good examples and warned them about the dangers of smoking. He also gradually added messages about the threat of evolution. With his mixture of
evangelistic, moral, and self-improvement messages, he was probably a typical YMCA boys' evangelist, at least until he started delivering anti-evolution messages.

Rimmer's youth evangelism was extraordinarily successful. He was a popular speaker, spoke constantly, commonly giving five addresses a day while on tour, and made a strong impact on young men. In both 1923 and 1924 Rimmer claimed to have spoken to "200,000 high school and working boys" in the previous year. Some of Rimmer's converts, such as C.L. Lewis, President of Gordon College, became fundamentalist leaders. Noting that he loved youth, Mignon Rimmer said that "he reaped a harvest in the central part of the United States which was fed into the evangelical churches over a period of two decades." As late as 1925, when he left the YMCA, young people were still Rimmer's primary concern, and he planned on beginning a "new and definite movement in evangelism" by reaching youth.

The needs and style of youth evangelism helped shape Rimmer's brash, colorful, active, and entertaining preaching style. One of his favorite messages, for example, was entitled "Dynamite" and was based on Romans 1:16 which proclaimed that the gospel was the power of God unto salvation. Since the Greek word for "power" was dunamis, from which the term dynamite was derived, Rimmer tried to illustrate the power of the gospel with high explosives. After advertising the meeting by warning the
elderly, timid, the easily shocked, and those with ailing hearts not to attend, he began the presentation with flash powder experiments, fired blank cartridges, and told stories about explosives. Noting that he was trained as a ballistics expert in the service, Rimmer then claimed he had brought a top-secret explosive, capable of destroying the entire building and "blowing the entire audience to heaven." As he juggled the tube with the explosive, one reporter observed, "the more timid ones in the audience hoped he would be exceedingly careful." Rimmer finally opened the tube, removed a slip of paper, read John 3:16, and revealed that the dynamite was the gospel, which was strong enough to end all wars, bring Jesus back to life, and send everyone to heaven. Rimmer then compared the two explosives; dynamite would blow off a man's clothes, but leave his sins, while the gospel would blow off a man's sins, but leave his clothing intact. The dynamite sermon, so effective in youth meetings, was also popular in his revival crusades; it attracted his largest audience, over 4,000 people, in Poplar Bluff. This type of message, while effective, prompted criticism of Rimmer's preaching as being full of "joshing, foolishness, and laughter."

YMCA work also reinforced Rimmer's awareness of the problems of modernism. Though he had little criticism for the international organization, he noted and spoke against the infidelity within some Associations. He complained of the subtle opposition of the Hawaii YMCA, proclaimed his
desire "to give them a run for their money!," and, in contrast, declared that "the Army and Navy 'Y' seem to be godly folk--evangelical from the heart out." On another occasion, Rimmer recalled with horror how a secretary of a "great YMCA" was stumped by "embarrassing questions" about the Christian religion, including whether Jesus was the Son of God or an impostor, and whether Mohammed had as good a claim to divine Sonship as Christ. "Of course," Rimmer added, "this position would be astounding to any one who made even a casual survey of the evidences."

In 1925 Rimmer abandoned the YMCA for crusade evangelism. Though he did not explain the reason for this move, it was probably due, in part, to theological differences with the Association. He still maintained YMCA contacts and goals. Rimmer's crusade advance man was J.C. Watson, a former YMCA state secretary in Oklahoma. In proposing a new youth-oriented evangelistic program in 1925, for instance, Rimmer advocated a YMCA-type ministry with a unified community outreach, and a four-fold program of physical, religious, intellectual, and service programs. The theme of his 1926 city-wide crusade in Muskogee was "helping youth find itself in this busy world." Though he left the Association in 1925, then, he remained interested in the format of the original YMCA program.

Rimmer's experience as a itinerant YMCA evangelist offered him experience in wholistic youth and military evangelism which he used throughout his life. He
functioned well in an atmosphere of ecumenical cooperation, and made important career contacts. YMCA work also reinforced his fears of the menace of modernism, allowed him time for scientific research, and offered a forum for his first pronouncements against evolution.

Crusading Evangelist

In 1925 Rimmer started conducting city-wide evangelistic crusades. Though his boys' meetings, church revivals, and Bible conferences had evangelistic elements, he appeared in 1925 to make a major career advance into the high visibility evangelism of crusade work. His major crusades were in Poplar Bluff, Missouri, Muskogee, Oklahoma, and Pine Bluff, Arkansas, modest sized Southern towns where he had YMCA contacts. His crusade work was successful, though controversial, and he might have continued this ministry if financial pressures and the lure of the anti-evolution campaign had not intervened. The crusade ministry gave Rimmer further experience in evangelism and inter-church cooperation, demonstrated the growing threat of modernism, and provided a platform for
espousing traditional American values.

American revival crusades peaked in the years immediately preceding World War I. Rimmer's friend John Brown, for instance, held major crusades in California, including a very successful Los Angeles campaign in 1916. The most famous fundamentalist evangelist was Billy Sunday, whose ten-week long New York crusade in 1917 drew 1,433,000 spectators and registered 98,264 converts. Though war-time and post-war pressures diminished the attraction of crusades, when Rimmer began this phase of his career crusade evangelism was an accepted means of outreach.

These evangelistic campaigns stressed traditional values and civic morality. Billy Sunday, for instance, condemned the booze traffic, vice, greed, and civic corruption, and described dancing as a "hugging match set to music" and the automobile as a "bedroom on wheels." During World War I, he said that the invasion of France was "God's vengeance for France's immorality and licentiousness." Sunday's role in American religion, one historian argues, was to "reaffirm and sustain the old evangelical beliefs and values of American life." In his 1915 Omaha crusade, for example, Sunday condemned civic corruption, machine politics, and moral decay so forcefully that one adversary allegedly threatened to blow up the tabernacle. These campaigns represented how American fundamentalists, struggling with the trauma and tension of society, attempted to sustain old-time religion,
traditional moral values, and social normalcy.

The crusades were also marked, and marred, by a sense of vaudeville. Historian C. Allyn Russell argues that fundamentalism declined due to "prima donna" personalities, and the "sensationalism of method and language." Rimmer's friend J. Frank Norris, for example, a leading Baptist minister in Fort Worth, stirred up the city by preaching a sermon on "Ten Biggest Fools in Fort Worth, Names Given," brought a horse into the church sanctuary so that its cowboy master could ride to his baptism, and gunned down a critic in the church office. Sunday dramatized his sermons with bodily contortions, furniture smashing, and partial undressing, and concluded the messages by urging people to come forward and say, "Bill, here's my hand for God, for home, for my native land, to live and conquer for Christ." He said he would use any method to convert the lost. "I'd stand on my head in a mud puddle," Sunday claimed, "if I thought it would help me win souls to Christ." When critics complained of his slang language and earthy style, Sunday simply responded that "it wins converts." To draw crowds, maintain interest, and motivate sinners, then, revivalists often used showy, and occasionally tacky methods.

Rimmer, who labeled himself the "Boys' Billy Sunday," appropriated this style in his own crusades. He sometimes devised silly antics for publicity. During his 1926 Pine Bluff crusade, Rimmer offered to parachute out of an
airplane at the Pine Bluff balloon races. Since he had earlier confessed a fear of parachuting, this publicity stunt was presumably a courageous concession for the sake of the gospel. Rimmer initiated attacks on public corruption, at least in part for the sake of media attention. In almost every crusade he highlighted the city's sins, alluded to corrupt leaders, named local dives and dens of iniquity, claimed that there were threats to kill, bribe, or drive him from town, and then, before overflow crowds, promised to stay in town to carry on the fight.

Rimmer also used young people for publicity. He often had large youth attendance, and used their youthful exuberance to create interest in the crusade. In Pine Bluff, for instance, high school students led the audience in the following cheer:

Barney Google, Andy Gump,
We've got Satan, on the jump,
Oh, Rimmer!

In Poplar Bluff, the "Rimmer Booster Chorus" injected "enthusiasm" into a meeting with "yells and rahs," and, according to a newspaper gave the revival meeting the "atmosphere of a Thanksgiving football game." The Booster Chorus also participated in a city parade, in which youngsters of all ages marched along with signs proclaiming "We Are Pulling For the Rimmer Revival," "Kum Two the Meeting," and various evangelistic slogans. After Rimmer
told a Muskogee audience that "We're here to have a good
time," the songleader presented one of the crusade's
"novelties"—a children's choir singing the following song:

   Everybody ought to give a dollar,
   Everybody ought to give a dollar,
   He died on the cross to save us from sin,
   Everybody ought to give a dollar.

The youth choir added further stanzas on "Everybody ought
to give five dollars," "be a Christian," and "quit
swearing," "boozing," and "drinking." For ladies, the
children added stanzas on "Everybody ought to quit
dancing," "flirting," and "painting." These novelties
brought charges that Rimmer's meetings were full of
"joshing, laughter and foolishness." Rimmer said he did
not care, because the meetings reached people. While his
methods were entertaining and successful, then, to some
people Rimmer's crusade tactics seemed irreverent.

To draw crowds, Rimmer's meetings were often
advertised as a show and described in active, colorful,
even violent terms. An article entitled "Rimmer was
Pugilist Before His Conversion on Streets of Frisco: Is Now
Dealing the Devil Even More Knockout Blows" introduced him
to Poplar Bluff in 1925, outlined his boxing career, and
said he was "a born fighter," who had "lots of energy and
was 'rarin' to get after old Satan and his lieutenants."
When attacking liberal religion, the local newspaper
reported, Rimmer scored "left uppercuts and body blows,
"hooked a black eye on Modernism," and "cauliflowered an
ear for radicalism in religion." After arousing opposition in Poplar Bluff in 1925, Rimmer said he was glad for the confrontation and announced that he was "loading up the other barrel." Though Rimmer believed that these frank confrontations with sin encouraged moral and civic improvement, which was a legitimate goal of crusades, these tactics probably aroused the interest of townspeople as a form of popular entertainment.

Rimmer's revealed his respect for the use of novelties and confrontations in crusade work in his biographical treatment of John Sorenberger's career. Rimmer explained that Sorenberger was a natural orator and dynamic speaker, possessed a "rare and native humor," enacted his ideas as he spoke, never lost his "salty language" and "pithy style of speech," and clinched his messages with stories of personal experience. Life was an adventure for Sorenberger, since everything he did was "flavored by adventure and had to be out of the ordinary." Rimmer approved of Sorenberger's bellicose style, chuckling about how he "offered to lick anyone in the crowd who didn't believe in Jesus." Sorenberger would fight at the "drop of a hat"—whether in defense of himself, the underdog, his faith, or a friend, his fists were always "cocked and ready to explode." Rimmer especially liked Sorenberger's evangelistic style. With his sinful, sordid, and colorful past, the evangelist was a "living and walking miracle." Sorenberger "hailed each preaching opportunity as a
slugging match with Satan. . ., and he pulled no punches." All of these characteristics were true of Rimmer as well. Sorenberger "had the knack for the dramatic and the spectacular," Rimmer continued, "and his years in the ring had developed him into a capable showman." While his friends adored him and his enemies hated him, all agreed on his "platform ability." (For Rimmer and other fundamentalists, "showman" and "platform man" were not a pejorative terms.) To explain how Sorenberger was in a "natural environment before a crowd," and how the "revival meeting brought out all his latent powers," Rimmer said:

He pranced about the platform as though it were a prize ring. He hurled defiance at Satan and all his works and followers. He blasted every form of evil that the community harbored. If his style was unorthodox, it was effective, for the results were astonishing from the start.

This exaltation of Sorenberger's colorful crusade style, then, indicated Rimmer's approval of and commitment to aggressive revival crusading.

Though Rimmer used some crusade theatrics, he tried to avoid the excesses of some evangelists. After describing Rimmer's style with boxing metaphors, the Poplar Bluff newspaper added that he was not a "spotlight poser." One observer praised the Rimmer campaign for its "absolute absence of professional evangelism," and avoidance of silly tactics, such as bringing whole church congregations forward to get "impressive totals." While conversion totals at Poplar Bluff were moderate, where 472 were
converted, the newspaper noted that those who hit the sawdust trail were "true converts," not church members or rededications as at other campaigns. Other observers praised Rimmer's campaign for being "free from sensationalism" and "high pressure methods of raising funds." Kathryn Rimmer Braswell recalled her father's evangelistic career by saying "at least he was no Billy Sunday, thank God!" Though Braswell was very young at the time of the crusades and was ignorant of, or perhaps chose to forget, the more sensational dimensions of the her father's revivalism, her comment does reflect the degree to which Rimmer, at least in the minds of his family, disassociated himself from the more tawdry elements of professional evangelism.

Rimmer espoused a revivalist theology in his crusades, which, because of its emphasis on evangelism, was very Arminian. Though a Presbyterian, his theological focus was neither Calvinistic nor Reformed. To illustrate how "Christ chooses all who choose him" in one message, Rimmer said that "Jesus Christ is unable to bear fruit or save souls unless it is done by you. The success or failure of the death of the Son of God is determined by you." In a another message Rimmer continued this theme by saying:

God has used every means within his resources to keep men from going to hell, and if a man ever lands in hell, it will be in spite of God and not because of him. God made man with the power and faculty of choice, a reason and a free will. . . . It would be utterly incongruous for God to give man the power of choice and then refuse to let
that man exercise that faculty of choice. God says "Ahead of you are two paths. ... Choose the one you want." Then He sends the Holy Ghost to help all He can.

Almost all of Rimmer's messages had evangelistic themes of the individual's need for salvation, God's offer of redemption, and the human power to choose. Though his revival theology was not very Presbyterian, it allowed Rimmer to work well within a broadly evangelical context.

Rimmer's crusades also stressed traditional American values and personal morality. Much of his preaching was a running indictment of current manners and mores. He scored gambling, for instance, condemning bridge, Whist, and Mah Jong, in addition to poker and shooting craps. He attacked sexual practices, describing modern dance as a "wrestling match" where it is "hard to determine which feet belong to which body," referring to automobiles as "bordellos on wheels," and warning of promiscuity, prostitution, and the "loathsome diseases" which corrupted youth. He castigated the unclean, poisonous habit of smoking, by frequently describing breath so foul with tobacco that it "would choke a buzzard at ten yards," and by repeatedly mentioning that though a person could smoke and still be a Christian, a person could also not bathe and still be a Christian; they would just be a dirty Christian. "As my friend John Brown of Arkansas says," Rimmer added, invoking the famous Methodist's name, "A man might chew tobacco in heaven, but he'd have to go to hell to spit." Rimmer hated modern
music, and once told of having to endure the awful syncopation of a "jazz band of educated monkeys" and the tremendous relief he felt when the music stopped. Perhaps his greatest concern was with drinking, bootlegging, and the violation of Prohibition. He told a meeting of police officers that people could not choose the laws they would obey without the threat of anarchy, since "there is no stopping place between the position of the man who carries a bottle on his hip and the anarchist who knows no law." Sometimes Rimmer could touch on all these concerns in one breath, as in a message in which he urged the audience not to fill their bodies with "stinking nicotine" or "rot-gut whiskey" and to avoid those "shimy-shaky dances and highbrow card parties," where people gamble away the days and dance away the nights.

In addition to the emphases on soul winning and traditional values, Rimmer was very concerned about public morality. One newspaper reported that he made a "forceful appeal in which he stressed the importance of civic righteousness." In another instance, Rimmer "scathingly denounced" vice and lawlessness, and, noting that "what a nation reaps it will sow," warned that indifference to corruption would "bring forth a harvest of corruption." In addition to general pronouncements on national decay, Rimmer, to the great interest of the people, made specific charges about corrupt officials in each crusade city. He titillated overflow crusade audiences by naming names,
attacking public officials, media personalities, and government agencies, and specifying the location of bootlegging outlets, roadhouses, gambling parlors, and houses of prostitution. While he did not believe in "bringing politics into the church" or "the church into politics," Rimmer explained, Christians who love Christ and hate sin should not "sit down with folded hands while sin and commercialized vice and wrong in high places dominate the city in which these folks live." After making these charges, Rimmer initiated clean-up campaigns in each city, two of which were fairly successful. In such campaigns, Rimmer claimed he had to resist attempts to bribe, kill, or run him out of town. "If I were a pastor in Poplar Bluff," Rimmer told an audience in 1925, within three months "they'd shoot me or run me out." When his campaign faced opposition in Pine Bluff in 1926, Rimmer said that Jesus was "no coward," and, though he could "shut his eyes to sin for thirty day of popularity," he did not want "to sell Jesus short." His campaigns were not pietistic or solely concerned with salvation and other-worldly topics; Rimmer addressed and attempted to correct problems of civic and governmental corruption.

Rimmer's crusade messages reflected standard American concerns during the period, such as the fear of radicalism. Ever since the Red Scare of the early Twenties, people were concerned about the menace of radicals and communists. During his Pine Bluff crusade Rimmer traveled to Little
Rock to speak on "Law Enforcement" and warned about bootleggers and anarchists, especially the I.W.W. He was first acquainted with the I.W.W. in San Francisco; his decision to enter the ministry came while he preached from a soapbox commandeered from an I.W.W. activist. San Francisco had been the scene of labor unrest, radical groups, bombings, and community reaction between 1916 and 1919, and Rimmer's animosity toward the group probably developed during this period. At Poplar Bluff Rimmer declared:

I think the I.W.W. is the loudest scum of humanity on the face of God's earth. [There are] lots of them on the north Pacific Coast. They are the dregs of humanity; shooting is too good for them. They hate every American institution; they hate the Constitution; they hate the United States, [and] the American home. They froth at the mouth at the name of Jesus Christ. But the Son of God died for them too.

Rimmer was also concerned about communism, though he did not make this a major feature of his crusade. Helen Gould Shepard, the eccentric heiress, philanthropist, and anti-communist activist, claimed that Rimmer was number one on the Communist liquidation list in their plans to take over America.

Rimmer was also implicated in the activities of the Klu Klux Klan, which experienced a revival in the Twenties. Rimmer was a Klan member in Texas for three years in the early Twenties, but abandoned the movement because it became too political, was dominated by "self-seeking politicians," and had the "seeds of disruption" and
violence. He later described vigilante "night-riders" in Texas as a "cowardly company" hiding behind a "mask of cowardice." For him, the Klan was to be a vehicle for Protestant Americanism; he embraced it with his "whole heart and soul" because it was organized on the principle of "godliness and patriotism." He respected the Klan's law and order stance. During the Poplar Bluff campaign, after complaining about how liquor violation indictments were not actively pursued because the Klan had gathered the evidence, Rimmer said he was "in sympathy" with the Klan; though he was not a member, he reportedly declared "I believe in it" and "that's my business."

After leaving the Klan Rimmer periodically spoke at Klan meetings, but only for evangelistic purposes. "I couldn't turn it down," Rimmer said of a Klan invitation before one such meeting, "I intend to pour the gospel into them and start a revival among them. Some of them are among the 'best' folks in town." The only negative theme in Rimmer's crusades which resembled Klan concerns was anti-Catholicism, and this aroused some opposition.

Rimmer did not endorse the anti-minority platforms of the Klan. As a Dispensationalist, he was Zionistic and defended Jews. When an Italian-American soldier referred to a Jewish comrade as a "Christ killer" during his YMCA military work, Rimmer pointed out that the Romans--or Italians had killed Christ, not Jews, was amused when the Jewish lad, hissing "Christ-killer," slapped the Italian's
face in a plate of gravy, and then proceeded to evangelize both soldiers. During a conflict between the Klan and anti-Klan factions in Muskogee, Rimmer said "I believe in the supremacy of the white race, but I also believe that our doors should stand open to the persecuted of any race." When a Black preacher in Muskogee told him that he did not want to hear "no negro gospel" and "no white gospel," only the "gospel of Jesus Christ," Rimmer responded that "there is no gospel for one man above the other, for God so loved the world--the whole cockeyed world--that He sent His Son to save all men from sin." Rimmer usually scheduled black services during his crusades, and was very well received. He liked to present anti-evolution messages at these meetings where he emphasized the image of God in man, and the unity of the human race. In the mid-forties, Rimmer wrote against segregation, discrimination, and the denial of social and economic justice to black Americans. Briefly a member of the Klan in the early twenties in the hope that it would restore traditional American values, he abandoned the organization when it became too political and prone to violence.

Rimmer's last theme was traditional religion. He adhered to mainstream, evangelical, American Protestantism, and was suspicious and critical of other traditions. He disliked Roman Catholicism and relished telling his crusade audiences good Romish jokes. When he compared the two systems, while admitting "neither Protestantism nor
Catholicism are the truth," he said that "in Protestantism you will find an abundance of truth, in Catholicism you will find a little." He especially liked to expose Christian Science and Spiritualism, and frequently gave examples of the horrible demise of the poor adherents of these religions. He also spoke against Pentecostalism, warning about the "fanaticism, foolishness, and bunk" in the doctrine of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. If the Devil cannot shut you out of the truth, Rimmer explained, "he will sweep you past it [to] fanaticism." In the Pacific Northwest, he continued, "we have a bunch of nuts called holy rollers. They went past the truth and became fanatics and made the gospel of Jesus Christ a laughing stock." After describing how a Pentecostal man cursed God and said shameful things about the faith in a strange tongue, Rimmer remarked that "Every kind of nut in the world grows and multiplies on the Pacific Coast. [There are] 57 varieties of holy rollers, and we have got them all." As a defender of what he perceived to be true American values and religion, then, Rimmer was harshly critical of alternative religious systems and denominations.

Rimmer's pushed his concern for traditional religion into crusade pronouncements on evolution and modernism. His growing antipathy to liberal Christianity and modernism was clearly demonstrated in his messages and, in one instance, in open conflict with a liberal pastor. Rimmer
presented very successful series on evolution during the crusades, and, at Poplar Bluff, initiated his first great debate. Archeological discoveries during the Poplar Bluff and Muskogee crusades further aided his campaign against evolution.

The Rimmer Revivals

Rimmer's first big crusade was in Poplar Bluff, Missouri in April and May, 1925. Having originally come to the city on a YMCA tour, he was invited back for a special Easter season revival. His evangelistic team included a music director, children's worker, business manager/youth director, and Mrs. Rimmer, who was in charge of women's work and impressed audiences with her beautiful singing. A local committee of community leaders, including the mayor, was responsible for crusade publicity, raising the $4200 to meet expenses, and hoisting the enormous 4,000 capacity tent on a mud-soaked city lot. The newspapers gave Rimmer's revival daily excellent front-page coverage, and publicized Rimmer as an old-fashioned preacher in the mold of Moody and Spurgeon. At the start of the crusade one paper ran
bold headlines across the entire front page proclaiming the "Greatest Evangelistic Campaign in Poplar Bluff History Starts Today."

The major theme of the revival was evangelism. Rimmer's first sermon, entitled "Is Your Heart Right With God?," was followed by other soul-winning messages, such as "Hell and How to Get There" and "Profit and Loss," a story about the man who gained the whole world but lost his soul. Rimmer quickly formed street meetings; as one converted at such a meeting and experienced in this type of evangelism, he wanted to take the gospel where the people were. This evangelistic theme was intensified by the death of Rimmer's mother. Unable to return to California in time for her funeral, which he had promised to preach, Rimmer dedicated a special, poignant message on "After Death What?" to his mother. Though other issues received attention during the crusade, his first, and major goal was converting the lost.

In concert with evangelism, Rimmer offered sermons on the Second Coming of Christ, one of the important fundamentals of the faith. Though he expected the imminent appearance of Christ, he warned about fraudulent date-setters and criticized the liberals' expectation of a gradual, evolutionary appearance of the Kingdom of God. Rimmer's frustration about World War I was apparent when he claimed that, like many others, he was caught in a "war to end all wars." They were "stuck in mud, vermin, cooties,
poison gas, and explosives," thought it was for the cause of "universal peace," but witnessed twenty-one wars in the next few years, a frightening arms build-up among major powers, and naive treaties on worthless paper attempting to secure international peace and stability. Rimmer concluded that "there is no peace without Christ."

The criticism of liberal eschatology was closely linked with Rimmer's assault on modernist theology. He hated these "scriptural contortionists," argued that modernism was "the Apostacy of the Modern Age," "flayed modernists" for repudiating what they had sworn to uphold, and felt that lying, hypocritical Modernists should, in honesty, join the Unitarians. Rimmer named "one lying, modernist preacher" in Long Beach, claiming that the scoundrel was "not only a modernist and liar," but is "a moral reprobate as well." This "Christ-denying modernist," Rimmer continued, told a student that "he didn't have to believe a thing in the Bible to be a preacher." Because of a "rising tide of apostacy," he warned, fifty percent of Protestants are "apostate to the fundamentals of the Christian faith." Rimmer used a message on the Cross and vicarious atonement to illustrate the difference between the two camps, arguing that fundamentalists loved the cross and saw it as the climax of the gospel, while modernists hated the cross and saw it as a regrettable accident. These messages helped generate opposition to Rimmer, as unidentified people "gossiped about" and
"questioned" the crusade. Rimmer said that they had "distorted" his words and issued "fabrications' calculated to arouse prejudice against the company." Reaction to his sharp criticism of liberal Christianity became common features of future crusades.

Rimmer's crusade also alienated some participants because of its theological tone. A local newspaper reported a "serious split" in the crusade's united effort, as Rimmer was charged with "denominationalism," for preaching on divisive doctrinal topics. While there had been earlier "rumblings" about some of his doctrinal sermons, a question and answer period at one meeting created the rift. A Christian Church pastor questioned Rimmer on the forgiveness of sins, producing a "tense moment" as the "two divines jabbed at each other." The Christian and Methodist pastors disliked Rimmer's theology, probably on questions such as modernism, the nature of salvation, eternal security, and baptism. The Christian pastor discounted rumors that he had opposed the meetings from the start and accused Rimmer of the "unnecessary division."

Rimmer also attacked city morality and corruption. After gathering evidence of local roadhouses and dives in Poplar Bluff, on April 6, 1925 Rimmer attracted a crowd by announcing that he was "going to tell something tonight." In a message entitled "How Far is Hell From Poplar Bluff," Rimmer "scathingly" denounced vice and lawlessness by
identifying a local "roadhouse," a booze runner's "Houseboat" on the river, and a bootleg joint next to the orphanage, describing the "Livery Stable," which housed no horses, only "white mule," and exposing a house of prostitution in the city, which was a "shame and disgrace to every mother, wife, and daughter in this community."

Rimmer was glad he angered people with these disclosures, and said he was "loading up another barrel" to continue the fight. In a subsequent front page article, Rimmer denied taking a fifty dollar bribe from Newt Frisbee, a roadhouse operator, for not condemning his roadhouse. Frisbee immediately denied giving Rimmer "hush money," said he was not fool enough to offer a bribe, claimed he had already sold the roadhouse, and felt he was the fall guy in gossip calculated to injure Rimmer.

Two weeks later Rimmer promised to "spill some dirt" in a message on "Sin in High Places." He attacked drunkenness, gambling, and prostitution, made pointed references to a leading Poplar Bluff official, who was seen leaving a roadhouse with a "painted lady," the Riverside Hotel, and a prostitute who had practiced in town for five years, and claimed that seventy percent of the town was involved in the "liquor traffic," by either making, selling or drinking the stuff. Castigating Christians for bickering about theological questions, such as the mode of baptism, while fifteen percent of the people ran the city, Rimmer said that if he were a pastor, he would find a
hundred good men to "clean up the town." If he continued his crusade for six months, Rimmer assured his audience, he could "eradicate sin" and make the city a "place fit to raise boys and girls into Christian, American citizens." He acknowledged that his purpose was not to clean up a city, however, but to "save people from Hell." At least part of the evangelist's calling, though, was to confront sin and promote American civic and moral decency.

Rimmer used the Poplar Bluff crusade as a forum for creationism. He delivered a popular series of messages on the fallacies of evolution, using museum artifacts, skulls, and slide presentations. His sermon exposing various hoaxes about missing links produced the thirty-six converts, more than any other night of the crusade. Rimmer informed his audience that he was a staunch true friend of real science, since he spoke against the groundless theories of so-called science. Scoffing at "atheistic hypotheses," Rimmer assured one audience that his "grandpa didn't hang by a his tail and pick fleas off grandma with all four feet." In addition to these scientific lectures, Rimmer excavated three Indian burial sites, which impressed local people and added to his "scientific" reputation.

The most important part of his scientific ministry was the crusade-closing debate. During the crusade Rimmer had tried to entice evolutionists into debates, first by offering one hundred dollars in expense money, and then by offering five hundred dollars for a series of four debates.
Rumored debates on "The Tenability of Evolution" with a local high school science teacher, who got "cold feet at the last minute," and a St. Louis scientist never materialized. Finally, Dean I. P. Noe, rector of the Episcopal cathedral in Memphis, agreed to meet him. Noe, who was rumored to have debated William Jennings Bryan and declined an invitation to meet William Bell Riley, was a capable debater and shrewdly arranged the confrontation. According to the arrangement, there was to be no debate, discussion, or audience response; both men would simply present their positions. Noe circumvented most of Rimmer's arguments by declaring his faith in the fundamentals and attacking atheistic evolution. He supported theistic evolution, scoffed at an ex nihilo creation, and argued that the Bible itself had an evolutionary development. While the audience favored Rimmer's position, Noe received a respectful hearing and a fine round of applause. Rimmer's later insistence on carefully defining debate topics might have been a lesson from this debate. Rimmer also learned that debates were tremendously popular. Four thousand people paid seventy-five cents apiece to watch the "two scientist-theologians" debate, while the Klan, in a formal procession through the tabernacle at the conclusion of the debate, brought Rimmer a love offering of $400. At Poplar Bluff, Rimmer learned the tactics and enormous value of evolution debates.

The Poplar Bluff crusade was extraordinarily
successful. Observers commented on Rimmer's "vigorous preaching" and "powerful sermons," noted that the meetings had attracted "the most marked interest from the beginning," and remarked that standing room was at a "premium." Rimmer also spoke at schools, clubs, and gatherings around town and throughout the area. At the end of four weeks, some people wanted to extend the meetings. Rimmer left the decision up to the tabernacle audience, vowing to stay an additional week if an extra $500 was received. That amount was easily raised, and the campaign continued. At the conclusion of the meetings, in addition to the Klan's gift, the town presented Rimmer a gift of $2,100. The Rimmers had fond memories of Poplar Bluff and occasionally returned for brief appearances. The Poplar Bluff crusade opened a new chapter in Rimmer's career.

In January, 1926, Rimmer conducted a month-long crusade in Muskogee, Oklahoma. He had had successful trips to the city in the past, in his YMCA work, and was "well known in the area as an evangelist and boys' worker." He was disappointed though with the local committee's lack of preparation; it had not properly advertised the crusade, lagged far behind in the prerequisite funding, and, instead of building the promised tabernacle, hosted the crusade in a Baptist church. At $3665 for a four week revival, Rimmer said he was offering a "bargain campaign," since most comparable crusades would cost $6000. Though collections continued to be small, ranging from thirty to eightyfive
dollars each evening and rumors flew about that crusade would fold, Rimmer promised to stay, even if the campaign staff had to "get guns and raise the money themselves." He tried to stir up interest in Muskogee with the promise of an aggressive crusade. Quickly announcing that he was not a modernist, he unveiled series on science and Christian fundamentals and predicted that "we'll make ourselves a nuisance to the Devil," and "make it hot" for Satan.

The emphases of the Muskogee crusade were similar to those in Poplar Bluff. Rimmer's early sermons focused on the poor moral climate in Muskogee, as he charged that people were involved in immorality, embezzlement, and all forms of uncleanness, vice, and "immeasurable filth." Evangelism was his major concern; he preached a sermon on "Salvation Free But It isn't Cheap," for example to an overflow crowd. Assailing modernism and liberal eschatology in a sermon entitled "No Peace Without Christ," Rimmer noted all the wars since 1918, expressed amazement at how they "harp about permanent peace and hail their pact as the end of all international strife," and reminded his audience that there could be no peace until the world "combines in one Christian brotherhood." Judged by newspaper accounts, however, community interest in the crusade was limited, and Rimmer's messages seemed flat and ineffective.

Rimmer fared somewhat better in the area of science.
He had attentive audiences for two series on science and the Bible, in which he used his collection of skulls, museum artifacts, and slide shows. His black audience was especially receptive to the creationist message. He also made some well-publicized archeological excavations at Webbers Falls, and contributed the specimens to the Pittsburg museum. These finds and the press treatment of his "remarkable discoveries" added to his reputation as a scientist, especially in Muskogee, and his scientific experience.

Rimmer's Muskogee crusade received the endorsement of Charles Erdman, a Princeton Seminary professor and national moderator of the Presbyterian Church. As a moderate Presbyterian, Erdman was fairly conservative in theology but pluralistic in church polity. In a fierce dispute at Princeton Seminary in 1926, a part of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy, Erdman bitterly opposed the appointment of Presbyterian fundamentalist J. Gresham Machen to the Chair of Apologetics and Christian Ethics, which led to a reorganization of Princeton Seminary, the subsequent formation of Westminster Seminary, and, ultimately, a schism in the Presbyterian Church. In Muskogee, however, Erdman said he was happy to be in town during a revival, noted that Muskogee's Presbyterian minister was a nephew of the great evangelist, D. L. Moody, and urged the congregation to support the Rimmer campaign in every possible way. Though Rimmer was clearly a
partisan fundamentalist, in 1926 he still retained at least
the public support of a national Presbyterian leader.

On January 24, toward the end of the crusade, Rimmer
decided to press the issue of civic morality, advertised a
sermon entitled "To Tell the Truth of Muskogee," and
announced that the city needed surgery and that he
"nominated himself" as surgeon. The "sad and shameful
conditions" in town required him to speak out, even at
"risk of being tarred and feathered or sent home in a long,
wooden box." While Rimmer manifested concern about
conditions in the city, the publicity was probably also
designed as an antidote for waning interest in the crusade.
He admitted that the local committee had not met its
contract, and that he was disappointed with the
"comparative lack of results in his campaign." Rimmer was
concerned about community polarization over race and Klan
questions; he referred specifically to a shameful recent
riot and demanded the attendance of "every Ku Kluxer and
anti-Klaner in town" at the special meeting. Rimmer
announced a series of messages on the town's problems,
including "How Far is Hell From Muskogee," reminiscent of
the Poplar Bluff crusade, and also called for the presence
of the city's newspaper editors, not just cub reporters,
noting that they were "notoriously brave in telling the
truth about other men, let's see if they have the courage
to come out and hear the truth about themselves." The
editor of the Muskogee Daily Phoenix, in a piece on "Harry
Rimmer, Surgeon," noted this with curiosity, announced that "we like this young fellow Rimmer," further patronized him by saying that "his personality charms us, his sincerity seems genuine, and he is a good fellow," and then asked Rimmer to explain if he was a Klan member and why he addressed the Klavern. Rimmer used this publicity well, saying that he had never ducked a question before and would reveal his relationship to the Klan--"at tomorrow's meeting." He said he had "cleared the decks for action," and was prepared for surgery. Admitting that sweeping up dirt, cleaning a house, or lancing a boil were never pleasant, he still affirmed that no good could come in a community until "the festering sore of rancor and hatred is lanced."

The community responded to the appeal; the auditorium and balcony were packed to capacity, all standing room was taken, and "hundreds of people" were turned away. Rimmer dropped a bombshell on the town, condemning the Klan, its rival All-American Association, the Roman Catholic Church, newspapers, especially the Phoenix, and the community at large for the social tensions. He said he had been a Klan member, but renounced it because he disagreed with the its increasingly violent and political tendencies. He charged the Klan with hopeless bigotry, accused anti-Klansmen of also being prejudiced, and scored the newspapers as being "uncompromising, bitter, and prejudiced," and "creating a state of hysteria that keeps
the community pot boiling." Muskogee's newspaper war between pro and anti Klan papers had exacerbated tensions. If he owned one of the newspapers, Rimmer said, he would sell it "and hide myself in shame." The *Phoenix* editor responded harshly by publishing an oversized, large-print, front-page editorial, which attacked Rimmer, answered his charges point by point, and refused to change its editorial policy, since to do so would "betray righteousness, law, and decency."

In his next message, on "The Harvest," Rimmer warned that a community would reap what it sowed. Seeds of "hatred, rancor, bitterness, and bigotry" would produce a "crop of civil war." He again blamed community strife on the media, which, wielding "lethal weapons," were guilty of "assassinating businesses, killing churches, and murdering love." When the other, pro-Klan newspaper inquired about answering Rimmer and joining the fray, Rimmer said it was a "public scrap," so "come on in, honey." In his evening meeting he noted newspaper misquotations and responded to their allegations point-by-point. The *Phoenix* editor, in another oversized, front-page editorial, said he did not mind being the target of Rimmer's abuse since he was used to villification by the "corruptionist, the grafter, and the hypocrite," by those "whose zeal overruns their sense of logic and sound reason," and by those, like Rimmer, "who do not understand." The editor said it was a "pity" that Rimmer he was not "better informed," and was
disappointed that he "of whom we had hoped for so much, should have given so little." When Mignon Rimmer, who was unaware of the situation, came into town about this time, a friendly porter told her that "This ain't no time to be goin' to Muskogee. There's a preacher there. . .an' he's sure stirrin' up a fuss. It's turbulent."

Rimmer's solution to Muskogee's problem was prayer. Noting the efficacy of prayer, he urged the Klan and All American Association to come together for a community prayer meeting. As time was running out on the crusade, he probably lost the desire to fight. Declining to answer the latest Phoenix "gas attack," he contended that he could respond to each point, but could not furnish "brains to understand." He regretted the fight, explaining that doctors like to heal their patients, not fight with them. Most of the controversialists, such as the Phoenix editor, attended the prayer meeting in good faith. One observer said that as a result of Rimmer's campaign people were confessing their sins and talking with people they had not spoken to in years. In the last days of the crusade Rimmer fulfilled his promise to drop his surgeon's role and return to the "old things" of the revival.

Despite the controversy, Rimmer was very popular. There was a movement to extend his stay, which would have forced him to cancel a speaking engagement at a Dallas seminary. He ultimately declined this extension. Despite the turmoil of his campaign, Rimmer felt he improved
spiritual conditions in the city, and made long-term friendships.

The Muskogee crusade taught Rimmer some tough lessons about city-wide campaigns, and probably forced him to reconsider his commitment to crusade evangelism. The Muskogee committee had not honored its contract, which made the crusade a financial nightmare. Rimmer finally abandoned crusade work because of his distaste for its financial and administrative burdens. His war with the city newspapers also proved distasteful to him. Though Rimmer enjoyed a good fight, the relentless attack by the Phoenix was harsher than anything he had experienced. When the media supported a moral campaign, as in Poplar Bluff, crusading was enjoyable; when the media savaged a moral campaign, as in Muskogee, crusading was miserable.

Rimmer waged his last and greatest campaign in Pine Bluff, Arkansas in April and May, 1926. He used essentially the same youth, music, and administrative team as in the earlier crusades. In this crusade Rimmer graduated to a pine-board tabernacle, and the attendance was so great that the tabernacle was repeatedly enlarged, to a maximum capacity of 3,200.

As in his other crusades, Rimmer dealt with scientific themes. His anti-evolution lectures were especially well received in his separate, black meetings, perhaps because he emphasized the image of God in all peoples. Rimmer warned of the foolishness of scientific hypotheses and
theorizing, and appealed to good, rural common sense. "You can sell evolution to a city boob," Rimmer told the audience, relying upon one of his favorite maxims, "But I've lived on a farm and I'm wise. Until I see a setter dog that has kittens, you can't sell me the evolution business." He also warned that evolution produced moral decay, since "apostacy in faith" was tied to "immorality in life."

Rimmer again launched an attack on modern morals. In a front-page "vitriolic denunciation of sin," he charged that God was crowded out of communities because of lust and the pursuit of pleasure, and the Devil took charge of people's lives. He made specific charges about Pine Bluff, describing boys running out behind the YMCA for "nips of rot-gut whiskey," the "necking parties" in dark autos along the highway, and the use of a local church for "immoral purposes" by young people. He concluded that "there are more prodigals to the square inch in this city than in any town I have ever been in." In his next message, which also produced front-page headlines in the local paper, Rimmer charged that people spoke publicly of buying whiskey; young people consumed dope as well as rot-gut whiskey; liquor was sold openly ten miles from town; and legal violations were "more flagrant" than in Los Angeles.

A local Presbyterian pastor objected to Rimmer's accusations. About a week after the charges, on April 12, Central Presbyterian pastor Marion Stafford expressed his
"deep resentment" of Rimmer's charges in a Chamber of Commerce meeting; he claimed that the negative reports would harm business development and objected to "propaganda" about how Pine Bluff was filled with "booze hounds," was more decadent than Hollywood, and was "the wickedest city on the earth." Stafford insisted that the boys and girls of Pine Bluff were as pure as any in the country. He criticized the papers for carrying Rimmer's propaganda, suggested that statements contrary to fact should be censored, and charged that Rimmer's accusations were the "stereotyped phrases that professional evangelists have used in every meeting I have ever been in."

The unauthorized publication of Stafford's speech divided the community and local churches. Churches proclaimed their allegiances, for instance, in notices in the newspaper's religion section. Announcing that Dr. Rimmer was a special guest on Sunday, one notice continued, "If anybody inquires, please tell them Selsus E. Tull and the First Baptist Church are for Harry Rimmer and the Tabernacle Revival." Stafford's Central Presbyterian Church, on the other hand, assured people that:

You can bring your children here and nothing will be said that will offend their sensitive, moral nature. No foolishness or crude stories told. This church is a church of fellowship and broad sympathy, where people know each other's faults and pray for each other in a spirit of brotherly love as our Master taught us.--J.Marion Stafford.

On April 20 Central Presbyterian Church gave Stafford a unanimous vote of confidence, and he claimed that he had
the largest audience in sixteen years to hear his message on "What Pine Bluff Needs." Reasserting his claims about the purity of Pine Bluff's citizens, he said that the city's few problems should only be for local consumption. Condemning the "apparent evils of modern methods of evangelism," such as "emotionalism" and "fanaticism," Stafford intimated that the real problem was Rimmer. "Nowhere in the New Testament," Stafford continued, did the apostles use "high powered methods of winning souls."

Stafford's attack irritated Rimmer. The night after the Chamber of Commerce speech, Rimmer, having never met Stafford and not realizing he shared the platform with him, asked "What kind of a man is Dr. Stafford?" Stafford replied, "I am he." Rimmer denied having treated Stafford unfairly in refusing to allow him to address the Tabernacle, arguing that "this is my crowd, my tabernacle, and my pulpit." He did offer to let Stafford speak after the service, and, in reference to Stafford's complaint about the publication of the Chamber of Commerce speech, added "And I don't ask that this be kept our of the papers. In fact, I want it to go in." Rimmer also denied saying, as Stafford charged, that Pine Bluff was "the wickedest city in the world." What I said, Rimmer corrected, was that Pine Bluff was "the wickedest city of its size in the country."

Rimmer's Pine Bluff crusade represents both interdenominational cooperation and denominational schism.
His crusade had broad support, from Methodist, Christian, Presbyterian, and Baptist churches. Ten members of the local ministerial praised his work during the height of the controversy, and many churches boldly registered their support for Rimmer in the papers. At the same time, Pine Bluff had modernistic elements. Two months before Rimmer's crusade Luther Burbank spoke at the First Congregational Church, and, according to headline article on "INFIDEL OCCUPIES PULPIT," said "I nominate myself as an infidel."

With his emphasis on human goodness, suspicion of Rimmer's evangelistic and revival techniques, and hostility to the crusade for morality, Marion Stafford showed an uneasiness with Rimmer's fundamentalism. Though both were Presbyterians, they had radically different theological and methodological convictions. The other Pine Bluff Presbyterian pastor, however, Dr. Robert Exall Fry, had fundamentalist leanings, frequently spoke at Moody conferences, and supported Rimmer. Fry's career also represents fundamentalist networking. In 1930, Fry accepted a call to First Presbyterian Church of Duluth, where Rimmer succeeded him in 1934. The fundamentalist-modernist dispute, even in small cities such as Pine Bluff, could divide people of the same denomination, at the same time that it drew ministers together from different communions.

Despite the controversy, Rimmer continued his crusade against civic corruption in Pine Bluff. He charged
policemen and newspapermen with "public intoxication," recounted how the mayor, District Attorney, and grand jury had refused to deal with liquor running, and promised that "he would not leave the city in its sin." On April 13 Rimmer revealed that forces were trying to destroy his crusade. Asserting that one newspaper was too frightened to carry his sermons, Rimmer said that:

A little company of men are going to ride me out of town on a rail. But I'm here until the night of May 2 at 9:15 o'clock, and there aren't enough sinners in Hell to run me out first, unless I go out in a wooden kimona, feet first.

Noting that the mayor had already contacted the prosecutor, Rimmer hoped a grand jury would be convened, promised to add some witnesses for the jury, and again exhorted: "Let's put sin out of the city of Pine Bluff at any cost."

Two days later Rimmer again encouraged action. He urged the people "to demand a Grand Jury investigation of Pine Bluff public officers," offered "to recruit an army for Christ's work," and volunteered to stay six months to clean up the city, even though he was threatened again with being run off. Though Pine Bluff was "not my city," Rimmer explained, "I was invited here to clean it up, and it is my business to clean it up." The new disclosures attracted attention; local ministers praised him, a large industrial firm commended his efforts to "uncover sin and uncleanliness in the city of Pine Bluff," and an extra six hundred seats were added to the tabernacle. When the Grand Jury was not called by April 15, Rimmer threatened to
reveal another chapter of Pine Bluff's conditions. He noted with relief that the police judge had ordered seventy-five gallons of "hootch" dumped into the gutters. He justified continuing the crusade for morality by saying that though he could have shut his eyes to sin for thirty days, Jesus was no coward, and he did not intend to sell Jesus out.

Rimmer escalated the tempo of his moral campaign with the well-publicized disclosure of an attempted bribe. When a man allegedly asked him, "What is your price?", Rimmer answered: "I'll tell you what my price is; when evil, corruption, and shame are done away with, I'll shut up; and that's my price." When another man promised that things would improve if Rimmer was quiet for forty-eight hours, Rimmer granted that much time, but promised that without improvement, "I'll dig deeper." Two days later he said he was never "so concerned for any city as for Pine Bluff," and explained how police drank, were drunk on duty, took protection money, and sold liquor from the police station. The information was so sensitive that, when Rimmer began describing how a bootlegger gave bribe money to the police, a Baptist minister quickly arose during the meeting to say that the story was confidential.

As Rimmer's crusade concluded, plans were made to continue his moral campaign. Selsus Tull, pastor at First Baptist Church and later a leader in the Arkansas anti-evolution movement, promised to lead a citizens group to
the Grand Jury to present the evidence Rimmer had collected, and testified that "I've never seen anyone rise to the occasion as Dr. Rimmer did." Just as Rimmer's crusade closed, the awaited indictments came, though in an unforeseen way. Police chief Frank Henry and detective Joe Lee Willis were charged with assault with intent to kill for shooting at a person in a diner from a speeding automobile. Though this happened after Rimmer launched his clean-up campaign, it confirmed his allegations of corruption.

For Rimmer, Pine Bluff crusade was a success. The turnout and community interest was gratifying, and he won 384 converts. After Rimmer had left the city, one newspaper acknowledged the importance of his crusade by republishing all of his sermons. The crusade was a profitable experience for Rimmer; it established important contacts for the future and seemed to be a springboard for future evangelistic work.

Surprisingly, the Pine Bluff crusade was Rimmer's last. Mignon Rimmer said that just as her husband was thinking of assembling a permanent team, "the whole picture changed." It is possible that the financial and administrative duties of a large crusades were too demanding, and that Rimmer decided move into conference work instead. Furthermore, he was more of an apologist than an evangelist, and probably sought, and found, a better vehicle for his gifts. Perhaps most important was
Rimmer's increasing involvement in the fight over evolution and his affiliation in 1926 with the World Christian Fundamentals Association. Rimmer left crusade evangelism because he had found a new, more satisfying crusade in creationism.
CHAPTER THREE

THE CREATION OF A SCIENTIFIC PROPHET:
HARRY RIMMER AND THE RISE OF FUNDAMENTALIST SCIENCE,
1920-1926

During the 1920's the focus of Rimmer's ministry evolved from evangelism to science, or, rather, from traditional evangelism to scientific evangelism. In the early Twenties he was a fairly typical itinerant, fundamentalist evangelist, who, though concerned about Darwinism and modernism, was primarily a soul winner. In 1926, however, in defense of the Scriptures, he threw himself into a life-long campaign against evolution, and ultimately emerged as a national creationist leader. Fundamentalists and evolutionists alike noted his rising prominence. One of the former proclaimed Rimmer to be "God's most powerful voice in this generation." More importantly, the creation scientists of the 1970s and 1980s have emphasized Rimmer's continuing legacy. In 1976 his works were the foundation for an amusing assessment of evolution entitled From Goo to You by Way of the Zoo, in which the author described Rimmer as "one of the foremost scientists of this century." Most important is the testimony of Henry Morris, guru of modern creationism, who
claimed the "remarkable Dr. Rimmer" was "the greatest Christian apologist of his generation," the "best known" and "most influential creationist before the Darwin Centennial," and the one who convinced him of the flaws of evolution and the truth of creationism. As a "voice crying in the wilderness", Morris maintains, Rimmer was a harbinger of later creation science. Though Rimmer's anti-evolution campaign attracted attention in the late twenties, he did little original or creative work during that period. In the early twenties Rimmer did almost all of his significant scientific work, developed the framework of his creationism, and seized evolution as a primary issue. The period between 1920 and 1925, then, marks the creation of a scientific prophet.

A Background of Science

Rimmer was interested in and researched the questions of the Bible and science long before he launched his crusade against evolution. In one 1927 speech, he claimed to have done scientific work since 1908—perhaps referring to reading in the sciences while working in the mining camps. In one of his first books Rimmer emphasized that, while he was both a scientist and a Christian, he was a
devotee of science before he became a Christian. In 1912, as a student at Hahnemann Medical School, he dabbled with science, received laboratory training, learned scientific terminology and methodology, and became "less enthusiastic about the scientific world" after exposure to the dogmatism of his professors. Rimmer recalled that one of his professors was an "ardent evolutionist" who argued that the theory of evolution was proven by mutations, such as the hairless Chihuahua Terrier. "At this point in the demonstration," Rimmer explained, "I had the poor grace to laugh, and the professor asked me what was so funny." Rimmer told him the story of how, while he was working at a northern sawmill, a woman brought a pair of hairless dogs to the camp, where they quickly contracted pneumonia and perished before they could produce furry progeny. Though Rimmer felt the example proved fatal to the theory of evolution, the professor ignored it, saying "he had been unfortunate in his illustration, but the principle was true, nevertheless!" While a Friends pastor, in 1916, Rimmer further attributed doctrinal and moral apostacy, in part, to the modernistic, man-made doctrine of evolution. While stationed in San Diego during World War I, he greatly admired Lincoln Ferris, a local Methodist minister who was interested in the physical sciences, especially astronomy. Dedicating an early book to Ferris, the "Prince of Erudition," Rimmer claimed that he "first turned my thoughts to this study" and his "brilliant scholarship has
ever been a source of unfailing encouragement." Rimmer thought of following Ferris into the Methodist ministry, and, that failing, tried to follow his example as an evangelical scientist. His interest in science grew enough that, by 1924, Rimmer claimed he had been extremely interested in scientific research "for a number of years," and had worked in anthropology, paleontology, biology, and geology.

The academic influences on Rimmer's developing creationism are difficult to ascertain. He intimated that his opposition to evolution grew from an inductive analysis of the evidence, which is probably true to a degree. The most significant influence, however, was probably The Fundamentals. Rimmer was converted to and educated within a fundamentalist movement increasingly hostile to evolution. Some of the first fundamentalist salvos against Darwinism were in The Fundamentals, published in a complete, four volume set in 1917 by BIOLA while Rimmer was a student there. Some of the articles, like James Orr's "Early Narratives of Genesis" and "Science and the Christian Faith," were scholarly, conciliatory, even amiable to theistic evolution, and emphasized the harmony of science and scripture. Other articles, such as "The Decadence of Darwinism", "The Passing of Evolution", and "Evolutionism in the Pulpit", were more confrontational, noting scientific fallacies and disagreements, attacking theistic evolution, and describing
the "collapse of evolution," which became one of Rimmer's favorite topics. An anonymous author in The Fundamentals attacked Gospel ministers who still supported Darwin's theory and spoke glibly of our "descent from monkeys," and thus merely echoed "the unproved and now properly rejected speculations of dead and gone generation of infidel philosophers." Evolutionary theory, the author continued, was:

conceived in agnosticism, born and nurtured in infidelity; is the backbone of the destructive higher criticism which so viciously assailed both the integrity and authority of the Scriptures; substitutes for a personal God an infinite and eternal Energy; and regards man as without a free will, moral responsibility, or immortality. . . .9

The Fundamentals also embraced a Baconian philosophy of science, which, rooted in the scientific methodology of Francis Bacon, emphasized experimentation, observation, and verification, and was suspicious of theoretical hypotheses. R. A. Torrey, in an essay on the resurrection of Christ, declared that "true science" does not start with an a priori hypothesis, nor twists the facts to make them correspond to theories, but simply examines the evidence to find out what occurred and makes theories accord with the facts as observed. In "The Passing of Evolution," George Fredrick Wright placed Christianity in the family of the inductive sciences, and warned that the worst foes of the faith were not physicists, but metaphysicians, and that the sophistries and fatalism of philosophers were more
dangerous than science. By emphasizing an inductive Baconian system of science, the harmony of true science and the Bible, and vigorously challenging Darwinianism as false science, The Fundamentals were probably a powerful influence on Rimmer's creationist thought.

In the early Twenties, Rimmer tried to educate himself in the sciences. He at least read widely in popular scientific periodicals, such as Science, was familiar with recent scientific discoveries, and, most importantly, was aware of the discrepancies among scientists on the theory of evolution. In 1923, he took a correspondence course in geology from the University of Colorado as preparation for archeological and geological work. But the most important influence was the work of the Seventh Day Adventist geologist George McCready Price, the father of flood geology. In Modern Science, Noah's Ark, and the Deluge, one of Rimmer's earliest works, he said that Price's "most remarkable and up-to-date" New Geology was a "masterpiece of REAL SCIENCE, and explodes in convincing manner some of the ancient fallacies of science so called." Since those who had not read the book were "behind the times," he exhorted his readers to "get the book and read it at once." Some took his advice. Henry Morris, the foremost twentieth century creationist, was first exposed to Price's work through Rimmer.
Rimmer's early interest in science and evolution led to his forming, in 1921, the Research Science Bureau, which Morris described as the "first attempt to develop an explicitly creationist organization." Rimmer first saw the need for such an organization in 1917 or 1918, when he realized that "an assault was being made on the scriptures in the guise of science." He was pressed to form the Bureau during a 1920 Bible Conference in Big Springs, Texas by high school science teachers who wanted an association of earnest, Christian scientists to combat the idea that "most scientists were atheists or, at the very least, infidels." Since Rimmer traveled throughout the country and could maintain national contacts and a network of supporters, he was the logical choice for Bureau president when it was formally incorporated in Denver, on March 27, 1921. The Research Science Bureau was designed to fund field trips, experiments, and publications dealing with science and scripture, and to be a clearinghouse for the latest creationist scholarship. The intent of the founders was positive, since the Bureau was to harmonize and integrate scientific and scriptural information, rather than attack science. The Bureau included two types of members: "active" members who were involved in research, and "associate" members who, in return for an annual
membership fee of five dollars, the promise of supporting the Bible, and the pledge of good moral character, received the organization's publications. Rimmer had great aspirations for the Bureau; he hoped to develop a research and teaching center, a syndicated news column on creationism, and a monthly magazine, *Science and Sacred Scripture*. By 1927, he claimed to have 220 research members and 1,000 associate members.

In the same year, the Bureau expanded its influence by publishing bulletins in militant fundamentalist Gerald Winrod's *The Defender*. So influential was the Bureau, at least in Rimmer's estimation, that, in a 1932 *Denver Post* interview, he claimed that:

> Principally through the Research Science Bureau, now international in scope, the theory of evolution has been knocked into a cocked hat. The only people teaching evolution today are years behind the times.

In 1940 he proudly acknowledged that the Bureau's members "cover the known world": Asia, Europe, South and Central America, Micronesia, Polynesia, the Philippines, New Guinea, the Dutch Indies, and the Malay regions—"we can truthfully say that we are international in scope."

Despite Rimmer's hopes—and claims, the Bureau remained small. The main research facility was Rimmer's garage, and the only staff was his family who stuffed envelopes. The Bureau did include foreign members and "active", research associates, but they were few in number and possessed limited scientific credentials. The doctors
listed on his board of directors were either medical
doctors, or, usually, dentists. The expert testimony on
human jaw structure in *Monkeyshines*, for example, was
offered by Dr. I. A. Hanna, a Bureau director and the
Rimmer family dentist. The influence of the Bureau was
so limited, even on fundamentalists, that some historians
concluded it collapsed after 1927. Financial setbacks of
that year did force Rimmer to postpone research activity,
and the crash of 1929 further crippled the Bureau's
financial viability. Mrs. Rimmer said that disappointment
over the Bureau's failure contributed to Rimmer's emotional
and physical problems. Though it did not fulfill
Rimmer's expectations, the Bureau did survive, probably
because Rimmer wanted his creation to succeed and enjoyed
the prestige of the Bureau's presidency. The Bureau was
useful for copyrighting and distributing books, and issued
a flood of Rimmer's books through the Frost Memorial
Library endowment in the Thirties and Forties. This
Memorial Library, funded by the father of a young man
Rimmer had converted, perhaps gave Rimmer his widest
audience, since it sponsored popular books like *Modern
Science and the Genesis Record*, *The Harmony of Science and
Scripture*, and *The Theory of Evolution and the Facts of
Science*, and disseminated them free of charge to students.
By 1949, Rimmer claimed that two million of his books were
in print, with many of the works translated into foreign
languages.
The Bureau, since it was incorporated, was also a legal umbrella for Rimmer. Through the Bureau, he made a well-publicized offer to give $100, then $500 and $1,000, to anyone could show an error in the Bible. In the first legal challenge to that offer, in 1929, when a man sued Rimmer for refusing to pay for a proven error in the Bible, the suit was dismissed because it was directed at Rimmer rather than the Bureau. Though the Bureau did not measure up to Rimmer's claims, it provided legal protection, prestige, visibility, and an outlet for his writing, and was, therefore, a valuable asset for the scientific prophet.

Amateur Research Scientist

An important goal of the Research Sience Bureau was the funding of creationist research, of which Rimmer's was the most significant. Rimmer was serious about doing scientific research since he believed that unbiased, systematic research would totally discredit the theory of evolution. The only people who still believed in evolution, he continually argued, were those who were "behind the times." "No scientist who is up to date within eighteen
months," he claimed, "will accept the theory of evolution." He suggested, for instance, that science teachers should be given an annual salary to allow them six months of active research each year which, he felt, would persuade them to repudiate Darwinism. By 1924, Rimmer claimed that he was doing six months of scientific research each year in addition to six months of evangelism. Participating in research, furthermore, gave Rimmer credibility and authority as a research scientist, a title which he coveted. When people questioned his scientific standing in 1927, Rimmer responded by citing his fifteen years experience in scientific research, "many years of laboratory work," specialization in embryological research, and nineteen field expeditions in archeology and paleontology. To prove that he was "one of the best," "staunch," "true" friends of "real science" in the United States, Rimmer argued that he had studied and tested science, and performed laboratory and field research work for "years," "a number of years," and "a long time."  

Throughout the twenties and thirties, Rimmer advertised himself as a scientist, especially when speaking on the topic of the Bible and science. Promotional literature frequently described him as a "distinguished research scientist." During his 1924 Hanford, California crusade, for instance, the local paper entitled an article on his opening session "Harry Rimmer, Scientist, Goes After Science." The Poplar Bluff, Missouri paper
repeatedly referred to Rimmer as the "evangelist-scientist-archeologist." When he toured Arkansas in behalf of the state's 1928 anti-evolution initiative measure, the Arkansas Democrat reported that "Scientist Speaks Here on Evolution." Prior to his 1930 Greenville conference, newspaper promotionals announced "Noted Archeologist to Conduct Conference." As late 1947, Rimmer's trip to Little Rock was promoted in a piece entitled "Scientist to Lecture," in which the subtitle proclaimed his "five field trips." Throughout this period, Rimmer's publicity heralded him as a scientist and, more importantly, as a research scientist. Rimmer, then, defined himself as a scientist. Since he lacked a formal education, however, he could claim that title only through his actual research activity.

During the early twenties Rimmer engaged in diverse, primary research. Unlike other early creationists, such as George M. Price and William Bell Riley, who did little research and depended on secondary material, Rimmer was constantly in the field or laboratory. He constructed a laboratory and darkroom at his home for conducting biological experiments and for producing creationist materials. His son, for instance, recalled pens of rattlesnakes and rats around the home which were part of Rimmer's research. On his speaking tours he frequently initiated archeological or geological expeditions into the surrounding countryside, such as his excavations of Indian
burial mounds near Muskogee, Oklahoma, Hanford, California, and Poplar Bluff, while leading city-wide revival meetings. As a result of his field work in the early twenties, Rimmer acquired specimen collections from around the world, including numerous human skulls, skeletons, and artifacts, human embryos, dinosaur fossils from Kansas, and a butterfly and insect collection from South America, India, Africa, Southeast Asia, and the Pacific Islands. While touring the western states, he studied geology, collected many rare samples, which were donated to different schools, and utilized the information in his books. Even as Rimmer pursued his evangelistic career with the YMCA and in city-wide crusades, he poured himself into scientific labors.

Perhaps the most famous of Rimmer's studies was his analysis of human skulls in a critique of missing links. He collected a large number of skulls, from his own excavations and overseas acquaintances (such as an African medical missionary who was Research Science Bureau member), and contrasted them to gorilla skulls. Rimmer sorted and photographed the skulls, used the color slides of the collection to supplement his lectures and books, and referred to his research while testifying before the California State Board of Education in 1927. He brought the slide presentation to Pittsburg State Teachers College in 1924, for instance, to show the differences between the species, and document how school textbooks had altered
gorilla skulls to make them appear human. He used the same slide show and skulls from his "private museum" during his city-wide crusades to show the "absolute dissimilarities" between human and simian craniums and the "gross fabrications" of pseudo-science's missing links. He explained how one German scientist "proved" evolution by wiring the head of a baby monkey unto the body of a human baby. The "gullible" public was misled for three years until the wire was discovered. The sheepish scientist admitted that he had "schematized the experiment a little." The slide show was effective and, at least in one instance, controversial. While one critic, in a scathing attack on Rimmer, noted the beautiful color slides, another was so incensed by the presentation that he arose during the lecture to berate Rimmer and had to be escorted from the auditorium. Rimmer drew the information and photographs together, in early 1925, in *Monkeyshines: Facts, Fables, and Fallacies Concerning Evolution*, a popular expose of the hoaxes of evolution.

Rimmer's most important work was probably in archeology; at Indian burial mound excavations in the twenties, and in Palestine in the thirties. The excavation of a Tulares Indian site at King's River, near Hanford, California, was his first major project. The local newspaper reported that Rimmer "with an enthusiasm that rivals that of the excavators of King Tut's tomb," was delving into the valley's "most extensive mound." After
initially exhuming one hundred skeletons, Rimmer returned later with student assistants to continue the project, and preserve and relocate the artifacts. He subsequently took his assistants to Deming, New Mexico to explore a site he discovered on a YMCA trip. In the Fall of 1924, while speaking in Muskogee, he unearthed a burial mound at Webber's Falls. When he returned to the area in January, 1926, he discovered more significant burial sites along the Arkansas River, which he claimed were 700 to 1,000 years old, and sent the well-preserved skeletons to the museum at Kansas State Teacher's College. In 1925, the "evangelist-scientist-archeologist" discovered three burial sites, estimated to be 500 years old, at Poplar Bluff, Missouri. After further projects in Arizona, Utah, Ohio, Mexico, and the Polynesian Islands, Rimmer claimed that he had personally exhumed 2,000 skeletons. Rimmer deposited almost all of these specimens and artifacts at Pittsburg State Teachers College, where he developed an impressive natural history museum, which occupied the entire third floor of the University library. The current library archivist, who saw Rimmer's collection as a student in the fifties, described it as "professional" and "monumental." Rimmer was interested enough in preserving the artifacts of his various sites and the heritage of the area that he encouraged communities to establish local museums.

Though he actively engaged in scientific work, attempted to become a research scientist, and even
developed a noteworthy archeological collection, Rimmer was essentially an amateur. His interests were too broad to allow him to specialize in one field or on one problem. One Pittsburg foe pointed to this problem by sarcastically noting that "Dr. Rimmer is exclusively a research scientist and specialist in such fields as anthropology, ethnology, sociology, psychology, history, ethics, religion, etc., etc." Rimmer lacked the means of research; the facilities of the Research Science Bureau were embarrassingly small. The research laboratory, which housed the darkroom, microscopes, and other basic supplies, was only a small addition to the back of the Rimmer garage.

The scientific community largely ignored Rimmer, his discoveries, and his books. California archeological records do not mention Rimmer's Hanford excavation, perhaps his most important work. Rimmer was probably one of the many people who came to the central valley in the twenties and thirties for the "quasi-scientific purpose of increasing museum acquisitions." Rimmer noted the lack of interest in his Hanford discovery, but attributed it to his refusal to ascribe an early date to the mound and engage in "guessiology."

The caliber of Rimmer's work is reflected in his archeological methods. Usually his assistants had no scientific training; they included young students, friends, and religious leaders. For the follow-up to his Muskogee
dig, Rimmer brought the local Presbyterian and Methodist ministers along for the "afternoon" of research. When Rimmer -learned of a possible Indian burial site near Poplar Bluff at a local ranch, he took along young people involved in the evangelistic crusade. While the women made coffee and prepared the picnic lunch, Rimmer took the boys to dig. He returned disappointed after finding only a couple of arrowheads, and attributed the lack of success to "bad luck." On his last dig, Rimmer was invited to the ranch of Homer Rodeheaver, Billy Sunday's famous songleader and Rimmer's close friend, who had bought Florida property to raise quarter horses and start a boys' home. Since the property included an Indian mound, Rodeheaver invited Rimmer to come for archeological work and some bass fishing. Though he caught some bass, and saw "jillions" of big cockroaches, Rimmer found that the mound was a "dud", evidently ruined by local "treasure hunters." Rimmer, it seems, had little background in the area of local Indian culture, and simply combined a vacation with some archeological work.

His work in geology was also suspect. His education in the discipline was largely limited to a correspondence course from the University of Colorado and long conversations with an assayer when Rimmer was stranded in a remote Arizona town. His geological expeditions seemed mostly like sightseeing and rock collecting tours. During one expedition he wrote to his wife about hiking to an old
volcano, where he found "some interesting geological freaks" and four smoky topazes, continuing to an old turquoise mine, where he found six turquoises, and then, on a subsequent trip a few days later, seeing some nice geological formations and the famous "Stonewall Fault," where he "picked up a fossil or two." During the same YMCA tour Rimmer learned to cut and polish stones, and what he had described as a real "geological find" was topaz he cut and set in a necklace for his wife.

Though Rimmer's expeditions were often educational in nature, in that he collected samples for schools and included college students on the trips, they were probably of little scientific significance. Rimmer's writings, furthermore, suggest that he was familiar with popular scientific sources, but not with technical works in his fields. He frequently quoted, for instance, from Science magazine, museum guidebooks, and his personal conversations with "experts." The source of his oceanographic information was the director of a Marine Institute with whom Rimmer chatted while on a tour of the facilities. In short, though he possessed a quick mind, continually tried to improve his knowledge of science, and actively and sincerely pursued his scientific research, Rimmer had no professional training and was only an amateur scientist.

The importance of Rimmer's research, however, was the way it helped him define himself and offered him scientific status in fundamentalist circles. Ignorant of or
unconcerned about the quality of his work, fundamentalists perceived Rimmer to be a first-rate scientist. Since he was a "hands-on" scientist, who actually peered through microscopes, collected rocks, and unearthed human remains, he spoke with authority on questions of the Bible and science. Rimmer cultivated this reputation as a researcher and filled his work with vivid examples of life in the laboratory. When Rimmer spoke at Pittsburg State Teachers College, an observer recalled that "Dr. Rimmer begins his address in a manner calculated to impress everyone. He regrets that he must give his valuable time to lectures. How he longs to be back in his laboratories researching his skulls." At other times, Rimmer declared the microscope to be the "greatest ally of the Bible," describing how it magnified the "finest hair of the tiniest bat" to the "coarsest hair of an elephant's tail," and proclaimed his confidence, that on whatever research project he was working, "my microscope will show me." His laboratory allowed him to show others as well. When an Occidental College professor tried to indoctrinate students in evolution by "dishonestly" using the theory of embryo recapitulation, Rimmer brought the students to his laboratory, showed them actual cross sections of human embryos, and refuted the recapitulation theory. Armed with this visible evidence, the students returned to school to confront and refute their professor. Rimmer later revealed that in his research on embryology he had studied "1,465
different kinds of living things" and had performed "a
great deal of original research" on the question of
"acquired characteristics." In one experiment, for
instance, he placed rubber vests on mother rabbits to
prevent them from pulling out hair for nests. Rimmer
wanted to determine if acquired characteristics could be
inherited. In another instance, while speaking before the
Wayne County Medical Society in Detroit in 1928 and, at
least according to the newspaper reporter, knocking the
tenets of adaptibility and acquired characteristics "into a
cocked hat," Rimmer described an interesting experiment on
parameciums he had "superintended," in which the organisms
were fed nicotine until they "got drunk." Though some died
and others produced sterile offspring, at the end of
fourteen generations all abnormalities had vanished and the
paramecium "were as good as new." He treated the citizens
of Poplar Bluff to the same type of first-hand evidence
that he presented to Occidental students. In addition to
lantern slides of human skulls and specimens from his
"private museum", Rimmer delivered a "wonderful scientific
address" utilizing nearly a hundred "stereopticon" images,
including telescopic studies of heavenly bodies and
microscopic pictures of a fly's leg. In all of this
evidence, the newspaper reporter concluded, "the element of
design of was obvious." In Muskogee he presented his
audience the first hand evidence of a freshly exhumed
skull, explained its fully human characteristics, and
pronounced the cubic capacity of the skull to be "much greater than that of the average college professor." To refute transmutation and show the stability of species over time in the field of paleontology, Rimmer gave colorful examples, of mosquitos and grasshoppers, which emphasized his research work and enhanced his reputation as a scientist. He described his trip to the "Grasshopper Glacier" in Montana's Saber Tooth Mountains, a site frequently overlooked by paleontologists, where millions of ancient grasshoppers were frozen into a glacier, and recalled the musty smell of the Rosebud River and the difficulty of catching the trout, which had grown fat feeding on prehistoric grasshoppers. Rimmer told his audience that "I get these prehistoric grasshoppers by the countless thousands. When they are examined microscopically and compared with the grasshoppers of Montana today, there is no change or evolution." In his discussion of mosquitos, Rimmer began by noting that sometimes lifeforms were trapped in moss agates, and continued in such a way that his audience could not overlook his primary research: "In my museum I have a priceless collection of moss agate. One includes a mosquito. I have him myself in my own possession. Examined microscopically he is identical with [today's mosquitos]." If evolution were true, he finished, mosquitos would be the size of elephants and have bills the size of telephone poles.

When Rimmer described scientific methodology in A
Scientist's Viewpoint of the Virgin Birth, he said he was compelled to use a microscope in "my laboratory" when studying biology, and a pick and shovel in studying archeology. When demonstrating the symmetry of the world and the geological proofs for the argument for design with rhomboids, Rimmer noted that he had rhomboid "before me as I write." To illustrate oceanographic research in two of his works, Rimmer spoke of walking about, lying down, and standing on his head on the floor of the Gulf, and hearing the "hissing of air in the helmet." He tried to prove his expertise in archeology and anthropology by frequently claiming that he had exhumed two thousand human skeletons "with my own hands." Some people claimed to have dramatic proof that Rimmer was a bona fide researcher. On man recalled how, as a Christian Endeavor youth snooping around the Rimmer garage, he was horrified to stumble on a whole barrelful of human skulls. One evangelical leader, recounting how Rimmer sailed in a whaling boat while doing research on Jonah, respectfully concluded that "he would find out the facts about a thing." When an assistant on an archeological dig struggled to harmonize their findings with accepted evolutionary theories, Rimmer chided him and explained that:

You dug that up. This poor bone never read your textbook and it doesn't know how you want it to be. Now, which are you going to believe? The schematized drawing in a textbook written by some professor who never saw a burial mound, or this evidence that you yourself have acquired by your own labor?
Rimmer gained credibility and respect as a scientist, then, at least in popular and fundamentalist circles, by emphasizing his first-hand research experience.

He further appealed to these audiences as a common-sense scientist. He was a superb speaker, possessed a gift for explaining difficult concepts in lay terms, and mocked what he saw to be the pretensions and sophistry of high-brow science. The "high-brow," he once claimed, such as the person who held to evolution and denied God's Word, was simply "somebody that has been educated above their mental capacity." During the Deming excavation, he joked that he was working in rock strata that was one million years and five days old, since the "experts" said that the strata was one million years old at the beginning of the week. He later explained to Occidental students the circularity of geological arguments; geologists dated fossils by the age of the surrounding geological strata, then confirmed the age of the strata by the age of its fossils. Anyone could see the folly of this methodology.

Rimmer appealed to, identified with, and communicated with the common person. He was disgusted with the ostentatious scientific language of "homo scientificens," including the "double-jointed, twelve cylinder, knee-action words," which characterized the "wierd and compound verbiage of science." When one young skeptic wanted to restrict his discussion with Rimmer to facts and scientific language, Rimmer accommodated him by referring to the
"shinbone" as the "anterior cutaneous border tibialis."

Rimmer admitted that the master of scientific lingo was his student-associate Paul Cameron, and recounted a favorite story about the Hanford dig. One night while gathered around the campfire, the team decided to translate the song "Uncle Ned" into scientific parlance. The line "he had no hair on the top of his head" became "he had no follicle appendage on the cutaneous apex of his cranial structure, anterior to the homoidal suture and posterior to the sagittal suture where said follicle appendages habitually germinate." After his 1925 Poplar Bluff excavations, Rimmer dazzled reporters with his own mastery of scientific language, "by rattling off about some sort of 'insidilusamancantsavvy','" and amused them with an example of extravagant scientific hypothesizing, explaining how he would gather "a string of evidence (not theories, since that word is not to Rimmer's liking)" about the exhumed man and his life.

Thereupon he would come to the conclusion that he was the step uncle of Chief Harry Chest of Stone Crick, who could wield such a mean club that all the girls were crazy about him and bragged that he was a ursus horribilis when it came to loving and that he lived in the year 2924 B.C.

For Rimmer, no one was incapable of understanding science. As one man, who had been converted through hearing Rimmer's scientific preaching, put it, "He could talk my language. He didn't use seventyfive cent words when he talked to me; he used two for a nickel words." Rimmer
held the attention of 3,000 people during a long, difficult lecture on evolution in Poplar Bluff, because his address was "interesting," "compelling," and, though scientific, "as nearly in the parlance of the people as possible." Rimmer was delighted when his young son silenced a pushy atheist by illustrating the argument for God's existence from design with a watermelon and a gourd. From the mouths of babes, Rimmer concluded, came the greatest wisdom. In *Monkeyshines* he stated that the differences between human and gorilla skulls were so obvious that even a child could tell them apart. "I have three children," he explained, "all under ten, and if I say. . ."Get me a gorilla skull," even the baby knows the difference." He then presented photographs of various skulls and challenged his readers with "you pick 'em." In contrast to what he believed was obtuse, confusing, and contradictory science, Rimmer offered his audiences obvious, visible, and comprehensible explanations and proofs.

Rimmer also encouraged the notion that he was a world-class scientist who was on the cutting edge of modern research. His critics frequently complained that Rimmer styled himself a "superscientist." After hearings before the California legislature on an anti-evolution bill in 1927, his opponent complained that Rimmer freely "admits that he is one of the world's greatest living scientists." His reputation as a world traveler and researcher grew from his earliest works, in which Rimmer
claimed that his research work had taken him "around the globe." In 1926, for example, he planned to lead a research expedition of twenty-two scientists and taxidermists to Africa to investigate human origins, "study the ferocious gorilla first hand, and further "his chain of evidence that the monkey is not the great grandad of the human. In the mid-1930s he combined family vacations with research trips to the British Museum and Palestine. These expeditions contributed to Rimmer's stature as a world famous scholar. According to the Duluth church's historian,

"Dr. Harry" was a world traveler, participating in archeological excavations at sites of ancient civilizations in the Near East, a student who kept in touch with scientific developments in many fields, a man familiar with ancient languages and who was able to read inscriptions on clay tablets dug up in Babylon.

Although one of Rimmer's ministerial acquaintances scoffed at the idea of Rimmer's ability to read hieroglyphics and ancient languages, the popular perception of Rimmer as a linguist persisted.

People could certainly see the fruit of his research. An avid photographer, Rimmer took pictures of ancient manuscripts in the British Museum and Vatican Library (after discovering a method of photo-graphing through glass), filmed King Tut's tomb, the pictures of which he showed to overflow crowds in Duluth, secretly took shots of Jerusalem's Wailing Wall, and smuggled pictures out of Mussolini's Italy. Most important was his photographic
and archeological work in Palestine, included in Dead Men Tell Tales and Crying Stones, which, his wife claimed, "proved" the accuracy of the New Testament. While traveling in Palestine, Rimmer wrote a series of newspaper articles on archeology, which further enhanced his reputation as a world traveler, researcher, and correspondent. In 1949, Rimmer took medical equipment to the Belgian Congo, where he assisted his friend Charles Trout, who was engaged in research on leprosy. Though his assistance was primarily in bringing equipment and clothing, raising money for a medical equipment, and filming leprosy germ culture, people assumed he was engaged in monumental research and was on the verge of finding a cure for the disease. One of Rimmer's former Duluth parishioners, noting the dangers and intrigue of sensitive research, recalled how Rimmer smuggled a vial of leprosy culture into the United States under his armpit. Because of his world-wide travel and ambitious claims, Rimmer developed a reputation, in his own mind and in popular fundamentalist circles, as a world-class scientist. As late as 1976 an admiring creationist described Rimmer as "one of the foremost scientists of this century."
The Quest for Scientific Credentials

Before Rimmer could speak authoritatively on issues of science, he had to acquire scientific credentials and establish himself as an authentic scientist. He was crippled by the lack of academic credentials, scientific position, and recognition in the scientific community. As his critics noted, being an ordained Presbyterian minister hardly qualified him to speak on matters of science. During the debate over an anti-evolution bill in California in 1928, Maynard Shipley, an opponent of the bill and Rimmer, after noting the impressive credentials of the bill's degree and titled opposition, described "Dr." Rimmer as a "fellow" of the Bible Institute. To gain respect and establish himself as a viable fundamentalist scientist, Rimmer needed credentials.

Rimmer relied, first, on his personal work in science. Though he was deprived of "the peculiar benefits of formal schooling," Rimmer explained to one inquirer that he compensated for his lack of scientific training by using tutors, which prepared him for college work and developed the technique which carried him "through many years of laboratory work." To a Minnesota group in 1926, Rimmer claimed that he had completed "the essential course of study" in the sciences. University of Minnesota professor

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David Swenson, hinting that Rimmer was an "unprincipled propagandist" and "ignorant demagogue," noted the ambiguity of this claim, asking,

What does this mean? Mr. Rimmer has doubtless read a book or two; but if this were enough, no student would ever flunk in his courses or fail to take his degree. Who has passed judgment upon his competence? It is my experience that a student's own judgment in that matter is not absolutely infallible. It is not research to read books, even if one reads them intelligently.75

Rimmer's strongest and most persistent claim to being a scientist, that of being a researcher and archeologist, was also questioned. Asked to prove his status as a scientist, Rimmer usually commented on his "fifteen years of experience in scientific research" [in 1926], "years" of laboratory work, and nineteen field expeditions. Swenson, however, met this claim with "suspended judgment," saying that "we do not know what Mr. Rimmer means by scientific research." Continuing the attack on Rimmer, he insisted that:

The bare fact that he has dug up 2,000 or 200,000 bones or skeletal remains of ancient man means nothing at all. If it tended even in the slightest degree to substantiate his claim to be an anthropologist, then every undertaker and gravedigger in the country could claim to be an authority on anatomy, perhaps also on evolution. [I]t is not research to dig up specimens, even if one is able to sell them later to schools and museums.77

Swenson concluded that Rimmer possessed only a "popular and journalistic notion of science," and was not a scientist; "much less is he the superscientist that unsuspecting audiences are being persuaded to think of him." A Denver
critic, hinting at Rimmer's ulterior motives in making such claims, said that Rimmer was "a joke" as a scientist, but assumed that role "to enhance his prestige". If he labeled himself a preacher, the critic continued, his "anti-evolution twaddle would fall flat"; "but as a 'scientific research worker', he is able to impress the uniformed and collect the shekels." Rimmer, then, first claimed scientific standing because of his scientific research. Though this did not impress experts and academicians, the research claim encouraged Rimmer's reputation as a "superscientist," at least among the "unsuspecting" and "uninformed" masses.

Since the claim of being a "researcher," though useful, was nebulous and difficult to define, Rimmer used more concrete examples of his scientific standing, such as the presidency of the Research Science Bureau. The Bureau's name and Rimmer's title sounded impressive. His opponents, however, were justifiably suspicious of the Bureau. After Rimmer asserted, during his 1932 meetings in Denver, that the Bureau was the world-wide organization primarily responsible for the demise of the theory of evolution, one spectator challenged the idea that the Bureau was international in scope. This Denver adversary noted that while "Mr. Rimmer says he is a scientist, president of the Research Science Bureau, Inc., elected to that position because of his achievements in research work," his "school boy blunders," ignorance of terms, "utter indifference to
well established tacts," and "falsehoods" about his own credentials mark him as a "cheap pretender and humbug."

A 1931 article in The Debunker, commenting on Rimmer's Philadelphia conference, questioned whether the Bureau even had a laboratory, or scientists to run it properly. In Minnesota, Professor Swenson included a scathing attack on the Bureau in his expose of Rimmer, saying

I do not know what kind of "research" this strangely named Los Angeles corporation carries on, but the mere fact that they have elected as president a man of Mr. Rimmer's demonstrated intellectual caliber entitles me to the suspicion that the high sounding name is merely claptrap, of which a minister of the gospel should be ashamed. Or else we must assume that Mr. Rimmer's associates are as ignorant as he is the sense in which real scientists use the term "scientific research."81

Opponents undoubtedly attacked the Research Science Bureau so vigorously and relentlessly, because Rimmer emphasized its position as a major research institution and tried to establish his scientific reputation with the Bureau's presidency.

Rimmer tried to further authenticate his scientific position through membership in professional organizations, such as the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Geographical Society. Though the latter society only marginally offered scientific status, as late as a 1947 conference in Little Rock Rimmer advertised his membership in the geographical society. The former, the American Association for the Advancement of Science, was much more important to Rimmer and his anti-
evolution cause. Not only was he a member of this scientific body, but he claimed that the AAAS's membership was predominantly theistic and skeptical about Darwinism. Because science demonstrated the existence of God, he argued, you could scarcely find a confessed atheist among the fifteen thousand scientists on the roll of the AAAS.

Rimmer's critics questioned his assertions about the nearly universal belief in God among AAAS members, and suggested that Rimmer's AAAS membership was worthless, since anyone could join the organization. When Rimmer was questioned about his claim of being a scientific archeologist during a 1928 Minnesota tour, he told the inquirer "As to my published standing, I suggest you look at the membership list of the AAAS." An indignant observer, noting that Rimmer was not a "fellow" of the AAAS, only a "member," for which the only requirement was a five dollar annual fee, said:

As proof of scientific competence his mere membership is worth precisely nothing. . . [H]e did not even exhibit the intelligence of an ordinary man of common sense, who would never have imagined that the possession of $5, plus the willingness to spend it, proved that he was a scientist.

Many others also checked on Rimmer's AAAS credentials. In 1939, for example, Bennette Greer, the president of Furman University and Greenville Women's College, wrote to the AAAS secretary seeking information about Rimmer, expressing his "deep concern" about Rimmer's recent message at his school, and inquiring about Rimmer's claim that of the
16,500 AAAS members, only 116 did not believe in a personal God. Rimmer had said, during the Greenville meeting, that the Bible anticipated modern science, including the prediction of photo-electric cells in the book of Job.

The AAAS secretary responded by saying that

"This is not the first inquiry we have had concerning Dr. Rimmer. Perhaps it is unfortunate that such a person can announce himself as a member of the Association, which is perhaps due to the fact that any person interested in the advancement of science and education can join."

Noting that Rimmer was not a fellow, probably did not belong to any important AAAS committees, and perhaps conducted his own survey of the members' religious beliefs, the secretary concluded by saying that "so far Doctor Rimmer has avoided such drastic statements that would cause his removal from the list of members." Despite its limited importance, Rimmer valued his AAAS membership, tried to contribute to the Association, and sincerely believed his membership brought scientific status. Rimmer was active in the Association's meetings; he planned on reporting on his Hanford archeological discoveries at a 1924 Association meeting in St. Louis, and was present at the 1926 meeting in which evolutionary hoaxes were discussed. He was amused by a paper at another Association meeting, which argued that the perfect shape of man should be spherical.

In defense of God's design of human anatomy, Rimmer pointed out that a round humanoid would tumble uncontrollably down hills with no means of stopping. Ignorant of or
unconcerned about professional and scientific scorn directed at him, Rimmer believed that membership in the American Association for the Advancement of Science verified his claim to being a scientist.

Rimmer also tried to enhance his credentials through association with colleges and universities. Advance publicity for Rimmer's 1925 Poplar Bluff crusade mentioned that "He worked his way through college, and now holds several degrees, and speaks thirteen languages, and is recognized as an authority on science and astronomy in the United States." This publicity was blatantly false; in 1925 Rimmer held no college degrees, and it is doubtful that he knew any foreign languages, except for "scientese." Though some of these exaggerated claims undoubtedly emanated from the local news reporter, Rimmer's resume was frequently inflated, which might explain historian Norman Furniss's description of Rimmer as "a man of great scholarly pretensions." Rimmer often hinted about his university connections, utilizing the prestige and aura of higher education to sound more impressive. Immediately after his 1924 Hanford discovery Rimmer told the press that he had "wired some of his University colleagues [and] they will assist him." In the same year, while at Kansas State Teachers College, Rimmer mentioned that he had just given a series of lectures at Sulphur Springs, Arkansas, and would be a "regular lecturer at the University there." John Brown's Sulphur Springs Institute, which
was just opening and lasted only a few years, was hardly a university and was best known as a "jazz-less school".

According to plans for the 1926 research trip to Africa, Rimmer planned to lead twenty-two scientists (and taxidermists) from American colleges and historical societies. In _Modern Science and the Fifth Day of Creation_, Rimmer explained how he was stumped on a problem while working in the laboratory, and was forced to call a friend, a professor of mathematics, at "our university."

The best example of Rimmer's padded credentials is the publicity prior to the 1926 Pine Bluff, Arkansas crusade. The newspaper described him as "a scientist with an enviable record," a contributing author to the nation's "outstanding magazines," and a scholar who "holds the chair of research science in a California university." Though Rimmer might have been referring to the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, with which he was affiliated and for which "university" was a more prestigious designation, Rimmer held no chair of research science there. In trying to develop scientific credibility, Rimmer often inflated his accomplishments and invoked the image of the university to gain respect.

The strongest academic credentials Rimmer had were from Kansas State Teachers College in Pittsburg, Kansas. He was close to the school's president, frequently lectured on the campus, was offered a teaching appointment and honorary degree, donated scientific and historical collections to
the school, and developed the school's Museum of Natural History. Rimmer was ultimately named curator of the museum, which was the one official, at least semi-scientific, title he possessed. By being named museum curator, Rimmer had independent confirmation of his contributions to and expertise in science, especially archeology and anthropology. When he was asked, while a Duluth pastor, about his scientific qualifications, he quickly noted his numerous field trips and the documents he possessed naming him head of the Pittsburg museum.

Rimmer's credentials were completed with his receiving, in 1926, the first of three honorary doctorates. Though the honorary degree was in theology (D.D.), and was granted by obscure Colquith College, it gave Rimmer a prestigious title and a measure of respect, at least in popular circles. Rev. Rimmer the evangelist was becoming Dr. Rimmer the scientist. Other honorary awards followed. He received the Sc.D. degree from Wheaton College in 1936, and the LL.D degree from John Brown University in 1942. Though he treasured these degrees, Rimmer resisted accumulating honorary titles for show. After declining an honorary degree from Kansas State Teachers College, Rimmer said that the only degree he had ever coveted was M.D., adding that:

If I had a list of degrees a yard long following my name, my critics would not be satisfied. They want only that I give up my faith in Genesis and accept evolution. Then they would welcome me with open arms. Will I do that? Hell will be frozen over first.
By 1926, then, Rimmer had accumulated the credentials necessary to be a scientific prophet. Though these credentials meant little by themselves and were not respected in academic, professional, or scientific communities, they sounded impressive, especially when taken as a whole, and especially to Rimmer's popular audiences. When Rimmer met W.A. Newman Dorland, a professor of gynecology and medical expert, in a 1928 debate before the Wayne County Medical Society, he described himself as a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Curator of the Museum of Natural History at Kansas State Teachers College, president of the Research Science Bureau, and an "authority on paleontology, archeology, anthropology and geology, [and] and particularly an authority on the archeology of the Tulares region." The scientific prophet had collected his credentials.
Baconian Evangelist

Rimmer's view of science and his antagonism to evolution was deeply rooted in the Protestant Baconian tradition. Historians Theodore Bozeman and Herbert Hovencamp have shown how nineteenth century American Protestants utilized the system of inductive science developed by Francis Bacon. Influenced by Bacon and the empiricism of Scottish Realism, these Baconians were suspicious of the metaphysical speculations and theoretical hypotheses which led to the atheism of the Enlightenment, and insisted on a "philosophy of facts" in which scientific conclusions were based on careful experimentation and immediate observation. These evangelicals stressed the limitations and mutability of science by pointing to some of science's "dubious theories" and wild abstractions. True science, they argued furthermore, must account for all phenomena and facts, including Biblical facts. Since God had created the world, they believed that the revelation in nature and the revelation in scripture would be consistent, and that by stressing this harmony, science could lead people to the Christian faith. Appropriated as a symbol, this Baconian ideal offered "security to threatened evangelicals" in science, and provided a rational, systematic methodology in theology and biblical
interpretation. The inductive, scientific methodology of Francis Bacon, then, was a significant part of the nineteenth century evangelical tradition.

American fundamentalism at the turn of the century drew upon this tradition in both science and biblical hermeneutics. Historian of fundamentalism George Marsden argues that "Baconianism [was] the hallmark of their intellectual heritage." Fundamentalists did not fabricate scientific inductivism for the sake of argument during the controversy over evolution, since the commitment of Bible-believing Christians to Bacon's system preceded the Darwinian debate. These fundamentalists were not intrinsically hostile to science, since they respected "true" science and stressed the harmony of Bible and science. Early in the twentieth century, however, assaults on orthodox Christianity by biblical higher criticism, with its evolutionary methodology, Darwinism, and, later, the cultural crises following World War I made fundamentalists more defensive and suspicious of science. They also applied this inductive method to the study of the Bible in a "dispensational" hermeneutic which demanded a literal interpretation of the text, rather than speculative symbolism. When fundamentalists opposed evolutionary theory, then, it was for what they felt to be scientific as well as religious reasons. The argument over Darwinianism was not a question of religion versus science, but of competing scientific or philosophic systems. Marsden
explains that fundamentalists were not "indiscriminately unscientific," but reflected a "striking commitment to the assumptions and procedures of the first scientific revolution." Following Bacon's methods, they sought "objective certainty" through inductive steps of using careful observation, experimentation, and classification and generalization of the facts. Speculations incapable of verification by observation, such as evolution, were "beyond the realm of true science."

By the time of the anti-evolution crusade of the twenties, even fundamentalist clergymen and laymen were schooled in the terms and verites of inductive Baconianism. A.C. Dixon, the famous preacher and The Fundamentals editor who convinced Bryan of the dangers of Darwinism, explained that "Science is knowledge gained and verified by exact thinking," and urged people to return to the method of Bacon, saying,

First learn the facts; then draw your deductions from them. There seems to be a trend now in the scientific world back toward the pre-Baconian period. Some scientists have accepted the theory of evolution and they spend their time seeking proof of their theory instead of confining themselves to "knowledge gained and verified by exact observation and correct thinking."

William Jennings Bryan launched his crusade against evolution buttressed by the same Baconian arguments. Darwinism should be rejected, he explained, because it lacked biblical support, led to absurd theories, was not supported by the "facts," and was built upon hypotheses and
guesses. "Guesses are not science," he continued, "science is classified knowledge. Christianity has nothing to fear from truth. It is the unsupported guesses that is substituted for science to which opposition is made."

Fundamentalist leaders everywhere directed their fire against guesses and hypothesizing, and insisted on science's return to facts established by observation and experimentation.

Rimmer echoed this need for inductive Baconianism. Marsden argues that Rimmer, an important "precursor of the modern creation-science movement," offered "definitive statements of the Baconian ideal." Rimmer emphasized the Baconian inductive method, for instance, by arguing that "an attempt to deduce is not a science!" He continually argued that "Science was a correlated body of absolute knowledge, which has been gained by trained observation and verified by experiment." Such science was no threat to Christianity; the danger was from speculative philosophy. In a 1925 work on the virgin birth, Rimmer first developed his philosophy of science and the themes of fundamentalist Baconianism which he stressed throughout his ministry. He introduced this doctrinal study by announcing his allegiance to both inductive science and the Christian faith, and saying:

I am a scientist, and a CHRISTIAN. I was a devotee of science before I became a Christian, and remained the same eager student of science after my conversion to Christ. I recognize the difficulty the student has in reconciling he

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differences of the two, but I will always believe the difficulties are more imaginary than real. The modern scientist is prone to swallow any and everything that is said in the name of science, and some of the queerest and weirdest ideas are held to be science, and so infallible. No man can ever begin to harmonize all the theories of men of science with the lasting truths of the eternal Book, but if we remember that a science is "A correlated body of ABSOLUTE knowledge," a great many difficulties will never arise. They say that every ten years the scientific knowledge of man has to be entirely revised, and I guess the charge is true. So rapidly do we learn and so fast do we pass on from theory to theory, that the so-called "knowledge" of today is disproved by the new discoveries of tomorrow. We live and learn. I never state a scientific truth in dogmatic terms, for I am sensible of the fact that although I may hold it for the truth today, tomorrow science will move on and hold the very opposite. But we see none of this vacillating in the Bible! It merely says: "Thus says the Lord. . . ."114

As his early work in The Virgin Birth suggests, Rimmer had a love-hate relationship with science. Though he respected and utilized "true" science, he was irritated with the false authority and air of "infallibility" of presumptuous "pseudo-science." Modern science, he suggested, was like a new religion or cult, and manifested the defects usually attributed to traditional religion: dogmatism, sectarianism, and fallibility. He complained about the "Baal of research" and the "fetish of science," which was "bowed down to and worshipped by the present generation." Rimmer characterized the modern age as the period of "homo-scientificens" because of the "exalted self concept of so-called science." He attacked science's dogmatism, suggesting that any one who challenged the
accepted doctrines of evolution was persecuted like Galileo. For the sake of their old, erroneous theories and pet philosophies, he continued, these "scientific obscurantists" repudiated the new truth with the "profane babblings of a science so-called." In Modern Science and the Youth of Today, after noting errors and fallacies of scientific theories, Rimmer charged that:

\[\text{THIS IS THE INFALLIBLE SCIENCE THAT WOULD ASSAIL THE VERY WORD OF GOD, ROB YOUTH OF ITS FAITH AND HOPE AND SECURITY, AND WHICH THE 'SCHOLARLY' CLASSES SO BLINDLY FOLLOW! \ldots SUCH MIRACLES OF CREDULITY RELIGION HAS NEVER SEEN.}\]

Though Rimmer claimed to speak authoritatively as a scientist, he resented the "infallible" stature of modern science.

As a good Baconian who believed that science should be limited to the "facts," he was upset about what he considered to be the weird, unfounded, and irresponsible hypotheses of science. Rimmer feared for the "simple souls who received as absolute gospel every wild guess that is uttered by any scientific fanatic. \ldots\" More credulous and naive than "the most gullible religionist," he continued, "they swallow the most unreasonable, improbable, and unprovable statements. \ldots that inflamed imagination can produce.\" As an example of exaggerated claims, Rimmer recalled that scientists dated some recent human remains as 25,000 and 150,000 years old, until he produced evidence refuting their assertions. His most persistent example of irresponsible hypothesizing was of
the "missing links" constructed from a few bone fragments. Rimmer lamented how Bryan's testimony and knowledge of science were ridiculed at the Scopes Trial, because he did not believe in Nebraska Man. Within two years of the trial, the lone tooth from which this "pathetic" evidence was "fabricated" was proven to be the tooth of an extinct pig. Noting that "Southwest Colorado Man" was constructed from the tooth of a small, ancient horse, Rimmer concluded that "'Give us a tooth!' seems to be the cry from the experts; they will supply the rest from plaster of Paris and imagination." Basing "tremendous assertions on insufficient evidence," he concluded, was the "fundamental error" of scientists. Since evolution demands a demonstration of its "fallacious claims," he lamented, "truth is sacrificed on the altar of prejudice." To illustrate the foolishness of unsubstantiated hypotheses, Rimmer told the story of a child who claimed that the blacksmith made horses. Questioned by his father, the child insisted that it was true, since he saw the blacksmith "nailing on the feet." Rimmer mistrusted the grandiose theory of evolution, then, since it violated the Baconian requirements of verifying facts through observation and experiment.

Because it was based upon so many theories, Rimmer argued, science was undependable, prone to error, and in a state of flux. With other fundamentalist scientists, he
concurred that science changed completely every generation; "A textbook of science ten years old is obsolete," he claimed, "One a century old is a curiosity." Ridiculous scientific errors, from which the Bible was immune, he argued, such as the flat earth, evolution, and the idea of a tortoise supporting the world, had plagued ancient scientists. The constantly changing horizon of scientific knowledge, furthermore, left science an undependable authority in the modern world. Subjected to constant scrutiny, the theories and conclusions of one generation will be "revised," "discredited," and "rejected" by the next generation because of the accelerating rate of the accumulation of new knowledge. "The fact of today," Rimmer concluded, "is the discredited theory of tomorrow." He predicted that present theories, such as evolution, "a false theory of philosophy which modern science has utterly discredited and disproved," would soon be thrown unto the "junkheap of scientific limbo, where so many false theories of the past now peacefully repose in perpetual slumber." In addition to this inherent flux of scientific knowledge, Rimmer said that science changed because of the competing systems of scientific sectarians. He explained that there was a bitter and annoying "civil war" within the ranks of scientists: "one scientist against another--man against man--school against school--theory against theory." How could science be dependable, he asked, when scientists violently disagreed about the truth
of their respective theories? He confessed that he never stated scientific truth "dogmatically," knowing that science would affirm the opposite tomorrow in its constant vacillation and shifting ground. Noting that the Bible, built upon "Thus saith the Lord," was steadfast, proven through testing, and had never faltered in a single truth, Rimmer added "How I wish my beloved science had the same unchanging face".

Science was most untrustworthy, Rimmer claimed, because it was manipulated by atheists, infidels, and agnostics to attack Christianity and discredit the Bible. Admitting that the only reason he approached the Bible from a scientific perspective was to answer infidelity, which was cloaked in the "disguise" of science, Rimmer charged that for over fifty years "the most brilliant minds that, infidelity and modernism (the Siamese twins of Satan's spawning) could marshall" have attacked the Bible. Their "entrenched bigotry," "exalted egos," and "ignorant conceit" forced evolutionists into fallacious and prejudicial arguments, he continued, since true science left no room for infidelity. Rimmer had no respect for these atheists, whom he described as the "liberally miseducated," "sadly muddled freaks" of so-called civilization, who, "befuddled" by their small learning and proud of their "puny accomplishments," declared themselves to be greater than God, denied his existence, and attacked the Bible. Since Rimmer believed that only the blind or
willfully dishonest could study science and doubt the existence of God, he argued that unbelieving scientists were in willful, open rebellion against God, and refused to believe since it would require humble repentance and conversion. Rimmer was cautious about science, then, because he felt that the foes of Christianity deliberately used it as camouflage in their malicious assault upon the faith. He best expressed this sentiment in the closing warning in "The Alphabet of Science," saying

on the borderland of true learning, there dwells a vociferous host in the half light of error, who are loud in their claims of superiority to the Christian scriptures. But in their ranks are found none of the truly learned, the erudite, and the sanely scientific. Those who really have a right to speak with the name of science testify with gratifying unanimity, "Thus saith the Lord!" In the calm certainty of their opinion, let us hold what God has given us, forsaking the profane babblings of science that is falsely so-called.135

Despite suspicions of science "so-called," Rimmer admired and spoke positively of true science. Some historians have seen Rimmer as a constructive fundamentalist because of his efforts to harmonize and bridge the differences between religion and science. Suggesting that the discrepancies between the Bible and science were largely illusionary, he stated that there was a "magnificent," "complete," "essential," and "absolute" harmony between Genesis and the proven facts of science. His creationism was not only a "workable hypothesis," as he sometimes claimed, but was confirmed by all real scientific
facts. He substantiated this claim by arguing that the Genesis record was accurate and scientific, since God, the creator, had given an infallible record of creation. Because Moses and the other biblical authors, as the amanuenses of God, recorded exactly what they received and thus avoided any scientific error, the Bible was a "record of absolute fact," in the Baconian sense. The Bible's prophecy of future scientific discoveries, such as ocean currents, the nature of human blood, quarantine procedures, photo-electric cells, infra-red lights, and evaporation further demonstrated the inspiration of the Bible. One of Rimmer's favorite topics, which was controversial enough to even prompt evangelical criticism, was how "THE WORD OF GOD ANTICIPATES MANY MODERN DISCOVERIES." The idea of harmony was vitally important to Rimmer, since he believed that disagreement between science and scripture was impossible. Since both were forms of God's revelation, natural revelation and special revelation must agree. As long as science was true science and not just theory, it never contradicted the Bible. Rimmer suggested that the Bible and science worked hand in hand--"THE WORKS OF GOD AND THE WORDS OF GOD in perfect harmony and accord."

Though God's written word and natural revelation were harmonious, Rimmer always emphasized the primacy of scripture. Since the Bible was the immediate, infallible, and complete revelation of God, it was Rimmer's ultimate reference point. In a work on the long day of Joshua,
Rimmer urged people to study both science and the Bible, warned that natural revelation was understood only by those who understood God's word, and closed the work saying, "FOR THOUGH THE WORD OF GOD AND THE WORKS OF GOD AGREE, THE WORD IS HIGH ABOVE THE WORKS, AND WHEN THE WORKS SHALL MELT AND PASS AWAY, THE WORD SHALL EVER ENDURE." In The Harmony of Science and the Scriptures, after noting that the enduring Book spoke with "absolute infallibility" on science while scientific opinion was "constantly changing," Rimmer exhorted his readers to "test science by the Bible!" Instead of judging the Bible by science, he said, it was more logical to "make science, the lesser, conform to the Bible!" In studying science, he further suggested, it was best to begin with the scripture, for "what modern science doesn't know, the blessed Holy Spirit does know." Rimmer said that the only reason he wrote on science was to appeal to unbelievers, in the hope that "by descending to the lower plane of science and reason, we may induce some to ascend to the higher plane of faith."

Rimmer's emphasis on the Bible as an interpretive guide superior to science and natural revelation anticipated moves by Christian apologists from classical to presuppositional apologetics and creationists from Baconian to Kuhnian science. In the 1930s, conservative Protestant apologists, such as Gordon Clark and Cornelius Van Til, argued that it was impossible to develop a neutral,
objective apologetic methodology or common ground, since everyone possessed a world-view or presuppositions through which they understood reality. Later creationists, influenced by philosophers of science Thomas Kuhn and Karl Popper, also deemphasized the notion of objective, impartial science, suggesting instead, that all scientists began their inquiries with self-contained, unfalsifiable paradigms or models. Both sides in the creationist dispute, Marsden explains, had divergent ontological starting points, differing ideas on what constituted "fact," and questioned whether the other side was doing "real" science. Rimmer, noting that everyone had an "A" and "Z" of thought—a beginning and concluding point, confessed that "this writer begins with God." The Christian was required to begin his reasoning with theistic presuppositions, since "we cannot think past or before Him." The problem with modern science, Rimmer explained, is that it began at the wrong spot, and endeavored to study the Bible through nature. For him, however, the Bible was "the microscope" through which he studied nature. In another work Rimmer described the Bible as an interpretive "telescope" which brought all things into perspective. In a reflective moment later in his career, he hinted at this movement from Baconian toward presuppositional science by referring to the controversy over evolution. The "teliorist" calls the evolutionist an "infidel and unbeliever," while the
evolutionist retaliated by calling the creationist "an obscurantist, ignoramus... and fundamentalist," which prompts a war of hurling textbooks and "stabbing each other in vital scholarly spots with impressive lists of great authorities." They agree on the facts, he concluded, "their argument is over the interpretation of those facts. Though Rimmer, especially in his early creationist work, relied upon a Baconian scientific methodology, his emphasis on the primacy of scripture and theistic presuppositions foreshadowed the movement of later creationists to Kuhnian science.

Despite his rhetoric about and sincere interest in pure, objective, impartial science, Rimmer was a polemical scientist. As an apologist and evangelist, he utilized scientific terms and themes primarily for religious purposes. He appropriated the weighty reputation of science, for instance, to enhance the authority of his own ministry. Referring to the colossal prestige of science and the way it became a "shibboleth" and the arbitrator of a generation's thought, Fredrick Lewis Allen suggested that "to preface a statement with 'science teaches us' was enough to silence argument." When a scientist spoke out for religion, Allen added, the churches took courage and believed God had received the highest possible compliment, so great was the reputation of science. Church historian C. Gregg Singer described the "scientific age" as a period where the test tube and microscope gained a "sacramental
character," and the laboratory was a kind of "temple."

Claiming to be a scientist, Rimmer used this authority in his apologetic approach to undergird Christian confidence in the Bible. Even his critics noticed this, believed that he exploited science, and claimed that "Rimmer gets these crowds only because he speaks on scientific subjects." Rimmer's daughter recalled that "his true calling was the defense of the . . . scientific and historical accuracy of the Bible at a time when many found their faith wavering. . . ." After Rimmer's 1924 lecture at Kansas State Teachers College, in which he showed the errors of the missing links, the student paper reported that his "happy audience" left the auditorium with a "sigh of relief" being "relieved of the odious burden of science." Of Rimmer's 1930 conference in Lynchburg, Virginia, a Presbyterian minister recalled that "he confirmed our faith in the Bible as the Word of God." Rimmer prefaced a later work with the admission that the book was an undisguised attempt to show that "in an age of science an educated person can believe the Bible to be the Word of God." By using Baconian science as an apologetic tool in defense of the scriptures, Rimmer became, for fundamentalists, a scientific prophet.

Since he believed that science was a "handmaid" of scripture and a "beacon to the Bible," Rimmer also used his creationist science as an evangelistic tool. After arguing for the accuracy and truth of the Bible in his
crusades and conferences he usually urged people to make a profession of faith. Though some questioned his "scientific evangelism," it was successful. One of Rimmer's Duluth parishioners, converted by such preaching, acknowledged that Rimmer gained his attention and respect with a lecture on archeology and claimed "it was the only way he could have reached me." A newspaper reporter covering the 1925 Poplar Bluff crusade mentioned that though Rimmer's scientific sermon was not really evangelistic, "many hit the sawdust trail as a result of the scientific discussions of the divine origin of man. It was an issue of back to God or gorilla." Since Rimmer believed that Darwinism was a rival religion, with its own faith, standards of authority, notions of human origins, and prophecy of human destiny, he dramatically called people to choose between evolution and Christianity. Since evolution said that man was "becoming a God," he argued, those who followed the theory of evolution and the "lying phrases of science so-called" were walking "the broad road to hell." In a subsequent message on the "gospels" of Christianity and Darwinism, he urged his audience to "flee from this Devil's lie of perfection [through] gradual change to the cross of Jesus Christ, for salvation comes not through ages of trans-mutation but by an instantaneous act of trans-formation." Rimmer said that his whole purpose in writing books on science was that those not too dominated by sin might repent and be converted. For
Rimmer, then, science was truly the handmaid of religion, and he used it primarily as an apologetic tool in defense of the Bible, and as an evangelistic tool to convert the lost.

Between 1920 and 1925 Rimmer threw himself into scientific study and work. Exposed to the problem of evolution at BIOLA and in The Fundamentals Rimmer joined the crusade against Darwinism when it emerged as a major fundamentalist issue in the early twenties. In 1921 he formed the Research Science Bureau which, though small, Rimmer believed was on the cutting edge of science. By 1926 he had made most of his contributions to scientific research which, though amateurish, gave him a reputation among fundamentalists as a hands-on, common sense, world-class superscientist. By 1926 he had accumulated scientific credentials—membership in the AAAS, Museum Curator at Kansas State Teachers College, and an honorary doctorate. During the same period he developed the contours of his Baconian science, which allowed him to defend creationism as true science and debunk evolution, in the most pejorative terms, as a philosophy, theory, and science so-called. Though his reputation as a leading creationist developed after 1925, it was in early twenties that Rimmer became a scientific prophet.
CHAPTER FOUR

THE CREATIONIST CRUSADE:

HARRY RIMMER AND THE CAMPAIGN AGAINST EVOLUTION, 1924-1934

As Rimmer dabbled with science in the early twenties, he started speaking out against evolution. Prodded by the Scopes Trial and provided with organizational support through the World Christian Fundamentals Association, Rimmer became increasingly active in the anti-evolution crusade of the mid-twenties. Even when fundamentalist anti-evolution ardor cooled in the late twenties, Rimmer continued his crusade. Encouraged by receptive readers, enthusiastic conference audiences, and laudatory evangelical leaders, Rimmer sustained the movement which many thought had died with Bryan. By defending the Bible, primarily from evolution, through conference appearances, books, debates, and lawsuits, Rimmer provided security and assurance to Christians who felt their faith buffeted by modernism and the modern world. In defending creationism, encouraging and motivating young evangelicals, and offering a pattern of anti-evolution activism, Rimmer provided a legacy for the next generation of creation scientists. He accomplished most of this and established the focus of his life's work between 1924 and 1934, in his creationist crusade.

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At the same time that Rimmer was conducting his research and directing the Research Science Bureau, he started adding scientific lectures to his evangelistic tours. These messages were usually designed for students and, frequently, were delivered in schools. Since schools were the new battlefields of evolution, it was natural for Rimmer, the YMCA youth evangelist and the "Boys' Billy Sunday," to respond to the new challenge to America's youth. He even organized the Research Science Bureau in behalf of Christian school teachers who wanted an intellectually viable alternative to evolution. Though involved in science and moving into crusade evangelism, youth work was still his primary calling. In the 1925 Poplar Bluff crusade, for instance, he hinted that he was on the threshold of a new national revival by targeting young people with his crusade evangelism. He shaped his style for young people by using popular science, biting wit, lively illustrations, and a conversational tone. Though his anti-evolution zeal and style was frequently criticized as simplistic, abrasive and frivolous, it simply preserved the flavor of youth rallies. Rimmer, then, did not abandon youth work to turn to science; his science was a form of youth evangelism.
Rimmer made no secret of his concern for American schools and desire to save young people from Darwinism. During his 1925 Poplar Bluff crusade, noting that he did not want the "evolution error" propagated among students, Rimmer collected special offerings for "combatting the ill-effects of teaching evolution in colleges and universities." When Rimmer appeared in cities for crusades or conferences, special invitations were often extended to high school and college students because of his Bible and science addresses. He specifically targeted students in his volumes in the Frost Memorial Library. Howard Frost, a wealthy Research Science Bureau board member who hoped to aid college students struggling with doubt, funded the library in memory of his son, John Laurence Frost, who was deeply influenced by Rimmer while a student at Stanford.

In 1945 Rimmer warned that an "animalistic philosophy of origin" had replaced creationism, even in the early grades, that the Bible was either derided, scoffed at, ridiculed, or totally ignored in a majority of public schools, and that educators were responsible for a national "collapse." Rimmer said that his last book on science, in 1947, grew from his delightful campus ministry of reasoning with thoughtful students and teaching them the word of God. But he warned of the "liberal trend in modern education" and the "systematic, deliberate, and continuous assault which is made upon the Christian faith in many of our tax-supported high schools, colleges and universities." Although it was
illegal to teach or defend the Bible in school, he continued, it was not illegal to deride or condemn the scriptures, provide textbooks with subtle denials of the faith, or plan courses with "the definite purpose of weakening the belief of the student in Christianity, and repudiating the Christian premise." Rimmer's book, designed for students with honest doubts or those looking for Biblical answers, contained answers to questions students usually asked, refuted false assertions of textbooks and "agnostic professors," and was "tried and proved" in public debates with "noted infidels," in convocations with faculty members, and in presentations before student bodies of many colleges and universities. Even at the end of his life, then, Rimmer tried to protect impressionable young people from the menace of Darwinism.

The crusade in the schools began in earnest in 1923. Early in the year discussions with Occidental College students "reawakened" his fears of the "encroachment" of evolution on college students. The students complained about a professor who "had no use for the Bible," taught evolution "as though it were all unquestioned, established fact," used circular arguments to establish evolutionary theory, and personally attacked Rimmer. When Rimmer toured Western states for the YMCA in April, 1923, he added lectures on "Harmony of Science and Scripture," and the "Seamy Side of Evolution." In the Fall, in an article published in the Bible Institute of Los Angeles' 

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Business on "Combatting Evolution on the Pacific Coast," Rimmer offered to embark on a tour of California's high schools and colleges in hopes of driving out Darwinism. He referred correspondence to the Bible Institute, which was in charge of establishing his itinerary. In early 1924 Rimmer introduced further lectures on science, including "The Collapse of Evolution" and "Science and the Youth of Today," in which he warned that the "faith of young people in the Christian faith is being shaken by... unscrupulous educators."

His anti-evolution reputation developed to such an extent that the secretary of the Honolulu YMCA, a man with modernist sympathies, tried to stop Rimmer's YMCA tour in Hawaii scheduled for the Spring of 1924, and forced Rimmer to defend himself and appeal to the YMCA Territorial Secretary. Though he mentioned his scientific research activity, convictions that evolution was unscientific, and how he had "given a number of addresses by request against the theory of evolution in colleges and schools" in his letter to his supervisor, Rimmer insisted that science was only "a side-line," and that his main business was being an "evangelist." When he arrived in Hawaii, however, Rimmer found that the "modernistic and evolutionary elements were simply vicious," had tried to undermine and build up prejudice against him, and were "moving earth and hell" to hinder the gospel. Since they had "spilled so much dirt" to stop him, Rimmer decided to "give them a run for their
money!" He delivered student lectures on "The Seamy Side of Evolution," "The Antiquity of Man," and "Science and the Bible." After four messages on verbal inspiration, and a series on the virgin birth, death, resurrection, and Second Coming of Christ, Rimmer chuckled that "soon they'll suspect me of being a fundamentalist!" Beginning in 1923, then, as part of his ministry to young people, Rimmer began opposing evolution. Though it was not yet the main part of his ministry, his early anti-evolution activism introduced him to the hostilities and fierce polemics of the issue, encouraged his combative spirit, and produced his reputation as a fundamentalist spokesman on science.

Rimmer was able to take the anti-evolution message directly into the schools, either when invited to address local school assemblies during evangelistic crusades, or as a special "religious emphasis" speaker in colleges. He was often confrontational—challenging professors to rebut his claims, or inviting them to debate. They rarely responded. A professor had nothing to gain, and everything to lose, in debating an itinerant evangelist, especially one so pugnacious in debate and adept at winning his audience. During one crusade in Denver, a local businessman offered $500 for any four Denver University professors to debate Rimmer. There were no takers. Famous radio preacher J. Vernon McGee remembered that when Rimmer spoke at Southwestern University in Memphis on "The Collapse of Evolution," he challenged professors to refute
his statements. McGee, a student, went personally to the home of every science professor to present the challenge, but "not one man responded affirmatively." When Rimmer was invited to speak at the University of Minnesota on "Archeology and the Bible", he hoped that his arch-nemesis, Professor Swenson, would be there, "but," Rimmer confided to his wife, "he won't be." When he spoke in Tucson, Rimmer was disappointed when Baptist students could not persuade their evolutionist professors to accept his debate challenge, and was outraged to discover that, after his departure, they continued to teach evolution with "unabashed effrontery." For professors to teach evolution to innocent, unsuspecting, and defenseless students, but refuse to defend it amongst their peers was, to Rimmer, the rankest hypocrisy. He was especially disgusted with one Kansas State Teachers College evolutionist who met Rimmer warmly and said he was glad to see him. Incredulous, Rimmer asked:

Where, oh where are the martyrs of infidelity? Where are the heroes of evolution? Echo answers "Where"? Hypocrite! I'd like him lots better if he'd spit in my eye and say "let's argue this out." But I can't get a word out of him in reply to anything.9

Though often unable to bait or initiate debates with professors, Rimmer's forays into the schools helped establish his reputation as a defender of the faith. His challenges, for instance, encouraged Christian students, especially those maligned for their faith in the Bible,
since nobody seemed willing or able to answer Rimmer. To embattled Christians, Rimmer was a new champion—a creationist David, able to put the Phillistines to flight.

Visiting schools also enabled Rimmer to speak from first-hand experience about the decadence of American education. Not only were public institutions threatened by Darwinism, but in many instances, he warned, Christian schools had also succumbed to the deadly theory. As a result of his travels, he could point to heretical teachers at Texas Christian University, "rampant evolutionary teachings" in Methodist institutions, and the teaching of an "emasculated Bible" in other denominational institutions. He saw, first-hand, how students were duped by what he saw as the pernicious philosophy of the age, and revealed the shallowness of a modern university education. He explained how a young student of a midwestern university insisted that the "entire book of Genesis was pure tradition and Hebrew folklore, and there never was a flood!" Though the student admitted that it took four years of study to learn that, Rimmer added that "it took four minutes to so tangle him up in the fallacy of his foolish arguments that he abandoned his four years' position." Rimmer often found that students resisted the truth. They refused to follow the Bible, he believed, because of their foolish pride, and refusal to acknowledge their sinfulness and need for salvation. When Rimmer confronted a young Grand Canyon guide about the fallacies
of evolution and an ancient earth, and suggested that the canyon could be explained by the catastrophes of the flood and the Genesis gap, the guide refused to believe him, saying that "if it did happen that way, [then] there are four years of college shot to hell in a minute!"

Rimmer's most important school connection was Kansas State Teachers College in Pittsburg, Kansas. After meeting the school's president, W. A. Brandenburg, in 1924, Rimmer was invited to lecture at the school. He spoke on "Man and Monkey No Kin," "Evolution is an Abused Term," and "Is Evolution Scientifically Tenable," and used his slide show to prove differences between human and gorilla skulls, show that human embryos did not have gill slits, and demonstrate that acquired characteristics were not inherited. Rimmer said that he was hailed as a "scientific Moses or Lincoln," and could find no faculty member to debate him. President Brandenburg offered him a faculty appointment, even though he knew about Rimmer's "very sketchy formal education," but Rimmer said that he had "the good sense to refuse." Rimmer's reception at KSTC is not surprising since, according to one disaffected faculty member, the school was a hotbed of fundamentalism. In addition to a fundamentalist president, he claimed, the school boasted a Methodist minister as the head of the Psychology Department, and a Baptist minister as the Dean of the college. The most notorious example of the school's campaign to "combat ideas", he continued, was the arrival
of "Dr. Harry Rimmer, of Los Angeles and Arkansas, [who] is the most celebrated YMCA scientist in America." Since he was a young man, Rimmer made a strong appeal to the youth and was successful in castigating evolution. He used "his beautiful colored slides," for instance, to show that "no skull he has ever dug up contains less brains than his own." By using his wit, the ex-professor complained, Rimmer prepared his listeners to accept what he said without question, and then,

in a few quick, short, conclusive sentences our research scientist shows that all the pseudo-scientists of the entire world are wrong, that the Bible is the sole source of knowledge of man's beginning and ending, that God in his divine providence has so fixed up everything that no one needs to think. Thinking being useless, perhaps harmful, our students no longer desire it.\textsuperscript{15}

The students seemed more grateful for Rimmer's appearance. After Rimmer's lecture on the uniqueness of man, the college paper reported that

Mr. Rimmer pointed out almost innumerable inconsistencies of the scientists and it was with a sigh of relief that his happy audience poured out of the great auditorium at the close of his lecture, each individual feeling relieved of the odious burden that science had been endeavoring to impose upon him by connecting him in some way or other with the horrid creatures of the animal kingdom.\textsuperscript{16}

Rimmer returned to Pittsburg often in the ensuing years to speak, establish a museum, and lead student expeditions. In 1927, he spoke on archeology and the Bible, described his own archeological work, and organized an expedition to search for dinosaur fossils. Most
officially curator of the museum." Since this claim was not totally accurate, it suggests that Rimmer probably exaggerated his relationship with the college. (The claim prompted later historians to argue, incorrectly, that Rimmer abandoned the WCFA in 1927 to enter college teaching.)

While in Pittsburg Rimmer often held conferences on the Bible and Science at the local Presbyterian church, where Brandenburg was a member. The Pittsburg connection was important to Rimmer because it gave him the aura of academic respectability. The connection was also important to the university and the town. When Pittsburg celebrated its centennial in 1976, Rimmer was inducted into its "Centennial Hall of Fame."

Rimmer was also involved with fundamentalist institutions. He had a continuing, ill-defined relationship with the Bible Institute of Los Angeles, BIOLA initially organized his anti-evolution speaking itinerary. During the anti-evolution battle in the California, Maynard Shipley described Rimmer as "the director of the 'research laboratory' at the Bible Institute of Los Angeles" and a "'fellow' of the Bible Institute." Rimmer was involved with John Brown University from its beginning. A personal friend of John Brown and a popular speaker at Brown's summer conferences in Sulphur Springs, Rimmer was offered a chair in "research science" in 1924, when the new university opened. Rimmer
saw the offer. Over the years he sent geological samples to the university, frequently lectured there, served on the Board of Directors, 1945-1952, and was granted an honorary L.L.D. degree in 1942. Rimmer also taught occasional special and interim courses at evangelical institutions such as Wheaton College, Gordon College, and Northwestern Bible College in his areas of specialization: archeology, apologetics, and christology. Rimmer seemed especially proud of the Wheaton connection, which figured prominently in his biographical summaries. In 1930, Rimmer was offered the presidency of two new fundamentalist schools. Frank Norris's Fort Worth church was trying to establish a Bible school, and unsuccessfully attempted to call Rimmer to head it. Shortly afterward, he was asked again to take the presidency of Bryan College, the Dayton, Tennessee school organized as a memorial to William Jennings Bryan and his crusade. Though he declined this opportunity, the invitation to Bryan's presidency symbolizes Rimmer's ascent to the top of the creationist movement.

Rimmer's crusade was essentially a youth crusade. Though he attracted a broader audience, he started his crusade as ministry to young people, always focused on youth, and was deeply concerned about the teaching of evolution in American schools. His often criticized style, which was feisty, humorous, and occasionally silly and frivolous, was designed for a youthful audience. Though
some fundamentalists proclaimed him to be a world-class superscientist, most recognized Rimmer simply as a youth evangelist who used science in his approach. In 1927 The Christian Fundamentalist described Rimmer as having a "brilliant mind and eloquent tongue," and added that no platform man "makes a more effective appeal to high school, college and university students, and young life in general." Kathryn Rimmer Braswell hinted at the thrust of her father's work in a memorial article, saying that "Dr. Rimmer's books should prove a priceless legacy to new generations of high school students." The effectiveness and influence of Rimmer's youth evangelism should not be misunderstood or underestimated. By outlining a simple but coherent Christian apologetic at Bible conferences, school meetings, youth rallies, Christian Endeavor conventions, and in his popular writings, Rimmer addressed and influenced a future generation of evangelicals. Walter Kaiser, a leading contemporary evangelical scholar and educator recalled that he "did a lot of reading as a young Christian, and was helped by [Rimmer] when no one else was available in giving more sophisticated answers."
Despite his escalating interest in science in the early twenties, Rimmer still saw himself primarily as an evangelist. Though increasingly concerned about evolution in the schools, his anti-evolution activism was a mainly a facet of youth evangelism. "Science," he said during his 1924 YMCA tour of Hawaii, "is a sideline with me. My business is that of an evangelist." Though Rimmer presented lectures on science during his month-long, evangelistic crusades of 1925-1926, they were a relatively minor part of his ministry, scheduled on Monday nights or weekday afternoons. He was most concerned, during the crusades, with modernism, morality, and evangelism, and attacked the theory of evolution as something that undermined the Christian faith, promoted immorality, or hindered the gospel. In the early twenties, Rimmer was primarily a fundamentalist evangelist with an interest in science. Between 1924 and 1926, however, in response to new issues, critical events, and speaking opportunities, he was transformed into a scientific evangelist, or scientific prophet, who used science as the main medium for conveying the gospel and biblical truth. The great catalyst for this transformation in Rimmer's career was the influence of William Jennings Bryan and the Scopes Trial.
William Jennings Bryan had become the most visible fundamentalist representative in the early Twenties after galvanizing conservative religious sentiment on the evolution question after 1915. He was a late-comer to the fundamentalist movement. Though raised an evangelical, he seemed unconcerned about evolution and modernism until World War I. Bryan was converted to the anti-Darwin crusade during the war by A. C. Dixon, the first editor of The Fundamentals, who convinced him that the war was linked to the philosophy of Darwin, not Nietzsche, and that evolution naturally led to German militarism and atheistic communism. Bryan made evolution a rallying point for fundamentalists, who, in turn, made it a litmus test for the movement. Initially, at least, fundamentalists worried more about the threat of Biblical higher criticism; William Bell Riley, for instance, said that they did not realize at first that most of "modern infidelity" was rooted in evolutionary theory. Because the media made Bryan the representative and symbolic fundamentalist, his crusade against evolution began to overshadow all other issues in the fundamentalist-modernist controversy and the inter-church controversy over evolution became a national issue. Historian of fundamentalism Ferenc Szasz correctly concludes that "Bryan was the center of attention--and made evolution the center of the fundamentalist movement."

Bryan's crusade really began in the early twenties. In 1920 he started attacking evolution with lectures on the
"Menace of Darwinism." Feeling "called" to save young people from "Darwin's false and demoralizing guesses," Bryan lectured on the topic of evolution at campuses around the country. He also addressed state legislatures in Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and West Virginia, and his speech on "God and Evolution" to the West Virginia legislature became a famous and controversial feature in the fight against evolution. He further carried his message to the country in articles and books, such as In His Image. Even though many fundamentalists differed with his politics, doctrine, and even with the nature of his creationism, they saw him as the champion of their cause because of his leadership in the prohibition and anti-evolution movements. For fundamentalists like Harry Rimmer, Bryan was a hero and role model.

Bryan also carried the battle over evolution to the Presbyterian church, nearly splitting the denomination in 1923 and 1924. In 1923 he was involved, first, in a bitter election for moderator with evolutionist and moderate Charles Wishart. Bryan lost the acrimonious election, meaning defeat, once again, for a national office. Bryan then offered a resolution that no Presbyterian educational monies be given to schools that taught Darwinism "as fact." After "white hot" debate, a compromise measure authorized the denomination to withhold "official approval" from any institution which sought "to establish a materialistic philosophy of life." When he finally succeeded with a
measure to censure Harry Emerson Fosdick, Bryan said that he had won the biggest fight of his career. Bryan was elected vice-moderator the following year. Though some feared a Bryan-inspired church split in that year, nothing materialized, as Bryan seemed to back away from the brink of schism.

Bryan's crusade and career ended at the 1925 Scopes Trial. Within a week of defending Tennessee's anti-evolution law and the creationist cause through the prosecution of John Scopes and confrontation with Clarence Darrow at the internationally publicized trial, Bryan died. Historians have traditionally seen the Trial as the deathblow to Fundamentalism, which embarrassed and drove the movement underground and squelched anti-evolution activism. Richard Hofstadter, for example, suggests that after the Scopes "rout," fundamentalists "retired sullenly," and looked for other areas of modernist vulnerability, at which they could "rise and smite again." Other historians argue that after 1925 fundamentalists became more interested in politics and the defeat of Al Smith, focusing their socio-intellectual and religious prejudices on a single personality rather than a theory. Even some fundamentalists have argued that anti-evolution leaders, such as Rimmer, and the creationist movement itself were driven "underground" after the Trial. Recent research, however, has shown that the Scopes Trial was actually an encouragement to anti-
evolutionary forces; in the years immediately following the trial, Fundamentalists felt they had been victorious and became more militant, anti-evolution measures proliferated throughout the country, school textbooks dropped references to evolution, and evolutionist worries about the fundamentalist menace approached hysteria. Though the anti-evolution movement fragmented, deteriorated and became essentially ineffective by 1930 because its sensationalism alienated potential supporters, between 1925 and 1928, when Rimmer joined the crusade, the movement appeared to be vital, strong, and gaining momentum from the Scopes Trial.

The Scopes Trial, in which Bryan was both leader and martyr, was a powerful catalyst to Rimmer's crusade. As one historian put it, "talented mythmonger" Harry Rimmer was one of "the strange slimy creatures [who] slithered out from under flat stones to join the crusade." Rimmer was present when, in his words, Bryan fought "the ablest cohorts of infidelity this nation could muster." He was angered that "dogmatic scientists" had "laughed at the mighty intellect of Bryan," and, according to his wife, these "pent up feelings of indignation exploded" into his later writings. In 1927 Rimmer explained that the main evidence at Dayton was the tooth of a million year old man, which, though it was repeatedly "cast in the teeth of the late Mr. Bryan" as proof of man's antiquity and the fallacy of the Genesis story, "was later proven to be the tooth
of an extinct species of wild pig!"

In 1929 Rimmer was still irritated that the "authorities" and "experts" had mocked and scorned Bryan with their "incontestable proof" of the Nebraska Man. "Of this proof(?) of man's antiquity," he said, "Mr. Bryan was apparently ignorant; and for this ignorance he was openly derided." Though Bryan contested that the evidence was too scanty and died unreconciled to the million year old man of North America, he was assured that "the greatest authorities of the scientific world" were convinced of the proof. Using the biting humor of the his popular lectures, Rimmer then described this indubitable proof of science: "One tooth. Yes, you read it aright the first time: one (1) tooth. Just a tooth! No, not teeth; tooth." He explained that since the tooth was only a pig's tooth, "the solemn array of experts, the doctors, the specialists, the comparative anatomists, the eminent authorities and curators. . . . were all wrong." He concluded his discussion of Nebraska man and the Scopes Trial by warning about the wild hypothesizing of pretentious scientists and raising Bryan's standard:

What supreme supreme confidence we may enjoy in the future, when this same imposing array of brains attests the next wonderful find! Solemnly, with every assurance that their science justified their dogmatic conclusions, they made a whole race of a pig long since dead, . . . and laughed at the mighty intellect of Bryan for repudiating their conclusions.40

Brandon Rimmer explained that his father's entire
apologetic was shaped around the issues of the Scopes
 Trial. Immediately after the trial, Rimmer published
 articles, booklets, then books dealing with evolution.
 In short, Rimmer made Bryan's cause his own.

The crusade against evolution sprang, in part, from
broader social tensions in modern American life. American
cultural and social historians have noted how Americans
faced the enormous cultural pressures of modernity after
World War I. The failure of United States goals in the
war, the shock of moving from farm to city, declining
interest in the church, the moral revolution, and new forms
of knowledge shook American society and left in its wake
uprooted emotions, fears and insecurities. As one
fundamentalist put it, "The world broke in two in 1922 or
thereabouts." The anxieties of the period were manifested
in a nostalgic nationalism and quest for traditional,
native values, as represented by the Red Scare and the
rebirth of the Klan. For fundamentalists, concerned
about the drift of modern society, evolutionary theory was
both a cause and symbol of national deterioration.

The methods, issues, and themes of Rimmer's and
Bryan's anti-evolution campaigns were very similar. Bryan
feared, first, the negative influence of Darwinism on
American political and civic morality. He warned, for
instance, that the French ideas of liberty, fraternity, and
equality would bring a "bloodbath," and that German conceit
and the doctrine of the survival of the fittest would turn
the world into a "slaughterhouse." Once the premises of evolution are granted, he continued, "an Armageddon is the result." He believed that evolutionary theory in society would depersonalize and dehumanize man by reducing him to a material being, cripple social and humanitarian reform, paralyze Christian social action, and contribute to moral, spiritual, and social decay.

Rimmer was also concerned about the long-term impact of evolution on American culture, morality, and spirituality. Like Bryan, he blamed World War I on the influence of Darwinism. The "pagan ideas of Darwinism," he warned during a 1928 Little Rock speech, "garbed in the language of science and philosophy...brought about the war of 1914. Evolution will produce chaos and the bloody reek of the jungle." Like other fundamentalists, he tended to "blend democracy and the old-fashioned evangelical faith" in his preaching and anti-evolution rhetoric. During a 1930 Birmingham crusade Rimmer told an evolutionist debate foe that the Bible was the foundation of America's greatness, and that those who assaulted scripture and weakened confidence in its power were "public enemies," since they worked from "within the camp" to burrow under America's defenses and "blast our foundation from beneath us." His greatest concern was with the way in which Darwinism stripped man of dignity and moral responsibility, and led to social deterioration. "If this theory is true," he warned a Poplar Bluff audience.
in 1925, "you are a first cousin to a skunk and a second cousin to a louse." In 1945, after lamenting the twenty-five years of decay in the American Protestant church, he charged that American educators were "undermining our national faith" by replacing the fact of creation with "an animalistic philosophy of origin." Arguing that educators were responsible for a "collapse in faith, morals, and conduct in this generation," he concluded that "you can't teach men and women that they are animals and expect them to act like the sons of God!"

Concerned with the growing migration to the cities, the stress of dislocation, and the perceived decadence of urban values, fundamentalists stressed traditional, rural, American values. Though the common stereotype of anti-evolutionists as ignorant, dry Baptists is incorrect, they did reflect rural and southern values. Even though many anti-evolutionists might live in urban areas—and the anti-evolution movement was certainly strong in some northern, urban areas, they still defended their "ruralist" values in the battle between town and country, and "corn belt" versus "conveyer belt." In her analysis of the 1928 Arkansas anti-evolution initiative measure, Virginia Gray shows that the anti-evolution vote had no correlation with illiteracy, Baptist membership, or the Hoover vote, but that there was a correlation with the rural vote. That this was the case is further suggested by the Hot Springs ballot in the 1928 election, where the proposal to prohibit
the teaching of evolution in public institutions was followed by a second initiative measure "prohibiting the running of large hogs in Garland County." It was an Arkansawyer from Smackover, Arkansas who had exhorted Bryan to "FIGHT THEM EVOLUTIONISTS TIL HELL FREEZES OVER AND THEN GIVE THEM A ROUND ON THE ICE." During his Pine Bluff crusade, Rimmer scoffed at urban life by noting that "you could sell evolution to a city boob, but not to a farm boy." In his appearance before the California legislature, Rimmer used similar illustrations. Investigating a rumor that a mule had given birth to a colt, he discovered that

a farmer had shaved the tale and head of a mare and sold it to the college as a mule. ... You can sell the theory of evolution to a city boob, but the boy on the farm knows it isn't true.

In contrast to the common sense of the rural, country people who had repudiated evolution, cities and colleges were characterized by foolishness and decadence.

Bryan's crusade against evolution was also a part of his broader progressive crusade. Bryan saw himself as a progressive to the end of his life. At the height of his anti-evolution crusade in 1924, he claimed to have supported every reform measure for the past thirty years, and backed all four progressive constitutional amendments (popular election senators, income tax, prohibition, and women' suffrage), and even offered himself to the 1924 Democratic National Convention as a progressive candidate. The crusade against evolution was part of a larger
progressive concern for children which was manifest in reforms on child labor, compulsory attendance, juvenile justice, foster homes, playgrounds, widows pensions, and industrial education. Bryan's crusade was not just negative; while pursuing the anti-evolution crusade, he proposed a federal Department of Education. He specifically saw the Scopes Trial as a progressive cause. In an April, 1925 letter Bryan depicted himself as a hunter with a double-barrel gun: one barrel loaded for an elephant entering the treasury, and the other barrel loaded for a monkey entering a school.

Bryan was also concerned about the anti-democratic dimensions of the struggle over evolution. In In His Image, he argued that taxpaying parents had a right to determine what was taught in public schools. He noted in his appearance before the West Virginia legislature that "under popular governments, rights are determined by the majority. ...it does not authorize the minority to invade the rights of the majority." Those who defend the faith of their fathers, he continued, have the triple advantage of standing on the "revealed will of God," are supported by the "established truths of science," and work in harmony with the "principles of popular government." He was alarmed that a "few scientists" were establishing a "Soviet government in education" and that public school teachers "demanded" the right "to teach as true, unsupported guesses that undermine the religious faith of
Christian taxpayers." While teachers could believe as they wished, they could not teach contrary to the will of the people, since "the hand that writes the paycheck rules the school." Bryan concluded by asking why evolutionists could teach "at public expense a so-called scientific interpretation of the Bible when orthodox Christians are not permitted to teach an orthodox interpretation of the Bible." Richard Hofstadter argues that in this democratic rhetoric, Bryan simply extended his populist faith in the will of the people.

Other fundamentalists shared Bryan's populist-progressivist convictions and rhetoric. Though many fundamentalists were deeply suspicious of "service" Christianity and the Social Gospel, they favored some reform initiatives, especially after the success of prohibition. Some fundamentalist leaders, like William Bell Riley and John Roach Straton, advocated broad, positive, and democratic reform measures. Many, perhaps feeling alienated and disaffected by the burgeoning culture and shunted aside by the new intellectual and educational elites, tried to enforce morality through public laws, democratize the schools, and create a more responsive political system. The greatest concern of this new fundamentalist activism was the schools. The antievolution movement corresponded with other movements to purify and strengthen public schools and thus protect America's youth. Arkansas's Ben Bogard simplified the whole school
question to "SHALL TAX PAYERS BE FORCED TO SUPPORT BY TAXATION THAT WHICH THEY HEARTILY DISBELIEVE?" When Riley launched a crusade against evolution in Minnesota, it was so that "believing taxpayers" would not have to support textbooks and teachers that "destroy the faith of their children." He encouraged support for his candidates by saying "Mr. Bryan had a custom of saying 'Trust your righteous cause to the people.' That is what we are doing in Minnesota." The fundamentalist anti-evolution crusade, then, in its concern for protecting children and emphasis on democratic institutions, drew upon the progressive spirit and rhetorical imagery.

Rimmer used these progressive-populist themes in his own crusade. He saw evolution as an elitist conspiracy which openly defied the principles of American democracy. Rimmer's said of the Scopes Trial:

Mr. Bryan was contending for the right of a sovereign people to enforce the laws (of) a majority of the State. . . . This issue was clear; the people desired their law to be observed, and an educational hierarchy disdainfully decided to set aside their will. Though they gladly took the tax money of the of the majority, without which "this minority would starve and their system would collapse," Rimmer continued, "they denied the right of their employers to control the manner in which their employers' children should be instructed."

For Rimmer, then, evolution was not only bad science, it also produced bad politics and was a model of bad business.
The greatest concern for fundamentalists, such as Bryan and Rimmer, however, was that evolution led to bad religion. Bryan explained that Darwin lost his faith because of evolution, as he proceeded from orthodoxy to agnosticism. The same would be true in America, he continued, if man is "a cousin to brute and bird and fish and reptile." The doctrines of evolution stripped Christianity of its most powerful doctrines, he argued, and left a Christ "impotent to save." During his crusade, Bryan became an enthusiastic supporter of the five "fundamentals." He argued that tax supported teachers should not be allowed to teach evolution "or anything else that undermines faith in God, impairs belief in the Bible, or discredits Christ, the Son of God and Savior of the world."

That message was at the heart of Rimmer's crusade. He believed that evolution was so insidious because it was a alternative religious system, offering its own standard of authority, and views on human origins, destiny, and salvation. His anti-evolution crusade was so intense, because, like Bryan, Rimmer believed that Darwinism was a direct assault on American institutions, democracy, traditional values, and the Christian religion.
Rimmer's real crusade against evolution began through his association with William Bell Riley and the World Christian Fundamentals Association. Riley was an extremely influential Baptist minister, who created a personal "empire" by presiding over an enormous church for over forty years (First Baptist Church in Minneapolis had 3,350 members in 1940), founding Bible schools, conducting Bible Conferences, flooding the Minnesota Baptist Convention with his graduates, and maintaining a fundamentalist network in the upper midwest. Like other fundamentalist networks in the 1920s and 1930s, Riley's empire became a "surrogate denomination" by channeling conservative energy, providing personal and church contacts, and offering educational opportunities and support services traditionally provided by denominations. These conservative affiliations were a bastion of fundamentalist strength and contributed to an evangelical movement within mainline denominations.

Rimmer had the greatest respect, perhaps even a filial devotion, for Riley. In addition to working for the World Christian Fundamentals Association, which Riley headed, Rimmer frequently spoke at Riley's church, school, and conferences. In 1932, Rimmer edited a special festschrift for Riley, hoping to offer "the old dear" a
"nice bouquet" while he was still able to enjoy it. In 1947 Rimmer paid his respects to Riley by dubbing him the "Father of Fundamentalism." As a great fundamentalist leader and protagonist in the evolution dispute, Riley was an example and role model for Rimmer.

The World Christian Fundamentals Association was an important fundamentalist organization for networking and political activism. It originated from the popular Bible and prophecy conferences which attracted fundamentalists from all denominations. Concerned about the menace of modernism, conservative leaders, such as R.A. Torrey, A.C. Dixon, and Riley, felt it was increasingly necessary to stress the fundamentals of the faith, rather than esoteric eschatology, and decided to call a World Bible Conference for that end. This premier conference of the WCFA, which met in Philadelphia in late May, 1919 with Riley as its president, included national fundamentalist leaders, such as C.I. Scofield, Lewis Sperry Chafer, Paul Rader, James Gray, and John Roach Straton, and 6,500 Christian leaders from forty-two states and seven foreign countries. The WCFA's doctrine was staunchly fundamental. In addition to the usual articles on the inerrancy of scripture, Trinity, virgin birth and deity of Christ, depravity of man, substitutionary atonement, resurrection of Christ, human need for rebirth, and the doctrine of heaven and hell, the doctrinal statement included a more restrictive dogma on the "blessed hope" of a personal, imminent, and "pre-
millennial" return of Christ. Riley's Christian Fundamentals in School and Church was the WCFA's unofficial publication until 1927, when it became the official WCFA publication as The Christian Fundamentalist. The WCFA was an important instrument of fundamentalist ecumenism, since it drew together conservative members of many different denominations, and coordinated fundamentalist ministries through oversight committees on Universities and Bible Colleges, Religious Periodicals, Bible Conferences, and Foreign Missions. The WCFA grew rapidly and claimed six million members by 1927. In the early Twenties, the WCFA appeared capable of fulfilling Riley's prophecy that future generations would see the 1919 Philadelphia Conference as more significant than Luther's posting ninety-five theses on the church door of Wittenburg.

As Rimmer's career was developing, the WCFA appeared to be vital, growing in strength, with a promising future as the dominant fundamentalist organization. Deeply sympathetic with the its fundamentalist stance and desire to combat modernism, Rimmer was involved with the WCFA through out its history. Historian of Fundamentalism C. Allyn Russell claims that Rimmer was an original WCFA board member. In 1926 Rimmer was appointed a Field Secretary of the association and in 1928 he was a member of a standing Resolutions Committee. The WCFA offered Rimmer organizational support and a recognition within the premier fundamentalist institution. Rimmer had cast his lot with
an organization that seemed to be the wave of the future.

The WCFA was important for Rimmer's professional development and career as anti-evolutionist crusader. It not only gave him an opportunity to interact with other conservative leaders and gain contacts for his itinerant ministry, but pushed him to the forefront of the campaign against Darwinism. The WCFA was an umbrella organization for many independent groups, such as Gerald Winrod's Defenders, Paul Rood's Bryan Bible League, the Anti-Evolution League of William Bell Riley and T. T. Martin, and Rimmer's Research Science Bureau. By concentrating on evolution Rimmer was able to develop his material and cultivate his reputation as a spokesman amongst fundamentalists. He produced most of his anti-evolution articles and books, for instance, after he joined the WCFA. The WCFA also offered Rimmer status amongst his Christian peers, as he became a popular WCFA conference speaker, acclaimed scientist, and point man in the fight against evolution.

His big break with the WCFA came in 1926 when Rimmer, along with A. I. Brown, was appointed a Field Secretary. In announcing the assignment in early 1926, Christian Fundamentals in School and Church described Rimmer as "a rare combination of a scientist, who is a successful soul-winning evangelist." A later announcement in the summer of 1926 commented on his "study of the natural sciences and presidency of the the Research Science Bureau" which
allowed him to speak "with authority on the issues of fundamentalism and modernism." The WCFA began to emphasize the fight over evolution about the time of Rimmer's appointment. Along with Riley, Brown, and Winrod, he became part of the WCFA's "Flying Fundamentalists," who, following the model of similarly named Prohibition advocates, traveled the country speaking, debating, and propogating the fundamentalist message. After the 1927 Atlanta WCFA meeting, Riley declared that "we have arranged the machinery for a finish fight with the backers of evolution, to mold sentiment against the evolution hypothesis, and to get voters educated [so] they'll express themselves through the ballot as fundamentalists wish." In the afterglow of the Scopes Trial, with this new WCFA supporting cast, Riley renewed the fight over evolution, and pressed the battle into state legislatures.

Rimmer's first legislative crusade was in Minnesota. In 1922, Riley had organized the Anti-Evolution League which was committed "to forc[ing] the teaching of the evolutionary hypothesis from the public schools, and in ridding [denominational] schools of the same pseudo-science." The League was formed, in part, because of the enthusiastic reception of William Jennings Bryan, who had spoken to thousands during an October 1922 appearance in Minneapolis. In November, 1925 Riley successfully met Edward Adams Cantrell of the Science League of America in a highly publicized Minneapolis debate. In early 1926
Riley used the evolution question to begin a feud with the University of Minnesota. He was thwarted in attempts to debate with University faculty members or get a speaking invitation at the school. Though he was finally invited to address the students on the subject of "The Fundamentalist Side of the Question of Evolution," the University withdrew the invitation when Riley announced his topic as "Should the Teaching of Evolution Be Tolerated in the State University?" Charging the University with censorship, Riley declared that he had "only begun to fight." In October and November, 1926, after threatening to expose the school's stonewalling tactics to the state legislature, the University capitulated and gave Riley the opportunity to speak. Riley responded by insisting on five lectures to adequately cover the topic, and used his opportunity to describe the Scopes' issues, castigate the errors and guesses of evolution, and rail against the menace of atheism in the nation. By January, 1926, Riley threw his support behind a bill to make it "unlawful to teach in any state-supported school that man descended from a lower order of animals." Though he finally persuaded University of Minnesota philosophy professor David Swenson to debate, Riley was disgusted to discover that the "debate" was to be a private discussion to which only University faculty members were invited.

By February, 1927, the evolution bill was very controversial. Riley claimed that the whole state was in a
"fever of excitement" over the evolution question from late January to mid-March. The intensity of the debate was seen in the February issue Theistic Monthly, which was dedicated to the evolution debate. Riley submitted an article on "Why Teach Darwinism in Tax Supported Schools?", in which he charged that evolution produced atheism, irreligion, and the destruction of civilization, and called on all patriotic Americans to support his measure. Warning about the influence of an apostate "educational oligarchy," Riley issued his appeal in the name of "every mother for the welfare of her child," "every citizen that loves the flag," and "every Christian that loves the Bible." The journal's editor answered with a piece on "The Menace and Errors of Rileyism," in which he charged that Riley violated the constitution, fanned "flames of hatred into a white-heat," and would soon suppress other American freedoms. Riley hinted at the serious hostilities of the debate in a later article in which he claimed that every atheist, Unitarian, liberal preacher, rabid rationalist, and anarchist in Minnesota opposed him, warned about the elitist tendencies of scientific experts, and prophesied that if scientists assume the right to legislate for millions of Americans, "democracy is at an end."

To this explosive situation Rimmer arrived as one of the WCFA's lobbyists. Rimmer had already demonstrated his debate prowess in Minnesota by meeting Edward Adams Cantrell in late 1925, shortly after the Riley debate.
In early 1926 Rimmer's scientific presentations attracted the attention and ire of some University professors. In late 1926 Rimmer and the other "Flying Fundamentalists" blitzed over 200 Minnesota towns and cities in support of the anti-evolution bill. Though other WCFA fundamentalists were involved, such as A.I. Brown and Gerald Winrod, Rimmer was perhaps the most important because he was the fundamentalists' scientific expert. He arrived at scientific lectures with his skulls, for instance, to discuss the antiquity of man, and argue against evolution.

The degree of controversy surrounding Rimmer's presentations suggests that he was noticed and was, probably, influential. A local evolutionist attacked Rimmer through the University newspaper, charged him with the "reasoning mentality of the prenatal," and a lack of scientific credentials and ability, "insinuated that he was a "deliberate liar," and concluded that he "spoke from the depths of tremendous ignorance." Though deploring his opponents use of "personal vituperation and mudslinging," Rimmer responded sharply, suggesting that the man lacked "mental equipment," moved in a "circle of ignorance," and lacked the "intelligence of a grammar school student." Rimmer first answered the charge that he was not ordained. He then defended his scientific qualifications by noting his fifteen years of scientific research, including exhuming 2,000 human remains, election to the presidency of
a "legally constituted board of a scientific association," and the completion a course of scientific study. The only qualification he lacked, Rimmer explained, was blind conformity to scientific bigotry. To be considered a scientist, Rimmer concluded:

he must conform to the bigoted, opinionated, mental demands of a self-elected educational hierarchy. A man may have all the academic training necessary and may serve for fifty years in scientific research, but he is not a scientist until he has paralyzed his thinking ability, subdued all intelligence of thought and accepted the entire theory of organic evolution. This intolerant, bigoted sectarian, narrow-minded group of self-appointed judges has done more to estrange intelligent thinkers from their ranks than anything the fundamentalists have ever been able to do. If a man does not possess any ability as a research scientist but is willing to subscribe to the entire tenants of the evolutionary school, his mental acquiescence to a mass of dribble automatically makes him a scientist.97

Rimmer mentioned with disdain a University of Minnesota professor who refused to hear alternative ideas, and characterized him as "the pope of the scientific world." Finally concluding that "unprovoked criticism" and "personal assault" was initiated because his critic was a man of "vast intelligence" who spoke from the "exalted heights of tremendous wisdom," Rimmer proposed settling the matter with a debate at the University of Minnesota. "My concluding word," Rimmer said, "is put up or shut up." University of Minnesota philosopher David Swenson answered Rimmer a few days later. His original concern about Rimmer's scientific status, aroused in early 1926,
was exacerbated in early 1927. Though committed to believing in Rimmer's "personal honesty as long as it is humanely possible," Swenson had trouble accepting Rimmer's intelligence, motives, and integrity. Since Rimmer had learned nothing, Swenson felt compelled "to teach him a few of the very things he sadly needs to know." He insisted that Presbyterian ordination did not make one a scientist, and refuted Rimmer's claims of fifteen years of research, membership in the AAAS, scientific study, and Research Science Bureau presidency. Science was not bigoted, Swenson continued, and added that real scientists ignored Rimmer because of his "abysmal ignorance", total lack of scientific competence, and because he was "too ignorant to know what he is doing." Though he scoffed at Rimmer's "tears," "protestations," "glib tongue and facile pen," Swenson was not eager to meet Rimmer in debate. He refused to accept any "blatant and silly challenge" to publicly debate scientific matters before a popular audience which was scarcely able to understand the issues, let alone determine the outcome. This debate challenge, he added, was "preposterous," "ridiculous hocus-pocus," and a meaningless and undignified "charlatan's trick" to fool the public, of which "a minister of the gospel ought to feel ashamed." Asserting that Rimmer was no scientist, and knew nothing about real science, Swenson concluded by questioning Rimmer's motives, asking, "What then is he?"

Because Rimmer had already left for the West Coast,
Riley responded in his behalf on the "delicate question" of the attack on a man's character and accomplishments. After defending Rimmer's scientific research work and educational training (Riley claimed that Rimmer was in his senior year in medical school when converted), Riley castigated Swenson for "flouting the ministry," explained that many famous scientists, such as Kepler and Newton had ministerial training, and noted that Darwin was a ministerial student, "whose studies had in no wise equalled those of Harry Rimmer," when he launched his study of evolution. Riley backhandedly defended the Rimmer and the Research Science Bureau by noting that the Science League of America and Maynard Shipley possessed even less impressive credentials. Riley wondered further why Swenson was such an expert on science, since in their debate, Swenson only claimed expertise in philosophy which, Riley added, was only a species of "bad religion." Riley concluded by questioning Swenson's bravery and issuing another debate challenge.

Professor Swenson very carefully protects himself against. . .having to meet in open forum Harry Rimmer. He tells us that no scientist will debate this subject. We don't blame him. He would not fare well in open forum against Rimmer. He hints that he fears his "glib tongue and facile pen," and well he might. The man who meets Rimmer in open debate must be willing to say something beyond, "All scientists are agreed." He will be called upon for a few facts and proofs.100

Despite the vigorous efforts of Riley, Rimmer, and the other flying defenders, the Minnesota bill was overwhelmingly defeated. After a negative committee
report, the Minnesota Senate killed the measure with a 55 to 7 vote in March, 1927. Though disappointed by the vote and regretting the lack of initiative and referendum procedures, fundamentalists were encouraged by the crusade. They believed that the overwhelming majority of Minnesota taxpayers did not want their children "steeped in pseudo-science," expected that this popular support would produce a more congenial legislature, and anticipated the future success of the anti-evolution bill. With true populist faith and confidence in the future, Riley concluded that this battle, lost in the legislature, has been won in the state... Mr. Bryan had a custom of saying, "Trust your righteous cause to the people." That is what we are doing in Minnesota.

Riley further believed that the Minnesota battle would be the leaven for nation-wide anti-evolution success. Though noting the great investment of time and money in the "strenuous campaign," Riley was satisfied with the effort to educate Minnesotans, was "confident that such campaigns should be put on in every state in the Union," and predicted that in the end "they will gloriously win."

Rimmer was a visible creationist advocate in the debate over Minnesota's anti-evolution law. Though he was not as important as Riley during the dispute, Rimmer was the most controversial of the outside "flying fundamentalists." In a Christian Fundamentalist update on Rimmer in the late in the summer of 1927, Riley remembered Rimmer's participation with fondness, recalling how...
Rimmer's "popular addresses excited so much favorable comment from fundamentalists, and such ardent criticisms from evolutionists. . . ." Judged by the attention he attracted and Riley's later praise, Rimmer's maiden lobbying efforts were successful. The Minnesota campaign made Rimmer an important component of the WCFA Flying Fundamentalists, helped establish him as a leading anti-evolution spokesmen, and pushed him even more into scientific evangelism.

The next test was in California, where the W.C.F.A. had resolved "to wage a relentless warfare on Evolution and Modernism." Fundamentalists had tried first, unsuccessfully, to bring Bible reading back to public schools via the initiative in November, 1926. They then turned their attention to the state legislature, supporting various laws which would prohibit the teaching of evolution, provide release time religious instruction, and eliminate objectionable school textbooks.

Anti-evolutionists first supported the "Heisinger Bill" to prohibit the teaching in any California tax-supported school the theory that man descended from a lower order of animals. In late February Heisinger amended the bill to prohibit the teaching of evolution in state colleges. The bill was very controversial. The Civil Liberties Union warned about imminent heresy trials in California if the bill passed. Other onlookers ridiculed the bill. One opponent said that the Heisinger Bill would place
California on the same cultural level as Tennessee and Mississippi. A jazz singer authored a spoof song on the monkey-bill and even offered Heisinger part of the royalties. Heisinger declined, saying that he was "a farmer, not a jazz publisher." The Sacramento Bee, which was merciless in its coverage of the bill and its sponsor, noted that in the legislature the bill was the subject of "editorial mirth," a "verbal barrage," and "humorous comment" by assemblymen. In one of the cartoons taunting the bill, a monkey, standing behind Heisinger as he tore a page on evolution from a school textbook, said "Tut, Tut, Sam. I never dreamed you would throw down our ancestors like that." Though the Education Committee wanted to table the bill, Heisinger demanded a public hearing.

Rimmer's presence was critical to the anti-evolution cause, since he was the scientific expert Heisinger had promised to produce. On March 3, 1929, the Sacramento Bee reported, with some skepticism, that "an organization called the Research Science Bureau, of which one Harry Rimmer of Los Angeles is the president, is the mysterious "world-wide" body that is backing [Heisinger's Bill]." Heisinger revealed this, the reporter continued, "when he admitted that the identity of the mysterious "man from the East" . . . is Arthur I. Brown." Brown, identified as an lobbyist employed by the Research Science Bureau, would be accompanied by Gerald Winrod. A week later, on the eve
of the public hearing, the newspaper again identified Rimmer as the "head [of] the fundamental delegation."

The public hearing on March 15, 1927 was packed with spectators, who witnessed a feisty, two hour debate on evolution. Rimmer opened the debate, after complaining of the press coverage, by mentioning his scientific qualifications and attacking the unscientific nature of Darwinism. Gerald Winrod, after identifying himself as a lobbyist from Wichita, continued the attack on evolution by describing it as a theory "supported by atheists and directly opposed to religion." A hostile viewer recalled how fundamentalist leaders, "headed by the egregious Harry Rimmer," made "impassioned speeches" during the "almost night long session."

The bill's opponents also made impassioned speeches, often by deriding Rimmer's character and accomplishments. Maynard Shipley, head of the Science League of America, led a delegation opposing the bill consisting of a Methodist District Superintendent, Congregational minister, a Unitarian, and a Jewish rabbi. Since Rimmer was the fundamentalist scientist, it was necessary to discredit his testimony. Describing him as one of the "noisy fundamentalists" supporting the bill, Shipley said that Rimmer "admits that he is one of the world's greatest living scientists who . . . began his 'study' of science three years ago." A Unitarian minister who opposed the measure scoffed at Rimmer's Research Science Bureau saying
that "this was the first time he had ever heard of a research bureau where all the researchers had made up their minds beforehand what the results of their investigations would be." The Congregational minister ridiculed Rimmer's scientific reputation, declaring that ministers of the state know him as a traveling evangelist, while "scientists know him not at all."

The fundamentalists were defeated in their first battle before the legislature. Winrod recalled that "the Galleries cheered . . . the evolutions as they defended their Bible wrecking, atheistic, jungle philosophy." The Education Committee responded to the hearing by unanimously tabling the bill. They were optimistic about prospects of future success, however, and immediately began organizing another effort for 1929. Maynard Shipley was concerned about this threat, and concluded his article on the California controversy with an ominous note, "Mark well that phrase--'until 1929'."

Rimmer and California fundamentalists struck before 1929, bringing their grievances before the State Board of Education in the Spring, 1927. Two years earlier the Board had suspended, then restored, some sixty textbooks which taught or implied the truth of evolution. Fundamentalists remained concerned about these books, and supported a measure to remove textbooks which taught evolution as a fact, rather than a theory. Rimmer was one who objected to these textbooks which, in his words,
"brazenly taught the wildest conclusions of the evolutionists as though they were established fact."

Riley gave the first presentation before the State Board of Education's Textbook Committee, but almost lost the committee's interest with a plodding, sermonic address. Rimmer followed with a rousing speech which saved the day and convinced the committee to drop the "most reprehensible" books. Mrs. Rimmer saw this as a pivotal point in her husband's career and a great confidence-builder. Her unwavering confidence was justified, she adds, for from this time on her "Daniel" never failed to emerge from the enemy's "lion's den" without flying colors, having completely mastered the situation.

Though California anti-evolutionists had limited success in 1927, they were optimistic about the future. The Heisinger Bill had been defeated, but public interest was aroused and fundamentalists thought they would triumph in 1929. The Board of Education had ruled in their favor, which, many believed, foreshadowed future triumphs. For Mrs. Rimmer, the California campaign was a stunning success for her husband, and produced her unwavering confidence that he could best any foe.

The last battle was in Arkansas. Since the early Twenties Baptist leaders such as Ben Bogard and J. S. Compere had opposed Darwinism. In February, 1927 an anti-evolution measure, which had narrowly passed the House, was defeated in the Senate. Unlike Minnesota, however,
Arkansas possessed initiative and referendum measures, and fundamentalists decided to take their cause to the people. Though state organizations were most prominent in the initiative struggle, Riley's WCFA also backed the Arkansas effort by supporting the Arkansas Anti-Evolution League and sponsoring tours for Riley, A.I. Brown, and Rimmer.

Rimmer toured Arkansas in August and September, 1928, speaking at public meetings and churches in Little Rock and Hot Springs in support of the initiative measure. The Arkansas Anti-Evolution League sponsored his tour to "help arouse public sentiment" on the anti-evolution bill. Though Rimmer was a relatively minor participant in this battle, his Arkansas tour was a microcosm of his anti-evolution activism.

The anti-evolution crusade was a catalyst for theological realignment. The evolution issue polarized the Presbyterian church as much locally, as it did nationally. One of Arkansas' most vocal evolutionist clergymen was Hay Watson Smith, pastor of Second Presbyterian Church in Little Rock. Smith's Evolution and Presbyterianism and Evolution and Intellectual Freedom contained scathing attacks on fundamentalist doctrines, such as the inerrancy of scripture, caustic references to the Westminster Confession of Faith, and open commitment to the theory of organic evolution. Ben Bogard noted that the Arkansas initiative would be opposed by "every infidel, every Atheist, and such preachers as Hay Watson Smith."
Though disgusted with modernism within his own denomination, Rimmer had broad ecumenical appeal, speaking in Presbyterian, Baptist, and Nazarene churches during his 1928 tour. During the evolution controversy, doctrinal concerns transcended denominational barriers.

Rimmer also demonstrated his concern for traditional values and the impact of Darwinism on culture. Darwinism's pagan ideas, he argued, not only brought World War I, but also threatened the United States with "chaos and the bloody reek of the jungle." The Christian ethic emphasized individual sacrifice for others, he continued, while evolution was a pagan system which stressed individual self-interest. In other lectures he tied Darwinism to religious decay. In "Atheism and Evolution: America's Siamese Twins," Rimmer warned that evolution was the "religion of the godless," and begged people to support the initiative and thus not use state money "to teach atheism.

As the fundamentalist scientist, Rimmer also discussed the unscientific nature of the theory of evolution. He refuted the theory with well publicized lectures on "Evolution and Embryology," and "The Theory of Evolution and the Facts of Biology." As ultimate proof of the unscientific nature of evolution, Rimmer referred to his debates. Noting that he had won forty debates, including a recent victory over Dr. Newman Doorland before the Wayne County Medical Society, Rimmer offered to publicly test
the theory of evolution against any challenger on the question "Resolved: That the Facts of Biology Constitute a Demonstration of Organic Evolution."

In November, 1928, the Arkansas initiative proposal passed overwhelmingly by a vote of 108,991 to 63,406. The only successful anti-evolution initiative, the Arkansas law lasted for forty years until it was declared unconstitutional in 1968. Though it was to be the last anti-evolution victory, the successful Arkansas initiative was a great encouragement fundamentalist forces.

While Rimmer and the other WCFA flying fundamentalists had a limited role in the measure's success, they were involved in this major victory in late 1928. Despite claims that the Scopes Trial killed anti-evolution activism, Rimmer's greatest activity came between 1926 and 1928. His involvement with the WCFA gave him the chance to concentrate on scientific work, taste victory in legislative campaigns, and gain a reputation as a creationist crusader.
Rimmer also carried the fight over evolution to the Bible conference circuit in the late twenties and thirties. Beginning in 1924, Rimmer became a popular conference speaker at both local conferences and regional summer conferences. Local conferences, usually sponsored by one church or an association of local churches for two or three weeks, brought in a recognized speakers to lecture on some aspect of the Bible and Christian life for the benefit of the local Christian community. Summer conferences, sponsored by a large church or regional association for an extended period of time, usually booked a number of leading spokesmen and attracted audiences from around the region and nation. After gaining popularity in the late nineteenth century, these conferences effectively disseminated fundamentalist doctrines and prophetic teachings, were a magnet for fundamentalist leaders, and, by drawing people together from diverse backgrounds, encouraged fundamentalist ecumenism. Rimmer spoke primarily at local conferences in the early years of his ministry, filled his schedule with conferences in the thirties (Rimmer accepted the Duluth pastorate on the condition that he could spend six months per year on outside speaking engagements), and by 1941 was a mainstay of fundamentalist summer
conferences. Rimmer used both types of conferences as a forum for creationism, and was probably the most visible conference itinerant dealing with the question of the Bible and science. Rimmer used the conference ministry, then, as a major medium of his creationist crusade.

Bible conference work forced Rimmer to refocus his ministry. Since conferences usually attracted saints, not sinners, evangelism was unnecessary. Conference audiences wanted encouragement in, support for, and instruction in their Christian faith, not exhortations to be saved. Accordingly, Rimmer's conference messages emphasized Christian evidences and apologetics, the major feature of which was the Bible and Science lectures. While he never abandoned evangelism, and used science to encourage evangelism, Rimmer's conference ministry marks a transition from evangelism to apologetics.

The conference ministry also helped Rimmer's career. As the designated conference speaker on creationism, Rimmer specialized in science and gained the reputation as the fundamentalists' expert scientist. The conference ministry also provided the contacts necessary to propel his career. By sharing the platform with some of the greatest leaders of fundamentalism, Rimmer developed a network of conservative Christian contacts, who used him in increasingly prestigious and influential ministries. The conferences also offered Rimmer status. In his work in schools and universities, Rimmer was often maligned, faced
hostile audiences, and was supported, at most, only by students. In the conference work, however, Rimmer had friendly, even adoring, audiences, and received the praise of America's outstanding fundamentalist leaders. The conference ministry, then, provided Rimmer with emotional support and status, the opportunity to specialize on scientific issues, association with religious leaders, and a network of contacts enabling him to rise as a creationist spokesman.

Rimmer's conference ministry began in January 1924, when he conducted a three-week conference at the Presbyterian church in Hanford, California. The conference messages reflected Rimmer's broad concerns, as he spoke on traditional evangelistic themes, modernism, and evolution. He styled himself variously as an evangelist, fundamentalist, and scientist. In early 1924 Rimmer's conference ministry lacked a clear thrust or theme.

Rimmer used traditional evangelistic and moralistic messages during the meetings. He warned of sin, moral and social decay, called people to salvation, and sought to reclaim backsliders. He reaffirmed popular revivalistic doctrines such as free will and eternal security. Rimmer utilized some of the spectacular gimmicks of youth evangelism, such as the "Dynamite" sermon, for the Hanford audience, and preached his standard evangelistic sermons such as "Hell and How to Get There," "The Human Speck," "Prodigal Son," and "God's Challenge to Man's Free Will."
In short, Rimmer used a common evangelistic format in the conference.

Rimmer also used the conference to attack modernism. Since the modernist controversy was rocking the national Presbyterian church in 1924, Rimmer perhaps saw modernism as the greatest threat to the church. Rimmer delivered messages on the "fundamentals" of the faith, the "Deity of Christ," and the "Virgin Birth of Christ." In "The Way of Cain," he flayed modernists as "emissaries of Satan" and "agents of the devil," who wormed their way into the church, denied key doctrines, undermined the Christian faith, and split the church.

Rimmer was also deeply concerned with evolution. During the conference Rimmer promised to answer scientific questions "scripturally and scientifically," though he said he would ignore "insincere seekers," such as the "little two-by-twice" who is ever pointing to flaws in God's Word, and asking about Cain's wife and Jonah's whale. The real problem with credibility, Rimmer suggested, was with science, which changed every generation and, now, "every few months or days." Scientists themselves, he explained, have "exploded" the theory of evolution in the last two years. Given the inter-nicene disputes of "dogmatic" and "sectarian" scientists, he added, science could not be trustworthy. He was especially concerned about how the Christian faith of young people was shaken by "unscrupulous educators." At the 1924 conference, then, Rimmer warned
about the threats to fundamentalism, but did not identify Darwinism as a greater danger than modernism.

The Hanford conference, however, encouraged Rimmer's creationist career in two ways. First, his scientific lectures were popular and well-received. One local paper reported that the scientist-evangelist's "sermon-lectures are attracting much attention and large audiences." Another paper urged people to hear Rimmer, guaranteed that they would profit and be entertained at the same time, and promised that Rimmer, because of his "graphic and gripping style," was "never tiresome nor uninteresting." Second, Rimmer uncovered his most impressive archeological specimens and Tulares Indian artifacts near Hanford during the conference. The newspapers recounted his tremendous enthusiasm (which, they said, rivaled the enthusiasm of the excavators of King Tut's tomb), how he wired his "university colleagues" for assistance, and his plans for laboratory investigation of his finds and a return trip for a complete excavation of the site. According to the newspapers, Rimmer planned to send the artifacts to the Smithsonian Institution and was going to report on the discoveries to the American Association for the Advancement of Science. The Tulares artifacts formed the core of the Pittsburg Museum, and were the major proofs of Rimmer's scientific expertise.

In the summer of 1924 Rimmer also participated in John Brown's summer Bible Conference at Sulphur Springs. The
Brown Conferences, which lasted from 1913 to 1940, attracted some of the most famous fundamentalist leaders. The major speakers at the 1924 conference were R.A. Torrey and William Bell Riley, but Rimmer won the hearts of the crowd. Though he was not mentioned in the first report from the conference, Rimmer was the highlight of the closing newspaper report. The local paper noted that "Dr. Rimmer's lectures here have delighted thousands, and he assured his audience...that he was coming back next year." The conference gave Rimmer the opportunity to interact with leading fundamentalists, and provided contacts for further work. At this conference, for instance, he met Leon Tucker, editor of Wonderful Word, who convinced him to publish his scientific material. Rimmer's earliest studies, on Joshua's long day, Noah's ark, and Jonah's whale, first appeared in Tucker's magazine. At the same conference, John Brown was so impressed with Rimmer that he offered him the chair in research science. The conference also gave Rimmer status and acclaim, since, even though a relatively young man, he was warmly received and praised by his audiences and fundamentalist colleagues.

Rimmer's commitment to conference work came in 1926, just after his crusade evangelism and concurrent with his appointment as WCFA Field Secretary. Conference work seemed to appeal to Rimmer because of its lack of pressure, administrative work, and financial worries. In late 1926, after receiving conference invitations for 1927 in Tampa,
Chattanooga, Atlanta, and Little Rock, Rimmer felt that God was leading him into full-time conference ministry. Mignon Rimmer explained that

suddenly he was forcefully confronted with the idea that he could have a Bible Conference ministry with an evangelistic emphasis and one, two, three weeks in each place. He could see its advantages. No tabernacle to build, no song leader, no advance man.

Conference work fit Rimmer perfectly. He had the chance to preach, lecture on science, and debate. But he was spared the demanding administrative and fund-raising exercises of crusade work.

By 1929 Rimmer depended even more upon the conference ministry. The financial crash had ruined Rimmer's plans and funding for the Research Science Bureau, and the conferences provided a living. Rimmer was in greatest demand in the South. Though he led numerous conferences in the north, especially in Minneapolis and Detroit, the South was Rimmer's base of support. As evidenced in the popular meetings in Memphis, Birmingham, and Greenville, South Carolina in 1929 and 1930, his conferences had a similar style and predictable topics.

In early 1929 Rimmer was the science speaker at a two week Bible conference in Memphis. He worked with famous Christian speakers and writers J.B. Phillips and Harry Ironsides, the venerable fundamentalist pastor of Moody Memorial Church. Sponsored by Baptist and Presbyterian churches in the city, the conference was an excellent
example of interdenominational evangelical unity. The conference topics were "Evolution, Science, and the Bible," "Prophecy," "Holy Spirit," and studies of Bible books and the "higher life." Rimmer had a demanding speaking schedule. In addition to his nightly addresses on "Science and the Bible," Mignon Rimmer claimed that he spoke before every High School, college, and luncheon club in the city. According to the paper accounts of his itinerary, in his first week Rimmer spoke at four churches, seven schools, three civic clubs, and two special youth rallies.

The major emphasis of Rimmer's presentations was science and the Bible. He attacked the doctrine of evolution in lectures on "Monkeyshines: Fables, Facts, and Fallacies Concerning Evolution," based on his book of the same title, "The Antiquity of Man," "The Chronology of the Bible," and "The Collapse of the Theory of Evolution." He decried the "illogical method of atheism" in the later presentation, arguing that since creation declared the existence of God, "only the blind, or willfully dishonest" could study science and doubt the existence of God. In a message on "Noah's Ark," Rimmer argued for the historicity of the Flood, and then made the discussion very practical by referring to the recent floods in Arkansas, and warning that floods were God's warning signs of judgment to come. He returned to familiar ground with lectures on "The Long Day of Joshua and Modern Science," and urged the audience to "search the heavens" for there was truth in them. But
he closed with the familiar theme of the supremacy of scripture, saying, "search the heavens indeed, but search the written word as well. For though the words and work of God agree, the word is high above the work. . .and shall endure forever."

The conference was a big success and Rimmer appeared to be the main feature. At the beginning of the conference the local paper reported that Rimmer attracted "much interest" and spoke to "overflow" crowds. At the conclusion of the conference the paper, noting the success of Dr. Rimmer, the "preacher-scientist," added that "the discussions of science and the Bible has attracted large crowds." Jack Gates, a prominent Christian leader in Memphis, said "how grateful we are that God has sent Harry to Memphis. He is being referred to on all sides as the greatest speaker Memphis has ever heard." Sponsors claimed that the conference, the first in fifteen years, was the most successful in Memphis history, and immediately began plans for another in the following year.

In May 1930, Rimmer conducted a two-week conference in Birmingham, where he lectured on religious-scientific subjects. Advertisements promoted Rimmer as a scientist, archeologist, geologist, president of the Research Science Bureau, Bible expositor, and revivalist, and even as an aviator, athlete, explorer, and "extensive world traveler." In addition to standard lectures on evolution, the inerrancy of scripture, Noah's ark, and Jonah's whale,
Rimmer added lectures on "Moses Speaks on Botany," "Moses Speaks on Biology," and "How the Bible Anticipates Modern Scientific Discoveries." Almost all his speeches were taken from booklets and articles he had written on the Bible and science. In these lectures Rimmer emphasized the primacy of scripture over natural revelation and insisted that one must study nature through the Bible, since "men's eyes are not opened until the Bible and Christianity come to them." Rimmer prepared an extensive newspaper article on science, in which he argued for biblical infallibility, claimed archeological confirmation of biblical facts, compared the accuracy of the Bible with other ancient documents, showed how the Bible anticipated modern medical and scientific discoveries, such as sanitation, evaporation, the spherical earth, atomic theory, photo-electric cells, telegraph and radio, and concluded that "skepticism toward the Bible is a sign of ignorance or semi-knowledge!"

Rimmer was very popular in this conference as well. A Birmingham newspaper reported that "large crowds flocked to the gospel tent" to hear him. Undoubtedly the staunchly fundamentalist parishioners of the tabernacle (T.T. Martin was the next conference speaker at the Tabernacle) appreciated the themes of Rimmer's conference.

Rimmer concluded the conference with a debate against G.B.F. Stovall, a retired Baptist pastor with a reputation as a free thinker. With a local judge presiding, they
debated the question, "Resolved: that the Bible is infallible." Rimmer so anxious to debate that he postponed a Philadelphia conference for two days to be able to meet Stovall. The newspaper recorded that Rimmer was "overwhelmingly sustained" by the audience vote.

In late November and December, 1930, the Presbyterian churches of Greenville, South Carolina invited Rimmer for a Bible conference. He opened in style, preaching to South Carolina governor John G. Richards, who was in town for the Furman-Clemson championship football game. He quickly launched into lectures on science and the Bible, claimed the harmony of God's words and works, argued that the Bible contained no ancient errors, and insisted that the Bible contained no modern scientific errors. As dramatic proof of the Bible's reliability, Rimmer offered one hundred dollars in gold to any one who could prove a scientific error in the Bible. He again showed his concern for young people with anti-evolution messages, claiming that they lived in a "dangerous age" where self-proclaimed scientists led "young people away from God by criticizing the Bible and by claiming that science and the Bible do not coincide." He argued that science was unreliable because scientists could not agree on answers, science was constantly changing, and scientists were blindly dogmatic, mindlessly repeating, when questioned, "all authorities agree."

Rimmer also touched on social themes and concerns.
His thanksgiving sermon, for instance, which the governor heard, reminded people of the need for national virtue. Moral concerns were also evident in messages entitled "The Past Cries Out to the Present," and "The Prospect and Promise of Universal Peace." Rimmer's "The Magnificence of Jesus," a devotional and doctrinal study, was the seed for a later conference series and popular book.

Rimmer was well received in Greenville. Papers reported that he "delighted" his audiences with "his keen wit and large scope of knowledge." Rimmer addressed capacity crowds and was often forced to turn people away from the meetings because of a lack of room. According to both Greenville papers, in twelve days Rimmer spoke twenty-seven times to over 20,000 people, of which 4400 were students.

Rimmer continued as an itinerant conference speaker throughout the rest of his life. In his last decade, Rimmer was in constant demand on the conference circuit. He usually lectured on science, though in later years he also spoke on devotional and doctrinal topics, such as "The Magnificence of Jesus," current events, and prophetic themes. Rimmer was perfectly equipped for this type of speaking. A natural "platform man," he attracted large crowds. The sponsors of Rimmer's 1929 Atlanta conference reported to The Christian Fundamentalist that Rimmer was "a remarkable speaker of seemingly limitless energy, charming personality, and convincing logic." William Bell Riley,
noting that the WCFA was trying to book Rimmer for its 1929 Indianapolis Convention, added that Rimmer made "this impression on everybody." Rimmer certainly made this impression on the directors of the large Winona Lake Conference. Conference director Dr. Biederwolf explained that they always pressed Rimmer to speak at their conferences, since he was very popular and attendance dropped when he was not scheduled.

Bible conferences encouraged Rimmer because they offered him status and acclaim among evangelicals. Whereas lecturing and debating in schools had been a thankless job, Rimmer received only praise in conferences. Largely because of conference work, Rimmer became a "household name" among evangelicals. Even more important was the recognition fundamentalist leaders gave him. After spotting Rimmer in his congregation, G. Campbell Morgan called him a "master of his subject," and testified that he had learned more from Rimmer's address than from any other speech he had ever heard. Rimmer told his wife that Morgan had dubbed him "'God's greatest voice in this generation!' He actually did! He spent minutes eulogizing me, while my ears lit up like cigar lighters." During Rimmer's 1930 Charlotte conference, a German-trained surgeon praised him before the local medical association. Rimmer told his wife that the doctor said "I was the best informed man on 'Science and the Scripture' that he'd met on either side of the water. Whee! Compliments flow freely." Rimmer clearly
enjoyed the attention. During a conference tour of Massachusetts, a sponsor proclaimed that Rimmer "was the man to bring New England back to faith." (Even Rimmer thought that this job was too big for any one man.) Another eager promoter, noting that Rimmer was "God's gift" to all the churches of America, said that "Harry Rimmer is as great a blessing to the Evangelical churches of America as was Paul the Apostle to the churches of Asia and Europe."

The conference ministry enabled Rimmer to flourish as a creationist apologist. With his straight-forward, confident defense of the Bible, Rimmer was a great encouragement to Christians at a time when their faith in the Bible was attacked. A Presbyterian pastor in Lynchburg, Virginia, recalling a Rimmer conference, said that he "confirmed our faith in the Bible as God's Word." The Stony Brook Conference urged people to attend its Rimmer sessions, promising that Rimmer "can iron out all the wrinkles in the minds of young people who have trouble with science and the . . . Bible." After Rimmer's death, Palmer Muntz, new director at Winona Lake, said that Rimmer was a "valiant defender of the faith," and "will be more greatly missed in churches and on Bible conference platforms than any other man of any time."
Rimmer was also a controversial creationist, since he aggressively challenged modernism and Darwinism and attacked these theories and their proponents with the same fervor, vigor, and intensity as his boxing foes. As a fundamentalist champion, he sought to expose the errors of evolution and confirm the truth of the Bible through open conflict in abrasive lectures, debates, the offer of prizes for proven biblical errors, and lawsuits over the Bible. His aggressive and bellicose style aroused support and sympathy from fundamentalists, but prompted controversies and, in some instances, produced deep hostilities.

Rimmer really believed in the debate format. Though he undoubtedly savored a good fight and liked the theatrics of debating and the attention it brought, he sincerely felt that debates helped uncover and propagate the truth. He believed that evolutionary theory grew only because it was not rigorously tested and scrutinized, and was confident that if the theory was carefully examined its flaws would be exposed. The problem was that scientists, by refusing to acknowledge God's existence, had deliberately suppressed the truth of creation and unscrupulously promoted evolution. Because these deceptive scientists had
compromised genuine scientific inquiry, only direct confrontation and debate would expose their fallacious arguments and establish the truth.

While debates rarely were forums for the free interchange of ideas, as Rimmer believed and hoped, they did establish his reputation as a leading fundamentalist warrior. He filled his works with firsthand examples of debate victories and the facile arguments of Darwin's supporters. Since he was a superb debater and usually won his debates, Rimmer made creationism intellectually defensible, and offered fundamentalists a great deal of security and confidence. Whipping evolutionists was a type of religious verification. Kathryn Rimmer Braswell hinted at the symbolic importance of her father's debates by saying that "It is a matter of record that he never lost a debate; in most cases the audience voted for him almost en masse. . . ."

Even when Rimmer could not secure debate foes, his challenging style helped the creationist cause. To Rimmer and fundamentalists, evolutionists seemed unwilling and unable to defend their theory. The reluctance of the scientific community to debate Rimmer demonstrated, to creationists the paucity of evolutionary defenders. When he had a difficult time finding an opponent for a famous 1928 debate, for example, he charged that the "evolutionists are so aware of the weakness of their position that fourteen "'eminent authorities' lacked the
courage to debate the evidences of evolution." In answering one of Rimmer's adversaries, William Bell Riley repeatedly noted the man's fear and unwillingness to meet Rimmer in "open debate." For Riley, like Rimmer, facts and proofs could only be discussed and confirmed in open, public forums. "The man who meets Rimmer in an open debate," Riley closed, "must be able to say something beyond 'All scientists are agreed.' He will be called upon for a few facts and proofs." In Monkeyshines: Facts, Fables and Fallacies Concerning Evolution, Rimmer declared himself ready to "meet any accredited scientist or teacher of science in public debate on the subject of the collapse of evolution." Rimmer's challenges were a no-win situation for evolutionists. In accepting the challenge they had to face a master showman, but refusing the challenge made them appear cowardly.

Rimmer's 1926 appearance at Denver University is a good example of the power of the challenge. When speaking on college campuses, Rimmer invariably tried to arrange debates with faculty members who advocated evolution, though few professors responded. In Denver, however, an area businessman exacerbated the problem by offering $500 to any Denver University professor or group of professors who would debate Rimmer. There were no takers. The student paper, The Forum, after noting the "considerable interest" in Rimmer's chapel service and how, though he was ridiculed, no one disproved his statements, said,
Three separate challenges have been given to the Denver University faculty to debate with Dr. Rimmer on evolution. He has shown his willingness to meet them on any grounds; but they do not answer him. It certainly appears that it is one thing to teach a doctrine to students who do not have the nerve to face ridicule, or are ignorant of the contradictory evidence; but quite another to oppose someone who meets them with experimental facts. Why teach in private what you dare not uphold in public? Rimmer's pressing challenges were effective, because they allowed him to claim victory even when he did not debate.

Rimmer, of course, frequently did debate. He debated in every possible setting: auditoriums, schools, churches, and occasionally the debates were broadcast over radio. He claimed, for instance, that his 1926 debate with a Unitarian on "The Flood and Noah's Ark" was broadcast to the radio station's largest audience in history. He often debated clergymen, especially liberal ministers who were irritated with his fundamentalist message. In the late twenties he debated with Methodist, Episcopal, and Baptist ministers, and a surprisingly large number of Unitarians. Rimmer especially tried to arrange debates with itinerant evolutionary and modernist spokesmen, such as Edward Adams Cantrell, Maynard Shipley, and Henry Fairfield Osborn, and was successful in his debates with these men.

Rimmer's debates were very popular, occasionally drawing thousands of spectators. In the twenties and thirties people were sincerely interested in the issue of
evolution and Christianity. They were also eager for a good show, and Rimmer was an exceptional showman. A Los Angeles fundamentalist, who heard Rimmer debate, remembered that he "easily won" his debates with evolutionists. He described how Rimmer told them that "maybe your ancestors hung by their tails and threw coconuts at each other, but mine didn't," and recalled that "I loved to hear him speak because he was interesting, dynamic...[and] threw in some humor." Brandon Rimmer, recalling his father's quick wit and disarming jokes in a debate with Edward Adams Cantrell, said that "my father never won a debate, but he always won the audience." Fundamentalist radio preacher J. Vernon McGee recalled how Rimmer debated on many topics, generally won his audience with his "marvelous sense of humor," and often had everybody laughing at the end of the debate. Even with hostile audiences, Rimmer's winsome personality and excellent sense of humor enabled him to capture the crowd's attention and sympathy. These personal attributes helped draw large crowds and, since debates were usually decided by audience vote, contributed to Rimmer's success as a fundamentalist apologist.

Despite his rapport with audiences, Rimmer's debates and relations with his opponents were often bitter. In his initial 1925 debate with Cantrell in Denver, Rimmer said he had to first "lick" the Unitarian pastor hosting the event. He was so "bigoted and vicious in his hate of the Scriptures," Rimmer told his wife, that "I almost shrank
from physical contact with a body so poisoned by a devil-inspired soul." He described the debate as a "battle," filled with "tumult and shouting." After a later victory over University of Pennsylvania Professor Samuel Christian Schmucker who was "simply scared stiff" of the debate and whose arguments "fizzled like a wet firecracker!," Rimmer told his wife that "the debate was a walkover, a massacre-murder pure and simple." Rimmer responded to charges that he "slammed" evolutionists at Denver University by saying that "those who would rob youth of their faith in the Bible, and condemn many of them to infidelity, didn't deserve love and sweetness," and said that he intended "to make it as hot for them as [possible]." Spectators at Rimmer's debates hinted that the debates were characterized by "cold antagonism," "bitter anti-Christian sentiment," a "critical spirit," and "acrimonious speech." In a letter to his wife, Rimmer used biblical and boxing metaphors to describe preparation for a typical debate:

Sweet lady, It is now 6:15 and at 8:30 I enter the "ring." I am just starting to make an outline. I've been sorting my pebbles and greasing my sling. I shall type my notes for easy reference and then rest until the gong sounds.

Through his constant challenges, attempts to lure people into debates, and pugilistic approach, Rimmer was a major irritant to scientists and college professors. As a controversialist, however, Rimmer became a champion for fundamentalists.
One of Rimmer's most famous series of debates was with Edward Adams Cantrell. Rimmer had issued a challenge in Denver to debate "all and sundry" on creation and evolution or the infallibility of the Bible. Though $500 could not entice Denver University professors to debate, a local Unitarian minister later accepted the challenge and brought Cantrell to Denver to debate Rimmer on November 1, 1925. Since the debate was held at the Unitarian church and the audience was evenly divided between evolutionists and anti-evolutionists, Rimmer was delighted with his victory by crowd acclamation. He repeatedly described the debate in martial terms, as a battle, and cloaked himself in his favorite biblical imagery, as a David facing Goliath, and told his wife that "I shall spend the afternoon girding up my loins and picking a pebble for my sling. Darwin's armor doesn't fit me, so I shall go in my own frock to the Unitarian church." Rimmer barely concealed his contempt for his adversaries, describing the Unitarian minister as "devil-inspired," and warning Christians in the audience not to put God's money in the collection. Mignon Rimmer suggests the importance of the debate by calling it a "precursor" to future conflicts. Later in the month Rimmer met Cantrell twice more in Minneapolis. Cantrell, lecturing at a Minneapolis Unitarian Church on the "Menace of Mass Intolerance," had already lost (by audience vote) a November 25, 1925 debate to William Bell Riley. Discovering that Rimmer would be in town, Cantrell invited
him to two debates at the church and offered him a choice of topics. Rimmer selected resolutions on "The Scientific Accuracy of Genesis," and "The Deity of Christ," and wrote to his wife, "you can imagine my holy joy over the opportunity of defending the deity of Christ before such a crowd." Rimmer did well in the debates. He recalled that "the first night [Cantrell] went home in a barrel and the second night without it!" Even though he was debating a Unitarian in a Unitarian church with a Unitarian crowd, William Bell Riley observed that "Dr. Rimmer had entirely taken care of his cause." The Cantrell debates were a model for Rimmer's later debates, encouraged him as a controversialist, helped establish his reputation as a fundamentalist apologist, and, by attracting the Riley's attention, perhaps secured a position for him in the WCFA.

The most important of Rimmer's debates defending creation was the January, 1928 Detroit debate with Dr. Newland Dorland. While Rimmer was in Detroit for extended meetings in 1928, local physician George Van Amber Brown tried to arrange debates. According to Rimmer, fourteen "authorities," including University of Michigan president Little, backed away from debates before Dorland consented to meet Rimmer. Dorland was president of the Chicago Gynecological Society, a professor of Gynecology and Obstetrics, head of the Department of Obstetrics at the Chicago Medical School, and editor of Dorland's Medical Dictionary. In the same article on "Scientists Debate
Evolution," the *The Detroit Free Press* described Rimmer as a member of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, curator of the Museum of Natural History at Pittsburg State Teachers College, president of the Research Science Bureau, and "an authority on paleontology, archeology, anthropology, and geology, and particularly an authority on the archeology of the Tulares region." They debated at the Detroit City College under the auspices of the Wayne County Medical Association on the question "Resolved: that the theory of evolution is established by the science of biology." Rimmer did well. The *Free Press* publicized his "overwhelming victory" by a four to one margin, by saying that "Cro-Magnon man had his nose tweaked in an undignified manner, and the tenets of adaptability and inheritance of acquired characteristics were knocked into a cocked hat, and it was well agreed upon that man never descended from a monkey." In a later work, Rimmer explained that Dorland tried to prove evolution by citing hernias in humans, which proved that man only recently began walking upright. When Rimmer pointed out that dogs, hogs, and Jersey cows also got hernias, the stupefied Dorland only offered that it "showed how human dogs were." Unlike most of his foes, Rimmer really liked Dorland, considered him an "eminent authority," a "gentleman of culture," who combined "splendid scholarship with the courage of [his] convictions," and said "it was a real satisfaction to
lick him." Rimmer wrote him a friendly letter afterwards, believing that Dorland, a Presbyterian, was "the victim of blind leaders." Rimmer's only regret was that the editor of the state medical journal, who had "demanded BEFORE the debate" that the papers be published, decided after 174 Rimmer's victory that "he can't publish the material."

The debate was a milestone victory for Rimmer. Since the debate was held before medical doctors, he could note a victory before men of science. When he toured Arkansas months later, Rimmer boasted that he was the winner of forty debates, including the famous one with Dorland. In 1952 Kathryn Rimmer Braswell described this confrontation as one her father's most famous and influential debates.

Equally as important were Rimmer's 1929 and 1930 debates with William Bell Riley on the creative days of Genesis. Riley noted that this debate was strange since both men held practically identical views on science and scripture and agreed on ninety nine points out of a hundred. The debate illustrates the latitude within early creationism, since these two leaders disagreed on a substantial point of whether the days of Genesis were eras or twenty-four hour periods. Though Riley predicted a friendly debate, he presented his case earnestly, referring to the twenty-four hour theory as "utter fallacy: untenable, unbiblical, unscientific; in fact, absurd."

Rimmer defended the literal twenty-four hour days of Genesis, though he refused to be "dogmatic" about this
position, and admitted that he used to hold Riley's position. Rimmer said that he enjoyed the debate and Riley's -ability to land a "shrewd and sarcastic wallop." Since he had always debated before with "enemies of the faith," Rimmer said that "it was a novel experience to enjoy the wit of an opponent (wit being lacking in an infidel)." Rimmer won the debate by a resounding five to one margin before an overflow crowd. Riley quipped that the victory showed what brains could do--enabling Rimmer to come onto Riley's turf and beat him on the wrong side of a question. Riley and Rimmer had such a "swell time" in their "very animated debate" that they decided to repeat it at the 1930 WCFA convention at BIOLA. Before a capacity crowd of 4,000, Rimmer again successfully defended the twenty-four hour days of Genesis. Riley amiably conceded defeat, saying that Rimmer won only because he was "younger and better looking." Defeating Riley in open debate was no small accomplishment. According to observers, these friendly exchanges were Riley's only debate defeats. The debate was popular. In addition to rearguing the 1929 debate in 1930, Riley filmed the debate, reprinted the transcripts in The Christian Fundamentalist in 1929, and published a pamphlet of the debate, which was reissued as late as 1974.

Rimmer's debates were not limited to scientific topics. He often argued theological topics, as in the Cantrell debate on the deity of Christ. Most interesting
was Rimmer's debates on Anglo-Israelism. Anglo-Israelist doctrine said that Anglo-Saxon and Germanic peoples were the true racial descendants of Abraham, and that present day Jews were false pretenders. As an adherent of dispensationalism, with its strongly Zionistic themes, Rimmer was committed to the restoration of the Jewish people to Palestine. In a debate with Florida evangelist and Anglo-Israelist Joseph Jeffers, in which one thousand people were turned away, Rimmer won five to one judges' decision. A Northwestern student recalled how Rimmer demolished his opponent in the debate, but was nice enough to tell the audience to contribute to the offering "to help the poor guy pay for the hall." The most dramatic of these encounters was the Los Angeles debate with Dr. Matthews, in which Rimmer even "won over" his opponent. Rimmer debated on all topics. The debate was his way of defending orthodox Christianity from error, whether it be bad science, or bad theology.

Rimmer debated throughout his entire ministry. When he assumed a Duluth pastorate in 1934, he tried to initiate debates in his new home. Though local modernist pastors, a Winnipeg Humanist Society lecturer, and textbook author and evolution advocate Henry Fairfield Osborn backed away from debating Rimmer, he enticed retired U.S. Congressman J. Adam Bede into a debate on evolution. The debate, which Rimmer handily won, drew 5,000 spectators to the Duluth Armory.
The debate was Rimmer's primary means of defending scripture. He originally hoped to answer "all challenges", though that proved impossible. For conservative Christians the debates were an encouragement. After a radio-broadcast debate in New England, Rimmer told his wife that:

all the evangelicals are elated over the debate and the strength it has given to their faith in the scripture. They saw the weakness of the best arguments against the Word. I am more confirmed than ever in my belief that any one who stands on the Word of truth, and studies its contents, can meet any man anywhere; the greatest of the 'authorities' or the 'scholars' and come out on top.183

Through his confrontational approach, Rimmer helped cement confidence in the Bible. He forced his adversaries to debate, in which case he had the advantage, or to sit in shamed silence. Rimmer whole approach was to say, as he did to a Minnesota opponent, "put up or shut up." Shortly after he was a casualty of such a debate, William Bell Riley commented on Rimmer's ability and influence, saying that Rimmer "has a fascinating way of bringing the truth and is a born platform man. He is a splendid debater and an able defender of the faith."184

Another controversial way that Rimmer defended the Bible was through prizes offered to anyone who found a scientific error in the Bible, and the lawsuits that resulted from this challenge. Rimmer was so convinced of the Bible's infallibility that he offered cash in its defense, and this confidence was contagious. Fundamentalists realized that Rimmer was willing to "put
his money where his mouth was" and were proud that he "never lost a nickel in his challenges."

In the mid-twenties Rimmer began to offer money to his opponents. In early 1925 he tried to tempt "any reputable scientist who holds to the theory of evolution" to debate in Poplar Bluff by offering to pay one hundred dollars in expenses, then raised the sum to $500 dollars for a series of four debates. Rimmer offered the same amount to Henry Fairfield Osborn in an unsuccessful attempt to lure him to Duluth to debate.

Along with cash offers to potential debate foes, Rimmer offered cash to anyone who discovered a scientific or historical error in the Bible. Since no one could find an error, Rimmer's challenge helped demonstrate the authority of scripture. During a 1930 Greenville conference Rimmer explained the terms of the offer and the way it substantiated God's word:

The Research Science Bureau, a corporation chartered for scientific research in the fields of physical science.. has a standing offer of one hundred dollars to any [one] who can find a bona fida scientific error in the pages of the Bible. The offer has been in effect for several years, it has been printed and broadcast in the papers and magazines of several countries and in many languages, and the award has not yet been claimed. [Many entered presumed errors] but each in their turn has confessed the error to be in their mind or understanding, and not in the Bible at all.186

Rimmer raised the amount of the offer from one hundred dollars (in gold), to five hundred, and finally one thousand dollars, and in 1940 explained that the challenge
had been issued for fifteen years in twenty-seven countries. Though thousands of alleged Bible difficulties were submitted, by everyone from day laborers to college presidents, Rimmer and his committee answered them all. That they could adequately answer "every fantastic theory and wild imagining of unbelief" was, for Rimmer, one of the greatest testimonies to the Bible's infallibility.

Two claimants, however, were not satisfied with the answers they received, sued for their awards, and, in the resulting lawsuits, made Rimmer a nationally recognized defender of Christianity and a martyr for the sake of the Bible. Rimmer noted that while many people were killed or imprisoned for believing the Bible, he was "the only man who has ever been sued for damages for believing, and teaching the perfection of the Sacred Text! And [he] had that strange experience twice." When the cases were brought to trial, Rimmer reasoned that in an impartial, objective court of law the Bible would meet its truest test. Though Modernists had long requested a "day in court," he concluded, "when their conclusions and teachings were subjected to the rigid demands of the laws of evidence, and proof for their statements and theories was demanded, they found it impossible to establish a case against the historic view of the Bible." Rimmer's successful defense of the Bible in courts of law gave fundamentalists ultimate assurance about the Bible's reliability.
The first case came in 1929, when Colonel Ode C. Nichols argued that the number of quail mentioned in the Exodus account was a mathematical impossibility. According to his calculations from the biblical data, over twenty-nine trillion quail descended on the Israelites, requiring each Jew to collect and consume twelve million birds. Although Rimmer thought that the argument was only a practical joke, he answered it by showing the errors in Nichols's premises. Nichols refused to accept the answer and sued for the one hundred dollar award. The case was dismissed on a technicality since Nichols had sued Rimmer, rather than the Research Science Bureau which made the offer. When the case was retried in 1932, Nichols argued that the Bureau was guilty of a breach of contract in refusing to pay the plaintiff for revealing a biblical error. The judge dismissed the case, however, determining that since the Bible contained the sole eye-witness accounts, it was the only acceptable evidence. Since no biblical error could be proved, no award was due. Rimmer was "much encouraged in [his] belief in the Bible," was confident that "God knew the facts," and concluded the "His Word must be as infallible on scientific subjects as it is on matters of history and morals." With a flawless record of defending the Bible over fifteen years, the Research Science Bureau raised its offer to one thousand dollars in 1939, which prompted a second, famous court case bringing Rimmer national attention.
As a controversial creationist, Rimmer made enemies. In the same way that he alienated liberal churchmen and community leaders during his early crusades, he alienated evolutionists with his harsh attacks and confrontational tactics. As early as 1925, John Scott, an angry Kansas State Teachers College professor complained of Rimmer's fundamentalist science, derided him as an ignorant "YMCA scientist," and attributed to him a Ku Klux Klan mentality.

The enflamed sentiments and rhetoric of anti-evolution controversy produced the first major attacks on Rimmer. In the 1927 Minnesota anti-evolution crusade, Rimmer's opponents savaged him with haughty denouncements of his accomplishments, intelligence, and character. C.C. Furnass, for instance, described Rimmer's meeting as a "cesspool of ignorance," and charged Rimmer with "deliberate lies" and "the reasoning mentality of the prenatal," while professor David Swenson, referred sarcastically Rimmer's research and Research Science Bureau, charged him with "abysmal ignorance" and scientific "incompetency," questioned Rimmer's motivation, and described his debate challenge as a "hectic harangue," "ridiculous hocus pocus," an undignified "charlatan's trick," and "intellectual claptrap." During the California anti-evolution controversy the Sacramento Bee ridiculed the Heisinger Bill and its supporters, such as Rimmer. Maynard Shipley, who was especially critical of Rimmer and made numerous
sarcastic references to his education, position, and theology, referred to him as a "noisy fundamentalist," and scoffed at Rimmer's "ad nauseam" presentation to the legislature.

Criticism of Rimmer was especially sharp in the Haldeman-Julius publications. The anti-Rimmer articles by Scott and Shipley first appeared in The Haldeman-Julius Monthly. In 1931, another Haldeman-Julius publication, The Debunker, published an article on "Rev. Harry Rimmer--God's Scientist," which described Rimmer as "narrow" and "hopelessly unscientific," whose method was to accept the Bible and "discard, ignore, or hopelessly distort all facts," and whose main interest was "those collection plates piled with crumpled dollar notes." This vitriolic assault especially worried Mignon Rimmer. After Rimmer's 1940 Bible trial, E. Haldeman-Julius complained that Rimmer had not been fair and above-board in his offers, predicted that he would use the trial publicity to delude his "dupes" and "hallucinated congregations," and charged that Rimmer, who directed his appeals to the "lowest mentality in the community," was "capable of any intellectual enormity." Rimmer's challenge about the impossibility of proving errors in the Bible was effective enough that Haldeman-Julius made a counter-challenge, offering to submit twenty-five inaccuracies from the Bible (that "piece of wretched supernaturalism"), allow Rimmer to respond, and have magazine subscribers determine the winner.
In 1933 Haldeman-Julius friend Oscar Whitenack published a booklet devoted to Rimmer entitled *A Twentieth Century—Churchman's Viewpoint of Science*. Arguing that Rimmer was "masquerading" as a scientist, Whitenack said his purpose was to show how "false, stupid and absurd his claims and teachings really are." After complaining of his "colossal ignorance" and "outrageous falsehoods," Whitenack discounted Rimmer's presidency of the Research Science Bureau, claiming that "his schoolboy blunders, his ignorance in the use of terms, his utter indifference to well established facts, [and] his falsehoods...mark him as a cheap pretender and humbug." Whitenack was especially peeved that the "hopelessly ignorant" and "absolutely dishonest" Rimmer had the "effrontery to dare honest scientists to debate the fact of evolution with him." The debate had a religious dimension. Noting that Jehovah must have created rattlesnakes, cobras, poisonous scorpions, germ-carrying fleas, sleeping sickness, spinal meningitis, and the germs of cholera, typhus, influenza, pneumonia, and tuberculosis "to torture and murder innocent children," Whitenack charged that "the "Reverend Doctor" is proud to call this being his creator and demands that intelligent people worship him." Whitenack finished on an upbeat note, predicting that "social evolution, enhanced by the rising tide of science, will sweep Rimmer and all his kind into oblivion."

Rimmer noticed the attacks, but said little.
Though the criticism probably stung, he was capable of taking care of himself, and undoubtedly recognized that the attention was good publicity. Mignon Rimmer was more concerned about the hostility directed towards her husband. Beginning in 1923, she said, Rimmer was subjected to "personal attack and personal vituperation," which lasted for twenty-eight years. She realized that "atheistic" and "evolutionary" groups targeted him because of his success in "forensic tussels," but worried about some of the vicious and inflammatory articles, such as the 1931 Haldeman-Julius piece. Rimmer tried to reassure his wife. In the early twenties, he had read Haldeman-Julius daily for "mental exercise." He told her that he had chuckled all day over the 1931 "outburst," and reminded her that "infidels" only blast those that are hurting the Devil's cause. Some time later Rimmer even expressed concern that he might be "slipping," because the Haldeman-Julius people had "quit railing" at him. The price of being a confrontational creationist was public attack. Believing he was persecuted for his fidelity to God's Word, he reasoned that he had come "for such a time as this," and quoting Esther, said "If I perish, I perish." Though Rimmer never complained about the personal innuendo in these attacks and probably appreciated the acclaim, the attacks wore on Mrs. Rimmer and probably irritated him as well.

By the early 1940s some of Rimmer's sharpest critics were fellow Christians. Some were theistic evolutionists.
who resented Rimmer's attack on their system and implications about the sincerity of their faith. Others were creationists who were embarrassed by Rimmer's tactics and crude scholarship. Most did not attack Rimmer directly, since he was popular and they did not want to be known as anti-Rimmerites, but worked behind the scenes to diminish his influence and prevent publication of his works. While Rimmer's controversial and confrontational stance may well have attracted popular interest and help confirmed fundamentalist confidence in the Bible, it alienated evolutionists and creationists alike.

Rimmer used a confrontational style to prompt controversy in his crusade against evolution. He did this, in part, because he was a fighter and relished open conflict. He was also a good showman, and recognized that controversy attracted publicity. More importantly, however, Rimmer felt that the issue was so important and critical that even the harshest responses were justified in stopping the menace of evolution. Most importantly, Rimmer felt that controversy was necessary to publicize the truth. Believing that scientific truth had been compromised by unscrupulous and deceitful scientists who wanted to propagate their atheistic theory of evolution, he hoped that open confrontation would challenge evolutionary theory, shake public confidence in pseudo-science, and confirm the truth of divine creation. Though his tactics produced enemies and even embarrassed other Christians,
Rimmer's confrontational style did attract attention, inform Christians, encourage creationism, and provide a model of activism for future generations.

Creationist Literature

Rimmer continued his creationist crusade in his writings, which, in the later stages of his career, was his most influential medium. In 1947 Rimmer claimed to have two million books in print, and his books sold well for a decade and a half after that. He was also an associate or contributing editor for Christian Faith and Life, Religious Digest, The Northwestern Pilot, The King's Business, and Moody Monthly. Rimmer's writings encouraged the creationist cause, helped establish his reputation as a leading fundamentalist scientist, and enabled him to reach audiences throughout the world and the next generation of evangelicals.

Rimmer's scientific literature was simple, apologetic, evangelistic, and designed for popular audiences. Rimmer distilled most of the essays from his popular conference
lectures and crusade sermons. His first material, on the virgin birth, Joshua's long day, and Jonah and the whale, appeared in Leon Tucker's Wonderful Word, after Rimmer met Tucker during the 1924 John Brown Bible Conference. Rimmer expanded these and other studies into Research Science Bureau booklets, which he sent to the Bureau's members, peddled at his conferences and rallies, sold in boxed sets, and, finally, combined into popular books. While not important scientifically and lacking technical information, the booklets were important because they developed a creationist philosophy of science, resolved scientific problems in the Bible, included Rimmer's personal debate and research experiences and anecdotes, and were readable and enjoyable because they included the earthy humor and enthusiasm of Rimmer's speeches. Even when they were reprinted decades later, these works depended almost entirely on Rimmer's scientific and archeological work in the early twenties. Henrietta Mears, a noted evangelical leader from Hollywood Presbyterian Church, claimed that by using the booklets she had rescued sixty youngsters who were disturbed by evolution. Brandon Rimmer recalled his father's initial bargain with the publisher of the booklets, in which the books were printed on credit until he could sell them at the crusades, and claimed that the heavy sales of the material made Griffin Publishing a major printing house. Rimmer reshaped the material from these booklets into series of articles for BIOLA's The

Many of these booklets and articles include Rimmer's approach to science. Rimmer's 1925 A Scientist's Viewpoint of the Virgin birth of Christ included his best, early exploration of a creationist philosophy of science. In his treatment of the virgin birth, a major question in the fundamentalist-modernist dispute, Rimmer combined concerns of science and modernism. He explained that he was a "devotee" of science and, in an attempt to harmonize the Bible and science, carefully defined true science as "a correlated body of ABSOLUTE knowledge," not the constantly changing theories of so-called science. Compared to the vacillation of untrustworthy science, the Bible offered a "Thus says the Lord," had been proven over time, and contained no scientific errors. Rimmer searched it "from beginning to end for scientific error, and found none." Having established the authority of the Bible, Rimmer argued for the virgin birth from its pages, citing as witnesses: God, Joseph, Mary, Jesus, and a medical doctor, Luke.

Though Rimmer attacked modernistic tenets and tried to defend a cherished fundamental in this book, he was
surprisingly open to modern methods of analysis. He defended miracles, for instance, by broadly defining what constituted miracles. He noted that there were a number of biological miracles, each produced by the power of God: the creation of Adam, the reproduction of human life, and the virgin birth. Further noting that even radios would seem miraculous to primitive peoples, Rimmer defined miracles as the "OPERATION OF AN UNKNOWN HIGHER LAW no yet grasped by human discernment." For many fundamentalists, Rimmer's definition of miracles might have seemed too broad. Describing radios as miraculous and classing ordinary human reproduction with the virgin birth might appear to be too great a concession to modernism. Rimmer also utilized a comparative religions approach, a controversial methodology usually used by liberals. Noting in great detail that many cultures expected the appearance of a semi-divine being, Rimmer felt that they all shared the hope of a savior from Genesis 3:15, and concluded that "the universality of these legends and myths is an argument in favor of the common hope in all hearts that a virgin born Redeemer would come.

Rimmer's ultimate purpose was evangelistic. Because of the overwhelming evidence for the virgin birth, Rimmer argued, those who denied the doctrine were either ignorant of the facts or were "hardened by sin" and would not believe. If Christ was not virgin born, Rimmer continued, he was either a "blasphemous liar" who tried to cover up
the shame of an illegitimate childhood, or was a "pitiful maniac" who thought he was God. He concluded by appealing that the scriptures proclaim him to be "the virgin born Son of God and the Savior of sinning men."

The theme of The Harmony of Science and Scripture, as the title suggests, is that the "Word of God and the works of God must agree." Since there was "ABSOLUTE AGREEMENT" between the Bible and the "proven facts of science," Rimmer explained, it was "academically incorrect" to pit the Bible against science. Alleged problems between the two arose from the false claims of pseudo-science that dealt with theories and hypotheses. Rimmer showed the unreliable nature of this science by explaining ancient and modern scientific errors, from flat earth theories to the Nebraska Man at the Scopes Trial, and the bitter conflict of competing scientific hypotheses. Scientists should really begin with the Bible, which spoke with absolute infallibility on scientific matters, was protected from error by God, and was a more secure point of origin than science. Rimmer also emphasized the secret scientific insights of the Bible, asserted that "THE WORD OF GOD ANTICIPATES MANY MODERN SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES, and gave examples of cryptic Bible references to radio frequencies, ultra-violet and infra-red rays, human cell structures and blood types, proper hygiene practices, and the process of evaporation. The Bible's anticipation of modern science was one of Rimmer's favorite themes, became his trademark,
Rimmer developed the same philosophy of science and theme of harmony in *Modern Science and the Youth of Today*, but intensified his attack on false science. He complained about the authority of modern science, or "theoretical school calling itself modern science," which was really religious, not scientific. Like religions, modern science was dogmatic, sectarian, and frequently mistaken. Rimmer mentioned his own archeological work to illustrate the erroneous assumptions of science. Experts guessed that the remains and artifacts of one of his digs were 150,000 years old, while Rimmer independently discovered that the remains dated from an Indian massacre seventy years earlier. In another instance, Rimmer found iron nails from the colonial period next to a skull that experts claimed was 25,000 years old. Rimmer warned that modern pseudo-science, which so many blindly and credulously followed, was assailing the word of God and threatening the faith, hope, and security of America's youth.

Rimmer's *Modern Science and the First Fundamental* continued the attack on false science and developed creationist alternatives. Warning of the "fetish of science" and the "Baal of research," he stressed that a "fact" is distinct from theories and guesses, and complained of pretentious scientific verbiage. To outline a creationist system, Rimmer relied upon arguments from
design in nature, the laws of nature, animal instinct ("imparted wisdom"), and the decay of order and energy in the universe, which demonstrated that the world "wound up" by God was "running down." For Rimmer, the perfect symmetry of the world and compatibility of earth's creatures to their environment proved the existence of God. The evidences for divine design were so apparent, Rimmer charged, that it was rare to find an atheistic scientist.

In *Modern Science and the First Fundamental* Rimmer also experimented a new, presuppositional apologetic approach. Traditional apologetics, which Rimmer usually used, were empirical and inductive, depended on traditional arguments for God's existence, and assumed that rational beings would objectively evaluate the evidences for Christianity. Presuppositional apologetics were more rationalistic and deductive, assumed the comprehensiveness of world views or paradigms, and argued that one's basic presuppositions directed philosophical or theological formation. Rimmer explained that every one had an "A" and "Z" of thought and confessed that "the writer begins with God. He is the Alpha and the Omega." The Bible was necessary to all scientific endeavors, for Rimmer, since, as the initial presuppositional starting point, it was a telescope "bringing all into perspective."

In *A Consideration of the Credibility of the Chronology of the Bible* Rimmer established a date for the creation of Adam, and, most importantly, challenged
traditional interpretations of the Bible. He claimed that a false dichotomy existed between beliefs in a 4004 B.C. creation-date for Adam, the traditional date assigned by Bishop Ussher, and the evolution of man over millions of years, and hoped to chart a middle ground between naive Christians who believed that even the marginal notes in the Bible were inspired, and the "simple souls who believe every wild guess of science." Rimmer cast his lot with the "sane people" who "only accept proven fact." After careful examination of the Biblical chronology, Rimmer decided that the most probable date for creation was 5862 B.C., though he refused to be dogmatic on this point, and later revised the date to 5411 B.C. Though Rimmer's reconstruction was based on biblical information and was not a radical proposal, the new chronology was an example of Rimmer's desire to compromise between the extremes in religion and science and his zeal to attack false theories, even those cherished by fundamentalists, some of whom charged him with "heterodoxy" for his views. Even more curious was Rimmer's unique textual approach in this work and in a parallel article on "Some Scientific Fallacies Exposed," in which he followed the Septuagint, rather than the Hebrew text. Rimmer rejected the Hebrew text, claiming that Jewish priests had altered and corrupted it in an attempt to discredit the Bible and distort the prophecies about the Messiah's arrival. For Rimmer, the public renunciation of Ussher's inadequate theory and the unique treatment of
textual problems were proof of his courageous commitment to the truth, even when it meant offending other Christians.

Rimmer carried the theme of the biblical anticipation of modern science to dizzying heights in *Modern Science in an Ancient Book* and related articles, such as "The Alphabet of Science and the Inspiration of the Bible" and "How Science Sustains the Bible." Dedicated Lincoln Ferris, the Methodist minister who first introduced Rimmer to science, *Modern Science in an Ancient Book* sharply criticized the inflated authority and "exalted self-concept of so-called science." He noted how the Bible avoided both ancient and modern scientific errors, and accurately predicted modern scientific discoveries, such as evaporation, electricity, telephone, medical treatment, and photo-electric cells. The Bible contained such prophetic insight into science because the writers were the "amanuenses of God," who wrote not "according to their limited knowledge, but according to the revelation given to them." Moses, for instance, "did not write according to what he himself knew to be fact; Moses wrote just the words Jehovah gave him to record." For real answers a person should go to the Bible not science; for "what science does not know, the blessed Holy Spirit does know. . . ." Rimmer relied heavily upon the argument from design in these works, claiming that the perfect balance and coordination in the world proved God's superintendence. Sometimes the arguments for design were simplistic, as when Rimmer argued
that the proofs for God in science corresponded to the alphabet: Archeology, Biology, Chemistry, etc. Rimmer had planned an extended series on "The Alphabet of Science" for The King's Business, but apparently BIOLA terminated the series after three articles.

Rimmer also produced a series of booklets on the creative days of Genesis, later republished in Modern Science and the Genesis Record. The booklets had a similar format; Rimmer explained alleged discrepancies between the Bible and science, extolled the scientific marvels of creation, and unveiled the spiritual or allegorical meaning of natural phenomena.

In Modern Science and the First Day of Creation, much of which was republished in "Modern Science and the Prologue of Genesis" and "The Creation Story in Genesis," Rimmer argued for the veracity of scripture by holding that, though the Bible was attacked by "Satan's Siamese twins of modernism and infidelity, there was a complete harmony between physical science and Genesis." Rimmer also introduced and discussed different creationist models, such as the day-age theory and the gap theory. Rimmer accepted the gap theory, which stated that the original creation of Genesis 1:1a was destroyed in a horrible cataclysm and that most of the biblical narrative covered re-creation. Rimmer rejected the day-age theory, which stated that the days of Genesis were eras or epochs, and, though not dogmatic, argued for literal twenty-four hour,
solar days. Rimmer included a lengthy analysis of the nature of light, explained the presence of light without a sun, and described the scientific marvels of light, such as photo-electric cells and supermicroscopes. He concluded with a biblical word study on "light," and a devotional treatment of how Jesus was the "light of the world."

Rimmer also included a rationale for his scientific exegesis of Genesis. Though he was uneasy about evaluating Genesis from a scientific perspective alone, Rimmer justified his approach by noting that "infidelity has adopted the disguise of physical science." To meet the need of those who doubt, to answer the objections of the infidel, and the set forth from a new angle the undiminished lustre of God's invariable Word, he explained, "we thus approach this subject in answer to the challenge of infidelity."

Modern Science and the Second Day of Creation covered the division of the firmament of Genesis 1:6-7 into the waters above and the waters below. Rimmer argued from design that man, fish and birds were uniquely suited to their environment by creation, and, in a favorite example, carefully explained how the special properties of water supported life on earth. After describing how Moses had insight into these mysteries through inspiration, Rimmer called on his readers to "confess that Moses was absolutely in harmony with modern science." He concluded the discussion of the division of the waters by showing
Christ's authority over the seas, and his appellation as the "living water."

Modern Science and the Third Day of Creation described the separation of the seas and the formation of dry land. Rimmer explained the findings of oceanographer Matthew Fontaine Maury, "the greatest man of science America has so far produced," who discovered the Gulf stream by taking seriously the Biblical references to the "paths in the sea." According to Genesis and the gap theory, dry land was formed through a cataclysmic catastrophe, and Rimmer argued that any school of geology that ignored this catastrophe was "doomed to oblivion sooner or later, and will ultimately find its way into the junkheap of scientific limbo, where so many false theories from the past now peacefully repose in perpetual slumber." After giving examples of the foolishness of evolution, Rimmer observed that "faith, plus intelligence, is always able to meet the silly reasoning of infidelity." He concluded his discussion of geological and botanical phenomena by describing Jesus as the cornerstone rock of the faith, the "lily of the valley," and the "Rose of Sharon."

In Modern Science and the Fourth Day of Creation Rimmer discussed the creation of heavenly bodies. He explained that Moses had repudiated ancient Egyptian errors about the celestial bodies and had embraced special creation. After giving detailed information about the solar system, Rimmer concluded by describing Jesus as the
"Sun of Righteousness."

In *Modern Science and the Fifth Day of Creation* Rimmer discussed the creation of animals, biology, and his philosophy of science. He reiterated that since science dealt with things as they are, it had no solution to the problems of origins. Furthermore, Rimmer continued, no true biological discovery fails to confirm the fact of special creation. On the other hand, biology, paleontology, and zoology could not be reconciled with evolutionary theory, which was "scientifically discredited" and the "last slim hope of the infidel." The Genesis record was the only totally reliable and dependable source, since it was more than a theory, and was record of absolute fact. Both biology and scripture proclaimed cardinal facts of life—that each species reproduces "after its kind," the fixity of the species, and the impossibility of the species transmutation. Rimmer further relied upon the argument from design to show that birds and fish were specially created for their environments, including the unlikely argument that the mouths of fish were specially designed for fishhooks. He spiritualized the topic by showing how the Holy Spirit was represented as bird, how fish were used in different miracles, how early Christians appropriated the sign of the fish as a symbol for their faith, and how "THE FISH ALSO PREACH TO US THE GOSPEL OF THE GRACE OF GOD."

Rimmer focused on the creation of animals and the
topic of human evolution in Modern Science and the Sixth Day of Creation. After showing the religious significance of sheep, oxen, and goats, which symbolized the Messiah, and the wonders of camels' humps and cows' stomachs, which proved God's design in creation, Rimmer concluded that the "animal kingdom preaches the Gospel of the Grace of the Son of God with ceaseless and mighty eloquence." He attempted to show the vacuity of evolutionary thought by the silliness of his debate foes and a paper at an American Association for the Advancement Science convention, which argued against divine design by saying that the perfect human shape was spherical. (Rimmer pointed out people would be forever rolling down hills.) Atheism and evolution were accepted by only a few "sadly muddled souls" who were "befuddled by their small amount of learning and pride of their puny accomplishments." Rimmer said that the purpose of the series was to appeal to those whose powers of reason were not "blunted" by sin and lust. He admitted that science was not the final authority, that he only used it for evangelistic purposes, and that he hoped that his scientific work, by descending to the plane of science, might induce some to repent, turn to Christ, and "ascend to the higher plane of faith."

Another series of booklets covered problem areas in the Bible. In each booklet or article, Rimmer argued for the truthfulness of the Bible and showed how science illuminated the biblical record.
Modern Science and the Long Day of Joshua evaluated the account of the sun standing still during Joshua's battle—in Joshua 10:12-14. Attacking the Bible's detractors, who depended upon "fallacious scientific errors" and higher criticism's "scholarly ignorance," Rimmer claimed that the long day conclusively established the "truth and infallibility of God's books." Rimmer used solstice records to argue that a day was missing from the earth's chronology and showed that many other world cultures—Chinese, Inca, Aztec, Babylonian, Persian, Egyptian, and Polynesian—had traditions of long days (or nights). Rimmer explained that God performed this miracle to relieve the fatigue of Joshua's army and allow more time for victory, but added a strange interpretive twist, maintaining that as the earth's rotation slowed, the force of gravity lessened, enabling Joshua's men to run faster, pursue, and destroy the Amorites. The whole episode illustrated, for Rimmer, the harmony of the Bible and science and the supremacy of God's word.

Rimmer's Modern Science, Jonah, and the Whale argued for the plausibility of the Jonah story. He especially targeted the "modernists," "atheists," and "infidels" who derided the biblical account, and suggested that Jonah's hyper-patriotism resembled that of liberal Christians during World War I, who went from proclaiming brotherly love to "damning the Kaiser." Rimmer argued that the Jonah account was credible, first, because Jesus accepted
it as authentic. Furthermore, the Bible said that God "prepared" the fish. If men are able to prepare "fish" capable of sustaining human life (the submarine), Rimmer asked, could God not do the same? Finally, Rimmer cited historical examples of men and large animals that were swallowed alive by sharks and survived. Since, in some instances, men survived naturally after being devoured by large fish, Rimmer argued that it was certainly possible for Jonah to survive with supernatural assistance.

Modern Science, Noah's Ark, and the Deluge was a defense of the biblical account of the flood. Against the "critics" and "satanically hopeful" who attacked the flood narrative as self-contradictory and unscientific, Rimmer argued for its credibility from the Bible, geology, and archeology. Other cultures possessed flood myths, for example, which confirmed the main points of the Genesis narrative. Rimmer argued that the ark was large enough to accommodate the relatively few "true" species, and had perfect dimensions for sea-faring, which were the same as those of the U.S.S. New Mexico. Rimmer pointed to geological proofs for the flood in the thick layers of mud and uniform sediment in some regions. Like all floods, the great deluge was a part of God's judgment, and Rimmer cautioned his readers to watch for God's "urgent warnings" about possible "moral collapse" in the United States.

Rimmer's treatment of the flood reflected the shifting ground within creationist circles. Though Rimmer argued
that the flood had cataclysmic effects, such as the loss of
the earth's canopy, the destruction of all humanity, and
the beginning of decay due to rain and solar radiation, he
believed that the flood was only local in scope. During
the same time, George McCready Price published *The New
Geology*, a revolutionary work that spawned creationist
"flood geology" by arguing that a universal flood
dramatically altered the geological complexion of the
earth. Though he highly recommended Price's work, Rimmer
never entirely abandoned the gap theory, and never fully
embraced flood geology. Rimmer, then, though he
emphasized the impact of the flood in his influential work,
remained true to an older creationist model.

Another of Rimmer's series focused on the theory of
evolution and the development of man. Rimmer usually
emphasized the difference between human and gorilla skulls,
showed the human characteristics of early man, exposed
fraudulent "missing links," and claimed that pictures of
missing links were doctored. Rimmer used his personal
archaeological and skull collections to develop a slide show
for his itinerant ministry, and used this material in his
books and articles.

*Monkeyshines: Facts, Fallacies, and Fables Concerning
Evolution* was Rimmer's first anti-evolution booklet. He
argued that Cro-Magnon, Aurignacian, Galley Hill, and
Neanderthal men were fully human, that Heidelberg, Java,
and Dawn men were fakes, offered "one hundred dollars in
gold for proof that such a creature [as La Quina woman] ever existed," and referred his readers to McCann's God or Gorilla. After describing how even his little baby knew the difference between human and simian skulls, Rimmer juxtaposed the two types of skulls and urged his readers, "you pick 'em." Rimmer concluded this work on hoaxes by saying that "there are two suckers born every minute. Barnum got one--the evolutionist gets the other." Mignon Rimmer recalled that the booklet had a "terrific impact," opened the eyes of "countless students and parents," and brought upon Rimmer's head "the wrath of the "4 A's" [the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism], the "Freethinkers" and the more rabid evolutionists of that day."

Rimmer's "pent up feelings of indignation" after the Scopes Trial "exploded" in The Theories of Evolution and the Facts of Human Antiquity. Proponents of evolution, he argued, without proof from modern research, flew to dim, unfalsifiable ages in their "pathetic attempts to fabricate evidence," and have created enough hoaxes "to make Barnum green with envy." He was outraged by the "missing links" constructed from animal teeth, such as Nebraska Man and Southwest Colorado Man, and suggested that the cry of the experts was "Give us a tooth! [They] will supply the rest from imagination and plaster of Paris." Heidelburg man, complete with the popular, manufactured, projecting eyebrows, was a true missing link, Rimmer quipped, it was
built from a jawbone; the rest was "missing." Rimmer claimed that Java man, which was shielded from investigation for forty years, was built from the kneebone of an extinct elephant. Rimmer's attack was noticeable enough that Jean Dubois, the son the Java man's discoverer, wrote to Rimmer, identified him as a leader in the "campaign against evolution," and tried to refute his charges.

Rimmer also described how scientists leaped to conclusions, and discussed his own cautious techniques. When he found a beer bottle fragment in an Indian burial mound, Rimmer explained, he did not theorize that Indians brewed and bottled beer, as he feared modern scientists would, but continued to search until he found the packrat's hole. He joked that future archeologists, finding a crowbar and surgical instruments together in an excavation of the twentieth century, might conclude that there was a "smooth steel age" and a "rough steel age."

Positing the weaknesses of evolution, Rimmer called people back to the Christian faith. The theory of evolution was "simply a false theory of philosophy," which modern science had "utterly discredited and disproved." In "The Collapse of the Theory of Evolution," which continued the anti-evolutionary themes of The Theory of Evolution and the Facts of Human Antiquity, Rimmer concluded by saying that "the utter collapse of the theory of organic evolution has left us no other alternative to believe [except
Genesis," and predicted that the theme of modern thought would be "back to God--and the Bible!"

Rimmer further articulated his philosophy of science in 1929 in *The Theories of Evolution and the Facts of Paleontology*. He offered a dictionary definition of paleontology as "the science that deals with life in past geological periods," and claimed that this science was "the Waterloo" of the evolution. The first immutable fact of paleontology was the "absolute fixity of species." Since "like produces like," Rimmer explained, it was impossible to find new species emerging, which was proven by fossils of ants, mosquitos, and grasshoppers. Species that declined in size rather than grow larger, such as the elephant, sloth, and dragonfly, proved a second paleontological principle of degeneration. The perfect compatibility of creatures in the world proved the final principle of God's design. Rimmer spent much of the book disputing the evidence for evolution from the development of horses. Scientists made so much of the horse, he claimed, simply because evolution demanded some "demonstration of its fallacious claim, and truth must be sacrificed on the altar of prejudice." He concluded by taking his stand with God on this question, and predicted that within two decades evolutionary theory would "melt away" and be replaced with a "true philosophy of the origin of life."

Rimmer continued his discussion of the origin of life and scientific methodology in another 1929 booklet, *The
Facts of Biology and the Theories of Evolution. He reaffirmed that science, by its very definition, could not deal with origins, since science is "a correlated body of absolute knowledge. . .gained by observation, proved by demonstration, and refined by experience." Since no scientist or trained observer (except God) was present at the beginning of the earth or mankind, science must be silent. Rimmer explained the dilemma of science with the illustration of a child who claimed that the blacksmith "made horses" and insisted that this was a "fact" because he had seen him "finishing" one—nailing on the feet. Questions of origin, Rimmer insisted, were consigned to philosophy or religion, where one could choose between the unprovable "nebulous vaporings" of philosophy, or the dependable revelation of an intelligent creator. He also rehashed the arguments for the fixity of the species, the impossibility of a transmutation of species, and the uniqueness of the cell structure and blood of each species. Warning that "scientific obscurantists" and men of the "old school" would "seek to repudiate new truth for the sake of clinging to old theories," "pet philosophy," and "the old hag of erroneous theory," Rimmer exhorted his audience to hold fast and resist the "profane babbling of a science that is falsely so called."

Embryology and the Recapitulation Theory covered the specific problem of human fetal development. Rimmer again described evolution in religious terms, charging that the
Dogma of evolution was part of a "cult," in which "facts were twisted," and "dogmatic theories" and "impossible assumptions" were stated as fact. As a student he was taught the "shibboleth" of organic evolution that "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny." Using dictionary definitions, he explained that ontogeny was the entire development or life history of an organism, while phylogeny was the attempt to deduce ancestral history from an organism's ontogeny. He quickly warned that "an attempt to deduce is not a science!" The recapitulation theory, based on a "supposition of resemblance," argued that the human embryo symbolically reenacted the evolutionary process as it passed through the successive stages, resembling protozoan, fish, and other animals. Reminding his audience that each animal reproduces only "after its kind," Rimmer gave examples of the uniqueness of human embryos. He further refuted the claims of gill slits and branchial arches in human embryos, referring to his own research and debates on the question, and the "misrepresentations" of the textbooks and professors. Embryology was a pivotal study for Rimmer, since it represented the worst of "deductive science" and was the field in which he first encountered the shallowness of evolutionary theory.

These booklets and articles, distilled from Rimmer's popular speeches and lectures, commanded a large audience, especially when they appeared in the volumes of the Frost Memorial Library. Though his work was not sophisticated,
it was readable and especially influenced young people. His writings offered a refutation of evolution, outlined creationist models, and encouraged readers to consult other creationist writers. As such, Rimmer's works were an important part of his creationist crusade.

Between 1924 and 1934, Rimmer was a major creationist activist. In the mid twenties, encouraged by the Scopes Trial, the perceived success of the WCFA anti-evolution campaigns, and his concern for young people, Rimmer moved increasingly into anti-evolution work. He carried his creationist crusade into schools, state legislatures, conferences, confrontational meetings in debates, and into a large body of creationist literature. During this decade Rimmer was perhaps the most visible creationist; Henry Morris described him as a "voice crying in the wilderness." Though Rimmer maintained an interest in Bible and science topics throughout his career and never really left his campaign against evolution, the major thrust of his creationist work came between 1924 and 1934.
CHAPTER FIVE:

THE PRESBYTERIAN APOLOGIST, 1934-1939

From 1934 to 1939 Rimmer pastored the First Presbyterian Church in Duluth, Minnesota. Because the church allowed him six months each year for outside work, he continued his scientific writing, evangelism, youth work, and conference appearances. Rimmer did little new creationist research or work, but because his earlier essays were collected and reissued in a popular format, his reputation as a creation scientist blossomed. The formal church ministry, however, forced Rimmer to reevaluate and refocus his ministry, and he moved away from the battle over evolution to the battle over modernism. He initiated (or was the focus of) conflict in three presbyteries and at the Presbyterian General Assembly in a drive to dislodge what he saw as heterodox tendencies and a denominational oligarchy. Concerned about biblical inerrancy and the fundamentals of the faith, he increasingly pursued traditional apologetics in his writing, lectures, and research. The Bible and modernism replaced science as his most critical fundamentalist themes. Since he concentrated on apologetic themes and worked largely within a Presbyterian context, in this period Rimmer was a Presbyterian apologist.
The Presbyterian Pastor

Rimmer briefly considered pastoral work in early 1931. A committee from the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church approached Rimmer about their pastoral vacancy, while he was conducting a conference in New York. The position looked attractive to Rimmer because of the prestige of the church, the financial security the position offered, his desire to settle down, and his wife's health problems. The church's elders even offered Rimmer the chance to continue his itinerant evangelistic ministry. Rimmer declined the call, however, partially because he wanted to revive the Research Science Bureau, and partially because, as he told the church's elders, "no church could prosper while its pastor was away building up some other church. I truly believe a pastor should stick." That decision was buttressed a few days later by Calvary Baptist pastor Will Houghton who prayed, during the conference, that Rimmer would never turn aside from his vitally needed "peculiar ministry." The continuing influx of conference invitations further assured Rimmer that he belonged on the road, not in a particular church.

Repeated inquiries about pastoral work over the next two next years, however, made Rimmer reconsider his decision. In addition to the Fifth Avenue church, calls
from an Atlanta tabernacle church and, especially, the First Presbyterian Church of Los Angeles forced him to think about the pastorate. In 1932 Boston's Park Avenue Congregational Church, the leading evangelical church in New England, approached Rimmer about a position as an associate pastor and successor to Pastor A.Z. Conrad. Rimmer, who was acquainted with the church through his work with the New England Fellowship, liked the church and its pastor, and seriously considered this overture for a steady position because his wife's health was poor and the nation's financial distresses had pushed his Research Science Bureau plans into the "dimly distant future." His wife's serious, nearly fatal collapse in health in November, 1932 was a further impetus for abandoning his itinerant work. He wrote his wife: "I don't like to quit until my Boss transfers me to a new job, but I am more than ever convinced that I must take a church now. Perhaps He is transferring me!"

When Rimmer was at Duluth's First Presbyterian Church for a March, 1934 Bible conference, the church called him to be pastor. He had originally held a very successful Bible conference at the church in November, 1931, and the people were anxious for his return engagement. Since the crowds were so large for the first conference, the elders secured a local theater for the second set of meetings. Because the pulpit was vacant, the search committee tried to persuade Rimmer to stay. His interest in the call
seemed circumstantial; Rimmer was under strain from his wife's "serious illness," was disappointed by the financial collapse which ruined his plans for the Research Science Bureau, and suffered from the "killing pace" of fifteen years of constant travel, which produced "nervous reactions in his body; muscle twitchings at day's end, and subcutaneous itchings which made sleep difficult and destroyed his rest." Longing for a normal pace of life without constant concern for his itinerary and train schedules, and greater contact with his growing family, the position offered stability and relief. It also offered financial security in the middle of the depression--even allowing the Rimmers to live in a lakefront mansion--and the prestige of serving a large, established church. The church unanimously agreed to Rimmer's conditions of fulfilling conference obligations, freedom to continue itinerant work (which was extended to six months each year in 1936), and ability to at least consider a call from Park Avenue Congregational Church upon Dr. Conrad's retirement in 1935. Rimmer accepted the call and, after leading a Minneapolis conference, immediately returned to the church to work for a month in May and June, 1934. Rimmer was formally installed as pastor of the church on September 6, 1934, with William Bell Riley preaching the installation sermon.

Rimmer was delighted with the church, the area, and his new pastoral schedule. Since Duluth had a population

274
of 100,000, the field was not too small. The church, Rimmer told his wife, was the only "really orthodox" church in the downtown area. After plans for an archeology debate with a local liberal clergyman excited his congregation, Rimmer said that "these Scotsmen are for the Gospel and the Word, with no ifs, ands, and buts." When his health immediately improved with the new schedule, Rimmer realized how much the "nerve strain" of constant platform work was affecting him. In Duluth, he "recaptured the joy of preaching," had no stomach disorders, itches, or crawls, and "slept like a top." Writing his wife about his "great church" after a month on the job, and assuring her that he preferred it to the churches in Atlanta, New York, Boston, and Los Angeles, Rimmer said "I believe I'm the pastor of the best church in the whole United States. I really mean that."

The First Presbyterian Church in Duluth had a long history of fundamentalist activity. The church had ties, for example, with Billy Sunday. The church choir was formed as a result of Sunday's 1918 evangelistic crusade, and Rimmer's associate pastor, Ira Honeywell, served as an "advance man" for Sunday for four years, a fact proudly noted by the church's news releases, members, and official history. Exall Fry, the Pine Bluff pastor who preceded Rimmer at the Duluth church and arranged for the Rimmer conferences in 1931 and 1934, was a conservative Presbyterian who often spoke at Moody conferences.
Starting in 1932 the church contributed its Christian Education Benevolence Fund to Westminster Seminary, the conservative Presbyterian institution founded after the General Assembly's 1929 reorganization of Princeton Seminary. The support for Westminster Seminary and sympathy for the various causes of J. Gresham Machen represented the church's strong fundamentalist allegiances.

The church was also committed to dispensational theology. Rimmer's adherence to this unique brand of conservative theology undoubtedly was a factor in his call. The adult Sunday School class was entitled the Scofield Bible Class. The church also had strong connections with Moody Bible Institute; it supported the school, encouraged young people to attend, and invited as speakers Moody men, such as Harry Ironsides and Dr. Lockyer. During Rimmer's pastorate two students were sent to a Moody Convention in the hopes of organizing a League of Evangelical Students in Duluth. The church also invited many prominent dispensational preachers, writers, and theologians to speak. The list included William White, the Dean of BIOLA, Donald Gray Barnhouse, Philadelphia pastor and editor of Revelation, Lewis Sperry Chafer, founder and president of the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Dallas, William Biederwolf, Dean of the Winona School of Theology and Director of its conference grounds, Wilbur Smith, a famous Presbyterian leader, J. Oliver Buswell,
president of Wheaton College, and William Bell Riley.

Rimmer immediately cast himself as a conservative leader in the church, community, and Presbytery. Shortly after his arrival he precipitated a confrontation with the liberal ministerial alliance in Duluth, and organized a Conservative Ministerial Association, explaining that evangelical pastors needed "some one to rally around, [and] I seem to be it!" He arranged for first-rate pulpit supply in his absences and emphasized the church's Bible conferences, drawing, as one elder put it, "some of the world's best pulpiteers." Rimmer tried to refashion the church as well; he wrote his wife that it needed a "lot of reorganizing," and that he would do a little here and a wee bit there, "so as not to upset the apple cart all at once." His influence also extended to the Duluth Presbytery, in which Duluth's First Presbyterian was dominant; where he organized conservative pastors and significantly altered the theological complexion of the Presbytery.

Though he pastored a prestigious church and was a leader in the community ministerial association and Presbytery, Rimmer did not forget youth evangelism. In 1935 he organized a "3 F Club" at the church, where local youngsters met every Friday night for food, fun, and faith. Current church members, who were teenagers during Rimmer's tenure, fondly remembered his lessons, activities, and pranks. To illustrate Rimmer's excellent memory and love for young people, one former "3 F" boy recalled that, while
a student a Moody Bible Institute, Rimmer came as a Founder's Week speaker. Afraid that Rimmer might not recognize him because of the time that had elapsed since his Duluth pastorate, the student was delighted when Rimmer spied him in the crowd and stepped up with an outstretched hand to say "Well, hello Paul!" Rimmer ultimately left Duluth to return to youth evangelism. In announcing his resignation, the local newspaper noted that Dr. Rimmer was leaving for special student meetings at the Universities of Texas and Oklahoma. Rimmer told the church session that he was leaving to have a "broader evangelistic and Bible ministry--especially to students."

It is difficult to evaluate the success of Rimmer's pastorate. He did not have a pastoral demeanor, especially for an established, dignified church. Rimmer felt that the Scottish parishioners all gave a sigh of relief when he decided to wear pulpit robes, chuckling that "They don't think that it is a church service unless the minister is robed." Some observers hinted that Rimmer was too nonchalant, rambunctious, and earthy for such a distinguished congregation. Rimmer told his wife that "as a dignified pastor" he was a "flop," describing how, during the announcements on one of his first Sundays, he "forgot and acted natural, and in two minutes the whole congregation was laughing." He tried, with marginal success, to act more refined. On one Sunday after his trip to Mussolini's Italy, Rimmer dressed in a white suit and
black shirt and, to the congregation's amusement, declared himself a "blackshirt." According to one of his fellow presbyters, Rimmer enjoyed wearing a clerical collar. One day while speeding, as he often did, Rimmer was stopped by an Irish patrolman, who said "It's okay Father, but you'd better watch out. The guy on the next patrol is a damn Protestant!" The story, which is supposed to be authentic, at the very least demonstrates how Rimmer's conservative colleagues saw him as a colorful, though somewhat reckless, leader. The history of the Duluth church, which invariably exalted pastors in respectful terms, usually referred to Rimmer as "Dr. Harry," "Rev. Harry," and "Pastor Harry."

Though church members cringed at Rimmer's pulpit informality, they enjoyed his warm, informal, personal style. All the Duluth parishioners remaining from Rimmer's pastorate remarked that he was friendly, got along well with every class of people, and, though a nationally famous fundamentalist, was never haughty or condescending. They commented that Rimmer was "friendly--not too big to trust," "humble--he would eat with the poorest," and had a "common touch." Some of the members who were married by Rimmer, who always gave his wedding honoraria to the bride, recalled fondly how he passed the money from the groom to the bride saying, "This is how much your husband thinks of you." One woman was impressed at how Rimmer, who was a dinner guest, helped wash the dishes with the family before visiting. Another man claimed that Rimmer was so
personable that he would go out fishing with a bank president and a janitor--"at the same time." The congregation remembered Rimmer as a warm, egalitarian, and friendly pastor.

Rimmer lacked pastoral gifts and carriage, however, and church membership declined slightly during his tenure. One of his former colleagues commented that Rimmer was not a pastor, but "pulpiteer," and that he hurt his ministry by "chasing evolution." Though Rimmer usually filled the church for services, attracted many newcomers, and registered numerous conversions, few of the newcomers joined the church. Some of the old members disliked Rimmer and moved to other congregations; a plurality of the dismissals, for instance, transferred to Pilgrim Congregational Church, perhaps seeking a more staid and sophisticated style of worship. Even those members who loved Rimmer said that he was not good at pastoral duties, such as visitation. According to one man, Rimmer was "too active" to maintain good contact with members and call on perspective members. According to another, Rimmer acknowledged his poor visiting habits by saying that he did not like "to hold hands with people with sniffles." Though one woman claimed that Rimmer was "marvelous" about visitation, recalling how he had helped her homebound mother, the woman's father was an important elder at First Presbyterian Church, with whose family Rimmer probably had more contact. Even if he had possessed stronger pastoral
abilities, his schedule would still have crippled his work. In the summer of 1936, with his wife's health improving and speaking invitations pouring in, Rimmer requested and received permission to travel six months each year. These travel commitments made it almost impossible for him to be an effective leader; as he once said, "a pastor should stick."

To help fill this leadership vacuum, the church called Ira Honeywell as an associate pastor in December, 1936. In addition to his work with the Billy Sunday crusades, Honeywell had experience in his own evangelistic and pastoral work. (The calling of Honeywell, a Methodist, suggests that the First Presbyterian Church was far more concerned about the fundamentals of the faith than the doctrines which had traditionally separated denominations.) Honeywell was an older man with a gentle, pastoral personality. In comparisons with Rimmer, sources said that he was "completely dissimilar," "an extreme contrast," and a "totally different type of person." The "humble and unassuming" Honeywell "endeared himself to the church" by counseling, offering advice, and leading the church and preaching in Rimmer's absence, and, by most accounts, worked out well for the congregation.

A conflict between Honeywell and Rimmer marred the closing months of Rimmer's pastorate and probably encouraged his resignation. Honeywell was originally called as a subordinate to Rimmer; according to the call,
he was not preach when Rimmer was in town, and was not to be Rimmer's automatic successor. The church might have called Honeywell, moreover, without Rimmer's counsel or consent. Mignon Rimmer said very little about the man except that he was "completely dissimilar" from her husband, memorized his sermons, and, in late 1938, "seemed to be fitting in well." The long-time Stated Clerk of Presbytery, however, suggested that a serious issue divided Rimmer and Honeywell. Because of Rimmer's prolonged absences, Honeywell often counseled and visited with the sick, who felt much closer to him than Rimmer. One family requested that Honeywell preach a funeral service for a man he had comforted. (Mignon Rimmer made a special point that Rimmer was a popular funeral preacher, and preached the Gospel for the living in such services.) Since public preaching was Rimmer's prerogative, he believed that Honeywell was usurping his authority, dividing the congregation, and probably violating the terms of his call.

On Sunday, September 11, both Rimmer and Honeywell submitted their resignations, though the session refused to accept Rimmer's. At a Presbytery meeting the next day, Rimmer presented Honeywell's resignation and asked for the immediate dissolution of his associate's pastoral call. Honeywell submitted a his own letter asking that the Presbytery not to act at this meeting. The Presbytery agreed to wait until the congregation could vote on the matter. At a special meeting on October 6, the presbytery
terminated Honeywell's call. While little evidence remains of this event, the Presbytery records substantiate the clerk's contention that there was a serious dispute between the two First Church ministers and that this was "the beginning of the end for Rimmer."

Mignon Rimmer might also have encouraged Rimmer's dissatisfaction with the church and departure. Though remaining church members had little to say of Mrs. Rimmer, and almost nothing negative, Rimmer's former colleagues were more critical. One woman suggested that "she was different—you never really got to know her." Another claimed that Mrs. Rimmer was neither a warm pastor's wife, nor a strong, spiritual helper. What Rimmer needed, a former colleague added, was a wife who could say "Harry, let's be more compassionate. No less firm, but more compassionate." To some observers, Mignon Rimmer was as pugnacious and unyielding as her husband. When one of the conservative members of Presbytery refused to comply with Rimmer's request to torpedo an opponent, Mignon Rimmer reportedly said "You aren't going to let him get away with that, are you?" By most accounts, Mignon Rimmer was not personable, was temperamentally ill-suited to being a pastor's wife, probably encouraged his confrontational stance in Presbytery, and might have been a factor in Rimmer's decision to resign the pastorate.

Despite these faults, Rimmer was well-liked and respected by the congregation. He delivered exciting
sermons, filled the church with spectators, and started a very successful radio broadcast of church services. The church liked the prestige of having a nationally recognized pastor, who put the church and Duluth "on the map." The formal church history claimed that Rimmer, one of the church's most "colorful personalities," had a "very fruitful pastorate," while an elder of the church added that he really built the work and made First Presbyterian Church a "respected church." Perhaps the best testimonial to his pastoral work came from a man Rimmer converted, who, though not uncritical of Rimmer elsewhere, insisted that "he was the greatest minister that ever lived."

Denominational Pugilist

Soon after Rimmer's ordination in 1920, the Presbyterian church was convulsed by the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. The denomination had already tempered its Calvinistic theology through a revision of the Westminster Confession in 1903 and a merger with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church in 1906. Harry Emerson
Fosdick precipitated the dispute with a sermon in entitled "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" in 1922. In the following year a bitter contest for moderator of the General Assembly between William Jennings Bryan and Charles Wishart nearly divided the denomination. Though Bryan lost the election, conservative Presbyterians succeeded in passing a theological "Deliverance" which endorsed five fundamental doctrines: the inerrancy of scriptures, the virgin birth of Christ, the vicarious atonement, the resurrection and ascension of Christ, and supernatural miracles. Liberal churchmen responded with the Auburn Affirmation in 1923, in which they argued that the five points were not scriptural, and could not be made special tests of ordination without ratification by the presbyteries. The Presbytery of New York deliberately flouted the 1923 General Assembly ruling by ordaining two men who rejected the virgin birth and allowing Fosdick to continue preaching within its bounds. By the late Twenties, fundamentalists and Auburnists were poised for conflict on these doctrinal issues.

Rimmer was keenly conscious of the liberal movement within the church. He repeatedly identified himself as a fundamentalist, and affirmed the doctrinal points delivered by the 1923 General Assembly. In early 1924 he charged that, by attacking fundamentalists, Presbyterian modernists were "agents of the Devil," who had "wormed their way into the church," were undermining its foundations, and were trying to split it. He identified a Long Beach pastor as
an example of the "lying, hypocritical modernism," which had repudiated the Bible and historic doctrines of the church. Immediately after his ordination in 1920, Rimmer had devoted himself to studying the polity of his new church, and, Mignon Rimmer claimed, became an expert on the constitution of the Presbyterian Church, perhaps motivated by the increasing ecclesiastical disputes. During his Duluth tenure, he warned that many denominational leaders embraced a "debased and apostate theology; they followed the path of Caiaphas and paid Jesus a "suave and hypocritical homage for the sake of rewards and financial gains."

The dispute over modernism reached another plateau with the reorganization of Princeton Seminary and the creation of Westminster Seminary in 1929. Princeton had been the bastion of conservative, Old School Presbyterianism, and held its faculty and Board of Directors to strict subscription to confessional standards. A new president tried to make the school broader, more inclusive, and representative of the whole church. When bickering between the president and the faculty peaked with the ascension of J. Gresham Machen to the chair of Apologetics and Ethics in 1926, the General Assembly investigated the conflict and recommended reorganizing the board and extending the powers of the president. Under Machen's leadership a number of faculty members left Princeton in protest and founded Westminster.
Presbyterian missions was another scene of the fundamentalist-modernist controversy. In the early twentieth century, mainline Protestant missions were evolving from "evangelising" missions, for which the major goal was proselytising people with the Christian faith, to "civilising" missions, which emphasized education, medical care, and service work and de-emphasized or repudiated fundamental tenets of Christian doctrine. The best example of this tendency was Presbyterian missionary Pearl S. Buck, who did not believe doctrines such as the virgin birth and original sin, and argued against teaching the Chinese "such superstition." Rimmer warned that denominational agencies taught "another gospel of social service and humanism." The leading opponent to this drift in the denomination's missionary work was J. Gresham Machen, who sponsored an overture at the 1933 General Assembly urging the Board of Foreign Missions to avoid modernists and doctrinally compromising unions, and authored a booklet on "Modernism and the Board of Foreign Missions," one of many such attacks on the national board. Machen ultimately organized the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions in 1933 to protest the policies of the denomination's Board. In response to Machen, the 1934 General Assembly declared that membership in or support for an independent missions organization violated ordination vows, since these missions competed with denominational agencies, and tried to force resignations from Machen's Independent Board.
Machen's refusal to submit to this General Assembly directive and the resultant disciplinary action against him split the Presbyterian church. Though many ministers were tried for their membership in the Independent Board, Machen's trial was the most important. Though he had already transferred his credentials to the Philadelphia Presbytery, the New Brunswick Presbytery, of which he was formerly a member, accused him of divisiveness, pushed the charges of disobedience to the General Assembly, and, after a peculiar trial, suspended him from the ministry in 1935. Machen and other conservative Presbyterians were expelled from the church at the 1936 General Assembly after a review of the case by the Permanent Judicial Committee. These defrocked pastors reciprocated by founding the Orthodox Presbyterian Church in 1936.

Rimmer assumed the Duluth pastorate during the peak of this denominational fighting. He knew many of the fundamentalist Presbyterians involved in the controversy, sympathized with their cause, and, though refusing to leave the church, was involved in many of their battles. Though all Rimmer's efforts to reform the Church at the national level ended in defeat, within the Duluth Presbytery he was very successful, winning key theological and political battles, and reshaping the Presbytery's theological complexion.

In Rimmer's first Presbytery meeting in June, 1934, a conflict arose over the ordination examination of
ministerial candidate William Van Dyken. Van Dyken, a graduate of the liberal Union Theological Seminary, would not affirm the five points of the General Assembly's 1923 deliverance. Presbytery conservatives were concerned because he did not accept the doctrines of biblical infallibility, vicarious atonement, the resurrection, and, most importantly, the virgin birth. The chairman of the Committee on Education, an "Auburn Affirmationist," supported Van Dyken and tried to expedite the ordination by offering his class standing in lieu of the required examination before Presbytery. Rimmer had heard of this plan, and urged conservatives to attend the meeting, block the move, and require the examination. When the examination proceeded poorly, Presbytery liberals moved to postpone it until a later meeting. Responding to a challenge to a fundamental doctrine, Rimmer galvanized conservative forces in his first Presbytery meeting.

In an article entitled "The Drift to the Left," Rimmer commented on the Van Dyken case and warned about the ecclesiastical machinations of liberal Presbyterians. Noting how his Presbytery's Education Committee favored "modernistic schools," Rimmer argued that Presbyteries were not "alert or faithful" and allowed infidelity to creep into the church. Though in a personal interview he found Van Dyken winsome, charming, and lovable, and regarded him with "sincere affection," Rimmer warned that this charming and affable nature was dangerous and would allow Van Dyken
to lead sheep astray. Calling his theology a mix of "theosophy, spiritism, criticism, and misunderstanding," Rimmer contended that Van Dyken was a "befuddled lad," "as liberal as any Unitarian Congregationalist." Rimmer was irritated that the Education Committee would thrust a "totally unfit" candidate upon the Presbytery and try to slip him into the ministry as a "charming wolf in sheep's clothing." At the same time, the Presbytery had an unordained minister who was a graduate of a noted Bible Institute, had "won souls for Christ," built up his church, conducted more Vacation Bible Schools than any other minister, "believes the entire Bible to be the Word of God," and "burned himself out in the service of Christ and the church," Rimmer continued, "and this blessed lad is rewarded with the opposition of the machine."

Instead of continuing the examination process in September, 1934, Van Dyken requested a transfer to the Black Hills' Presbytery of South Dakota, where the prospects of ordination were much better. Duluth Presbytery conservatives, however, who were "much stronger" under Rimmer's leadership, denied the request, arguing that it was improper to foist an unqualified candidate upon an unsuspecting presbytery. This refusal to transfer Van Dyken produced "long and tense arguments" in Presbytery. One pastor volunteered that he did not believe in the virgin birth, either, since it was only found on two pages of the Bible and was not reaffirmed by the Apostle Paul.
Rimmer created an "uproar" in the assembly when he retorted that he did not believe in the Sermon on the Mount for the same reasons. Liberals were furious about the Presbytery's demand to reexamine the candidate, complained about prohibitive travel expenses, and insisted that it was a deliberate plot to embarrass the candidate. Rimmer and the conservatives held fast, offered to pay the travel expenses themselves, and forced Van Dyken's reappearance.

The Van Dyken examination and ordination vote came in January, 1935. Though a majority supported the candidate (the vote was 28-24), Van Dyken fell short of the three-fourths majority needed for ordination. Conservatives were disappointed that a majority of the Presbytery voted to sustain Van Dyken, who had denied the virgin birth and other fundamentals, and raised the issue again during the April meeting. The stated clerk read a proposal during this meeting, subsequently rejected, stating that a "majority of the Presbytery adhered to the doctrine of the virgin birth. Rimmer introduced a resolution, subsequently adopted by a thirty-five to twenty-five vote, "pledging Presbytery to refuse to ordain any one who cannot unreservedly subscribe to the doctrine of the virgin birth." The session of Rimmer's First Presbyterian Church sent a letter condemning the vote on Van Dyken's examination, and submitted a strong report, which was subsequently adopted by the Presbytery. They said little about the candidate, believing that he was an "unwitting
product of false instruction" and "more sinned against than sinning," but denounced the ministers who supported Van Dyken for violating the standards of the church and their own ordination vows. Announcing that the First Church followed the Westminster Confession and the five points deemed essential by the General Assembly, they criticized the Presbytery vote which implied that "it was not necessary for one to believe in the virgin birth of the Lord to be an ordained preacher of the Gospel," and led to the "absurd" and "illogical" conclusion that the Gospel was the "good news of a man born of the power of the flesh."

The Rimmer-inspired report concluded with a ringing indictment of liberalism, and the need to follow the biblical fundamentals and confessional standards:

Not to believe in the Virgin Birth is to believe in a man of sin, an anti-Christ, set up by the enemy of our salvation. We resent any slighting of the honor and glory of the Divine begettal of our Lord, the only begotten Son of the Father. It is bad enough to see the whole world pay little heed to the claims of our Lord, but it is with a sense of shame that we see the Holy One contemned in that which should be the house of His friends. Therefore, we protest the action of the Presbytery as being subversive of the standards of Presbyterianism, and as being a denial of the revealed truth of the Holy Scriptures.25

The April meeting marked conservative ascendancy in the Presbytery. In addition to the resolutions endorsing the virgin birth and denouncing the Van Dyken ordination vote, conservatives elected the first of a series of moderators. One of Rimmer's friends elected as Presbytery
moderator recalled that it was a difficult and tumultuous time, with as many as ten men at a time clamoring for the floor, but that Rimmer drew fundamentalists together. Rimmer was appointed to an examining committee and drafted the final set of questions for Van Dyken, who was denied ordination once again. Conservatives were powerful enough to block attempts to transfer Van Dyken to another presbytery and remand him to care of his home session, though their action was overturned Synod of Minnesota and their appeal denied at the General Assembly. Rimmer, however, was elected as the Presbytery commissioner to the General Assembly in 1935, defeating the proposed liberal candidate. He later held other influential positions within Presbytery: he was moderator of Presbytery in 1937, and was a long-term chairman of the Christian Education Committee, where he tried to strengthen conservatives by obtaining Presbytery funding for a circulating library of conservative theological works. After one year in Duluth, then, Rimmer galvanized conservatives forces and increasingly controlled Presbytery, primarily because of the fundamentalist-modernist issues involved in the Van Dyken case.

Rimmer's second major conflict in the Presbyterian church was over missions. In "The Trend to the Left," he objected to the General Assembly's condemnation of Machen's Independent Board of Presbyterian Foreign Missions. The loss of confidence in and support for Presbyterian missions
was not surprising, Rimmer said, because of its liberalism and infidelity. Confidence in the China Inland Missions remained excellent, by contrast, he argued, because the mission was "steadfast" and true to the "old, historical faith," and because contributors knew that every dollar supports missionaries "who are true to the Bible as God's Word, and who believe that all men must be born again, if they are to become the sons of God." Our own board, he continued, "repeatedly" sent men to the field who did not believe the Gospel and were trained in "the most rabid centers of modernism," whose "repudiation of the old verities [is] little short of infidelity."

The article created an immediate "furor" and "fireworks," and, according to Mignon Rimmer, Rimmer was labeled a "divisive influence" and a "troublemaker." The piece was so popular that this issue of The Presbyterian quickly sold out and Rimmer's article was distributed in a special reprint. The president of the Board of Foreign Missions telegraphed Rimmer and ordered him to forward proof of his accusations within one week or publicly retract the charges. Warning that the charges were in "defiance of the Assembly, and a violation of ordination vows," the president threatened action in church courts, ecclesiastical discipline, and, perhaps, excommunication. That the Board president was concerned about "rebellion against the General Assembly" was strange, Rimmer added, since the Board supports men who "are in rebellion against
the Westminster Confession" and are "signers of the Auburn Affirmation." As for the charge that he was violating his ordination vows and upsetting the peace and unity of the church, Rimmer answered:

We have searched our memory in vain, and cannot recall taking any ordination vow that pledged us to support in all circumstances and under any and all conditions, the various boards of our church. We never vowed to refrain from all criticism. . . . We did vow our fidelity to the Westminster Confession, that vow we have kept! We did vow to study to maintain the peace, the purity, and the unity of the Church, and we believe that persecution comes to us now for remembering that vow, for the chief obligation of every minister must be the preservation of the purity of the Church. There can never be peace on any other ground than this,. . .and there can be no unity when the purity of the church is marred by dereliction from our standards.28

Rimmer also addressed the president's threat of court action in the article entitled "Presbytery or Episcopacy." That an agency official could demand immediate action from an ordained minister and attempt to intimidate him smacked of tyranny; Rimmer said he had made a "serious mistake" in assuming that church boards "were administrative, not governmental." "It seems we are no longer governed by presbyteries," Rimmer continued, "as an episcopate has set itself up in our midst!" Even before the one week grace period had expired, the Board president contacted a member of the Duluth Presbytery, and instructed him to try Rimmer for a "violation of his ordination vows." The presbytery's moderator, however, believing that the demand was foolish, refused follow this dictate and did not press charges against Rimmer.29
The controversy over missions emerged again during the Duluth Presbytery meeting in April, 1935. A Michigan man, W. H. Mason, unsuccessfully requested that Presbytery investigate Rimmer's accusations that "the Foreign Missions Board was appointing as missionaries, men unsound in faith." Duluth's First Presbyterian Church sent a letter questioning the policies of the Board of Foreign Missions, and submitted a proposal, subsequently adopted by the Presbytery, petitioning the "General Assembly to sever relations with schools in the foreign field, that are not purely evangelistic and thoroughly evangelical, and to discontinue diverting funds to schools, unsound in theology and non-evangelistic in purpose, policy, and practice." Later in the spring, Board of Foreign Missions secretary Cleland McAfee visited Rimmer in Duluth, showed him Board files, and offered a Board-financed trip around the world to allay his suspicions. Rimmer did not know whether Board was trying to trick him by showing him the "good missions," get him "out of the way," or make him "more reasonable" by offering him a wonderful trip. It is unclear if this was an honest attempt at reconciliation by the Board, or an instance of how, in Pearl Buck's words, "the princes of the church play their church politics and trim their sails to every wind." Rimmer's criticism of liberalism, denominational missions, and the Presbyterian bureaucracy in the mid-Thirties was very similar to that of J. Gresham Machen and other dissident conservatives. 30
The controversy over missions and "episcopacy" followed Rimmer to the New Brunswick Presbytery in late 1934 and early 1935. Shortly before this Presbytery deposed Machen from the ministry, it tried to prevent one of Rimmer's union crusades. In the summer of 1934 area pastors and laymen had invited Rimmer to come for meetings the following January in Flemington, New Jersey. The Presbyterian pastor in Flemington objected to Rimmer's appearance, however, explaining that Rimmer had criticized the Board of Foreign Missions. The Union Committee overruled this objection, noting that the Union meetings were being held in a Methodist church and were immune from "Presbyterian squabbles." Rimmer's opponents then appealed to the New Jersey governor to intervene, claiming that conducting a crusade during the trial of accused Lindbergh kidnapper Bruno Hauptmann would be undignified. The union revival committee explained the matter to the governor, who withdrew his objections, blessed the crusade, and expressed his love for the Bible and interest in evangelism. The Presbytery of New Brunswick next wrote to the Duluth Presbytery, arguing that it had jurisdiction over Presbyterian preaching services within its bounds, and, while it "rejoiced in every legitimate effort to make known the eternal Gospel," insisted on evangelism with "dignity and sanctity," which was impossible with the "unworthy notoriety and blatant publicity" of a murder trial. Rimmer responded that the Presbytery had spoken
contemptuously of him, calling him a "roving evangelist," had little interest in evangelism, and was motivated by narrow ecclesiastical bickering. "When a presbytery can become the dupes or tools of any board," Rimmer warned, "the shadow of episcopacy is growing!" The Duluth Presbytery agreed that Rimmer had the right to hold the services. As a final attempt to discredit the revival, the New Brunswick Presbytery threatened two participating Presbyterian ministers with reprisals if they did not disassociate themselves from meetings. Warning of a vindictive attempt to "bludgeon" these men into submission, Rimmer urged everyone to watch New Brunswick "to see if these two courageous young men are to be made martyrs of freedom of action, and liberty of conscience, in their efforts to serve God and redeem lost men." Rimmer's closing warning was about the "self-perpetuating board" that was "entrenching" itself in power: "Unquestionably there is a studied attempt to usurp power, . . . and concentrate this power more and more in the hands of a few."

Rimmer took the battle over modernism in the Presbyterian church to the national level as a commissioner to the 1935 General Assembly in Cincinnati, where he tried to move the church in a more conservative direction. Brandon Rimmer said that his father originally took the Duluth pastorate as "a forum against the General Assembly," but was "outmaneuvered" at the Assembly. Rimmer met with
other evangelical leaders, such as Mark Matthews of Seattle and William Biederwolf, prior to the Assembly to create a unified conservative strategy and voice on issues and candidates. They supported The Presbyterian editor Stuart Robinson for national moderator against Joseph Vance, president of the Board of National Missions. Vance's election, Rimmer wrote his wife, "was inevitable, as he is the machine candidate. He will appoint machine men, of course, for the key positions to try to keep the 'peace of the church' by crushing any attempt...to improve 'the purity'." Rimmer tried unsuccessfully to secure seats on both the Committee of Christian Education, to protest the content of Sunday School literature, and the Committee on Polity, to speak in favor of conservative men who were denied seats in the Assembly. He did gain a position on the Committee of Nominations to the General Council, but, though he hoped to put up "good men," knew that "it will be of no use--the machine lads will all be elected. I honestly admire the smooth and marvelous functioning of that machine." Questions about doctrine divided the Assembly; Rimmer, for example, attended the meeting to support evangelism and "get out the truth" about impurity in the church. Rimmer also met J. Gresham Machen at the Assembly for the first time, and described him as "humorous, witty, sweet personality, humble, and absolutely, passionately dedicated to Gospel truth." Rimmer noted Machen's recent suspension from the ministry,
and contended that liberals bitterly hated him, and were responsible for swaying commissioners on his case with their "subtle, one-sided propaganda." Rimmer was disgusted with the liberal bent of the Assembly, and objected to the nasty speeches and "dirty slurs" on conservatives. In 1934 he had predicted that a split in the denomination was "inevitable," unless the "liberals" halted their "mad career." At the 1935 General Assembly, a year before the split came, Rimmer's prognosis was just as grim.

Rimmer was also frustrated in the Perkins' case in 1935 and 1936. Arthur Perkins was the Field Director of the Winnebago Presbytery, and had charge of twenty-three home mission churches in eastern Wisconsin. A Moody graduate, Perkins was a fundamentalist and strongly evangelistic, with a reputation for "soul-winning" and a vision for starting summer camps. His troubles began when he created a special Bible fellowship for his subordinates, many of whom were also Moody graduates, and encouraged the fellowship to support inexpensive and evangelistic summer Bible camps. Winnebago Presbytery, which ran its own camp and was unhappy with the competition, declared that the Crescent Lake Bible Fellowship was "quite unwise, unethical, and divisive (as well as positively contrary to our vows as presbyters, looking toward the peace, unity, and purity of the Church)." Perkins' camp certainly broadcast its autonomy; the cover of the camp's brochure proclaimed that it was "Independent of Any Ecclesiastical
Affiliation or Control." The camp historian argued that, though charged with establishing "a Presbytery within a Presbytery," the plaintiffs were "merely jealous because the home missions pastors were so loyal to [Perkins] and really loved him for his evangelistic zeal." Theology and ecclesiastical control, however, were the real issues. Perkins was singled out from many pastors who supported independent camps because he had criticized the Board of Foreign Missions and the Board of Christian Education for unfaithfulness to the Bible, and failed to meet church benevolence quotas. The Presbytery ordered him to close his camp in 1934, and, when he did not comply, charged him with violating his ordination vows.

Rimmer served as Perkins' defense attorney at the Winnebago Presbytery trial in Green Bay in July, 1935. He argued that the camp was independent and not under Presbytery's authority, hence Perkins had violated no vows. He further contended that Perkins was attracting poor children to his camp, a different clientele than the Presbytery camp, since Perkins' camp only charged $3.50 per week, while the Presbytery's camp charged ten or twelve dollars per week. Perkins lost the case and was suspended from the ministry for two years. Rimmer appealed the case to the Permanent Judicial Commission at the 1936 General Assembly, but the commission, the same one that ruled against Machen, unanimously sustained Perkins' suspension. Shortly after the appeal Perkins' health broke, he was
committed to a mental institution, and died on December 29, 1936. Mignon Rimmer was appalled at the decision, saying that the church courts "condemned a man for no other fault than that he believed 'God was the Lord of the conscience,' and chose to follow His leading in his humble and fruitful ministry." The Crescent Lake Camp historian added that "It is hard to understand how this could happen to a man of God, but missionaries have been martyred before." The trial was devastating for Rimmer; in addition to his failure to reform the national church, he was unable to defend what he believed to be an innocent, beleaguered, conservative pastor.

Perkins' trial and appeal angered Rimmer, pushing him and his First Presbyterian Church towards increasing independency in church polity, and made him suspicious of the National Missions Board which encouraged the proceedings. A National Board home missionary in the Winnebago Presbytery told Rimmer that the Board had schemed to get Perkins, and after the trial came to the Presbytery "with money to disburse," paid the trial costs for the plaintiffs, and gave grants to the churches of men who testified against Perkins. Rimer immediately recommended that Duluth's First Presbyterian Church develop its own missions programs and objectives, "rather than have it spent by the National Missions Board in this outrageous fashion." The church responded by increasing its allocated missions giving, funding, for example, the Minnesota sky
pilots and the North China Theological Seminary, which, because it had refused a General Assembly order to close, was "left an orphan without funds." Brandon Rimmer even claimed that his father originally took this pastorate because he knew about "misappropriation of money" and wanted to redirect the church's large missions budget to worthier causes.

Rimmer recorded some of the biggest battles over missions support and liberal tyranny in Presbytery in The Last of the Giants, the story of Minnesota's sky pilots, which included their persistent fight for funding from the National Board and ordination from Presbytery. When Frank Higgins, Minnesota's first sky pilot to loggers, was finally ordained and offered support after a prolonged struggle, Rimmer said that "a minister of the so-called 'liberal' school, jealous of the Sky Pilot and antagonistic to the Gospel, slandered him before the Board," and jeopardize his funding. John Sorenberger had to fight the same "ecclesiastical machinery" that had opposed Higgins. More concerned about the salvation of men than denominational rules and procedures, Sorenberger was "very impatient under restraint and contemptuous of rules and regulations when they stood in his way." When presbyters were shocked that the unordained Sorenberger had baptized converts, he said "O.K., Doctor, Presbytery can baptize 'em over again if you think it didn't take--providing you can catch them!," and then burst out in "Gargantuan laughter."
According to Rimmer, the Presbytery simply gave up and ordained Sorenberger to avoid further embarrassment. The National Missions Board recognized his earthy charm and great speaking abilities and sent him on a fund raising tour, at least until Sorenberger, feeling that Board secretaries were "exploiting him for their own purposes, kicked over the traces." Duluth's First Presbyterian Church assumed his support and funded his work until he died, according to Rimmer, so that Sorenberger could be "under no authority except his own and the Holy Spirit."

Sorenberger warned his successor, Al Channer, that his "chief cross" would be the "fool ideas" and "red tape" of the Mission Board:

Men who live two thousand miles away who never saw a lumber camp or a lumberjack. . . will handicap and hamstring you at every turn. You will not only have to fight sin and the devil, you'll also have to battle the "big shots" who ought to be your best friends.

According to Rimmer, Channer's "exalted opinion" of the National Mission Board crumbled when they did not pay him and his subordinates. The problem was rectified only when elders of a wealthy Duluth church paid Channer directly and withheld the amount from their benevolence contributions. Though Rimmer concluded this work by praising the current president of the National Missions Board, The Last of the Giants included sharp criticisms of the National Mission Board's bureaucracy and the Presbytery's liberal "machinery," and praised the independent, autonomous
missionary efforts of the sky pilots and their supporters within the Duluth Presbytery."

Rimmer received mixed evaluations as a leader of the Duluth Presbytery. Though successful in organizing conservatives, he was strong-willed and combative, and produced deep rifts in the presbytery. A former moderator of the presbytery said that Rimmer would be more effective if he was "more gracious to his enemies." Rimmer responded to such suggestions by saying, "if a basket full of clothes is dirty--wash it!" A former stated clerk recalled that Rimmer could be unfair, and sometimes bent the rules to get what he wanted. Rimmer was resoundingly defeated, for instance, though later vindicated, in an attempt to oust a liberal stated clerk before his term expired. One pastor commented that the presbytery was "polarized," because Rimmer was a "theological pugilist." "He could have led the presbytery anywhere he wanted to go," Rimmer's friend continued, "but he fragmented it." All these observers agreed that Rimmer was successful in moving the presbytery "from a liberal to a conservative base." At the time of Rimmer's resignation, the Duluth church commended him for being "the successful champion in our Presbytery of the long standing convictions held by our church." The stated clerk explained that the First Presbyterian Church brought Rimmer to Duluth "to rally conservatives within the presbytery. And that was successful. Rimmer galvanized conservatives."
Despite all his conservative activism and sympathy for the cause of J. Gresham Machen and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, Rimmer never left the denomination. He was not schismatic. After an invitation to pastor a separatistic church in 1929, Rimmer said that "my job is not to build a little outlaw denomination of Rimmerites in opposition to, and at the expense of, the organized church already in existence, but to add 'called out' ones and then do my best to feed them." Before taking the Duluth pastorate he echoed his wife's desire to stay within the denomination and added that "a time is coming, and soon, when she'll need every articulate conservative she can muster." Even when Rimmer predicted a liberal-incited split in 1934, he added that he would fight it "with his very life's blood." Rimmer's drive to "purify the church" did not force him into schism.

Rimmer, then, was deeply involved in the modernist controversy of the Presbyterian church, stressed the fundamentals of the faith, and pushed for theological, biblical, and confessional purity at all levels of the church. He was successful in the Duluth Presbytery, where, beginning with his first presbytery meeting, he galvanized conservative pastors in response to liberal theology and ecclesiastical machinery. Like others, he attacked the Board of Foreign Missions, but was not prosecuted for it in the Duluth Presbytery and avoided the New Brunswick Presbytery's retribution. Rimmer was a
failure in all his efforts at the national level; he was outmaneuvered at the General Assembly level, and defeated in the Perkins' case and appeal. Though he did not leave the denomination, Rimmer responded by circumventing the denominational boards, through urging greater congregational autonomy and by supporting independent missions. Rimmer might have had a greater impact, but, after 1936, he diverted his energies into renewed itinerant work. Rimmer's influence and impact upon the Duluth Presbytery, which was substantial, is even more noteworthy, because it came largely in his first two years in Presbytery.

Christian Apologist

In the half century before 1930 issues such as evolution, biblical higher criticism, modernism, and comparative religions deeply divided American Protestantism and eroded its strength and influence. The challenge to traditional orthodoxy in the Twenties seemed especially acute. One survey of ministers and theology students showed a startling rejection of older verities by students
of the decade: 47% of ministers and 5% of students believed the biblical account of creation, 80% and 44% accepted the doctrine of the Trinity, 68% and 24% held to supernatural miracles, 71% and 25% affirmed the virgin birth, 84% and 24% accepted the resurrection, 57% and 11% thought heaven and hell were actual places, 77% and 33% acknowledged the authority of the New Testament, and 60% and 9% believed in the person of Satan. Aware of this trend, Rimmer declared in 1925 that fifty percent of mainline Protestants were "apostate to the fundamentals."

The greatest and encompassing concern of fundamentalists was the inerrancy or infallibility of the scriptures. Almost one third of the articles in The Fundamentals dealt with some dimension of scriptural authority, which was easily the most common topic. Rimmer shared this concern. He explained one vicious attack against him by saying that his opponents feared that he "might move some to allegiance to God's Word." Mignon Rimmer opened The Fire Inside by quoting Rimmer's approach to alleged Bible contradictions:

I begin by conceding that I am not infallible, while the Bible is. It is the craziest sort of egoism for any man to say that he can't be wrong or mistaken, and that, therefore, any apparent difficulty in the Bible must be a mistake in that great Book. Do not consider yourself wise above that which is written!

Rimmer especially liked the attitude about scholarship and doctrinal fidelity of a staunchly biblical leader in the San Antonio Presbytery, who said "We don't like [a
to be too much smarter than the rest of us, but we won't tolerate him being any smarter than God!" Rimmer became an increasingly popular defender of the scriptures in the Thirties. Though his anti-evolution crusade of the Twenties had an apologetic function, since he endeavored to protect the Bible and the biblical account of creation, his apologetics ministry became much broader in Duluth, where Rimmer emerged as a leading defender of biblical Christianity.

Rimmer continued the Research Science Bureau in Duluth. Though its future looked bleak when he took the Duluth pastorate in 1934, he continued to use the Bureau to publish new material and disseminate creationist literature. Even after he resigned the pastorate, the Bureau's mailing address remained in Duluth. A postman commented that its volume of mail was so great that the Bureau "put Duluth on the world map." Mail for Rimmer and the Bureau in Duluth remained heavy until the the 1960s, and some correspondence still arrived in the 1980s, fifty years after his pastorate.

Rimmer noted that the material had been used in debates, discussions, and classroom lectures, and had helped "thousands of students." His purpose was to show the harmony of science and the Bible and repudiate the "false antithesis" between religion and true science. The book was very popular and remained in print until the 1960s.

Rimmer's best outlet for literature was through the Frost Memorial Library. Rimmer had tutored Stanford student John Laurence Frost in the Christian faith and helped resolve his questions about science. After discussions with Rimmer "settled" his faith, he became a "propagandist for orthodoxy" and diligently distributed Research Science Bureau materials. When he died from polio in the summer of 1935, his father Howard Frost, a Research Science Bureau director, commissioned Rimmer to write a special memorial series of six books on Christian apologetics. Frost funded Rimmer's Duluth secretary, two research trips abroad, and publication of the books. The library covered science and creationism, collecting Rimmer's booklets into permanent book form, archeology, the Bible, and christology. These apologetic works were distributed free of charge to Seminary and Bible college students. The volumes in the Frost Memorial Library reflect Rimmer's shifting interest at Duluth from science to broader apologetics.

Rimmer's first volume in the Frost Memorial Library was *The Harmony of Science and Scripture* in 1936, which was
probably his most influential work. The volume included slightly revised material from Rimmer's booklets, and focused on questions of the harmony of science and religion, philosophy of science, the biblical anticipation of modern scientific discoveries, and special miracles in the Bible. Rimmer noted that the material had been given in lectures and "many hundreds of thousands of booklets."

The second Frost Memorial volume on Modern Science and the Genesis Record appeared in 1937. Rimmer covered the account of creation in the first chapter of Genesis and used unrevised material from his series on the days of creation. Though he dealt with scientific themes, Rimmer used a symbolical method of interpretation and made spiritual applications throughout the text. He consciously used the allegorical hermeneutic of Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:27) to explain how the themes of Genesis were fulfilled in the life of Christ. The titles of some of the volume's chapters illustrate Rimmer's unique and devotional approach: "Moses and Meteorology," "Doxology of the Deep," "Geology and the Rock of Ages," "Botany and the Rose of Sharon," "Astronomy and the Bright and Morning Star," and "Zoology and the Lamb of God."

The third volume of the Frost series, issued in 1938, was Internal Evidence of Inspiration. Rimmer addressed the nature of revelation, the development of the canon, confirmation through prophecy, and internal arguments for biblical infallibility. He especially attacked higher
critical theories. The frontpiece of the book had a picture of a Bible partially eaten by termites subtitled: "The Assured Results of Higher Criticism." Suggesting that biblical critics were sneaky termites who had "ravaged" and "emasculated" the Bible and made it "utterly profitless to needy humanity," Rimmer said that he stood "willing to debate the issue with any authority of the critical schools." He opened his work with a salvo against comparative religions, declaring that "Christianity has nothing in common with the so-called 'world religions'." The entire work grew from an earlier booklet entitled A Syllabus of Bible Study which Rimmer had used in his crusades. He carefully followed the outline of the first work, and included its appendices on prophecies and symbols of Christ in the Bible, spiritism, and rules and methods of Bible study. Rimmer later reworked the material in Internal Evidence for Inspiration into more popular books on Seven Wonders of the Wonderful Word and Inspiration Plus Revelation Equals the Bible, and The New Testament and the Laws of Evidence.

Rimmer began his research for the next Frost memorial volumes Dead Men Tell Tales and Crying Stones with a trip to the British Museum in the summer of 1936. Though he took his family on what appeared to be a sightseeing expedition, Rimmer did visit the Museum, concentrated on the exhibits dealing with the ancient Near East and biblical manuscripts, devised a way of photographing relics and
documents through glass, and included the information and pictures in his texts. He added detailed descriptions of the Museum exhibits, and his books, especially Dead Men Tell Tales, occasionally sound like museum guidebooks. Because of the trip, Rimmer obtained excellent photographs, illustrations, and the illusion of having done primary research on ancient documents and artifacts in the British Museum.

Rimmer continued the research for these volumes in Palestine and Egypt during another Frost-funded trip in January and February, 1938. By sending special weekly dispatches to a Duluth newspaper, which included archeology, politics, and, in his initial report, a first-hand account of King Farouk's wedding, Rimmer contributed to his reputation of a world-class researcher. He investigated and photographed archeological sites, though mostly as a tourist. During his trip to Petra, about which Rimmer wrote a major section in Dead Men Tell Tales, Mignon Rimmer said that, having no responsibility, "he just rides and looks and photographs." She later described another day of research, in which they visited Gethsamene, Jericho, Rachel's Tomb, Bethlehem, and Bethany, and "then Harry went off seeking and acquiring archeological information." In addition to touring famous Egyptian ruins, Rimmer was given special permission to film King Tut's tomb. Rimmer treated his Duluth church, neighboring churches, and conference audiences to glimpses of this tomb and other sites captured
on the 3,000 feet of film he took. In addition to providing material for books, the trip enhanced his reputation as an archeologist. Members of Duluth's First Presbyterian Church remembered him as a world traveler who participated in archeological excavations in the Near East, was familiar with ancient languages, and read inscriptions on Babylonian tablets.

The fourth volume of the Frost series, Dead Men Tell Tales, was published in 1939 and dealt with archeological confirmation of the Old Testament. Rimmer hoped to show how the "sober science" of archeology demonstrates "the HISTORICITY, ACCURACY, AUTHORITY, and INSPIRATION of the Bible." In a potpourri of the Bible and archeology, he covered archeological methods, sources, and discoveries. He emphasized special topics and problems, such as the religious and medical aspects and symbolism of the Exodus plagues, parallels between the Gilgamesh epic and Noah's flood, and even slipped in the doctrinal issues of the deity and virgin birth of Christ. He especially emphasized recent archeological discoveries, such as the existence of the Hittites, the antiquity of writing, and viticulture in Egypt, that confirmed previously questioned statements in the Bible. Though Dead Men Tell Tales was basic, rambling, and textbookish (it was used as an archeology textbook at Riley's Northwestern), since Rimmer marshalled multiple evidences from antiquity arguing for biblical authority, the volume was important as a popular, apologetic work on
Crying Stones, the fifth Frost volume, in 1941, complemented Dead Men Tell Tales by providing textual and archeological confirmation of the authority of the New Testament. The title was taken from Jesus's claim that, if his people were quiet, the very stones would call out (Luke 19:40). Rimmer used the work to attack the higher critics, who had captured the schools and universities, "trained religious 'Fifth Columnists' to attack our faith in our own platforms and pulpits," and with "deliberate deceit and willful treachery" gave the world and the church the "husks of Modernism." Claiming that the evidence from antiquity "silences the Higher Critic" and refutes every objection of "infidelity and skepticism," Rimmer wanted this information in popular form for Christian laymen, so that they "also might share in the triumphal vindication of the New Testament." He dedicated considerable time to cultural and linguistic aspects of Koine Greek, which he borrowed from his 1933 work on Voices From the Silent Centuries. Rimmer also presented archeological and manuscript discoveries that documented the historicity and authenticity of the New Testament. To supplement patristic evidence, he included the entire Greek text of the Didache, an English translation of the work, and his own commentary. Dabbling with hermeneutical issues as well, he vigorously defended literalistic interpretations of the Bible against Modernists. Pronouncing a "happier day" for conservative
students, Rimmer showed how "God's Word can take care of itself," how the weapons of higher criticism had "rebonded" against its inventors, and how, because of the "swelling chorus" of crying stones, it was a "new sign of ignorance to doubt the Bible."

Though not a part of the series, Rimmer dedicated a theological work on *The Evidences for Immortality* to John Laurence Frost in 1935. The piece, which drew heavily on an earlier booklet on *Spiritism in the Light of Science and the Bible*, covered the problem of death and grieving, spiritualistic phenomena, biblical passages on witches and wizards, examples of Enoch and Moses, biblical accounts of different resurrections, and the biblical teaching on the intermediate state after death and the promise of the resurrection.

In Duluth Rimmer developed as a Christian apologist. Though he continued his popular conference appearances, he expanded his influence through his works, especially in those of the Frost Memorial Library. The focus of his concern shifted from evolution, his dominant concern in the Twenties, to higher criticism. Though he continued to publish creationist works, Rimmer's new material dealt with broader apologetic topics and the defense of biblical Christianity.

Rimmer continued his debating activity in Duluth, which helped maintain his reputation as a champion of the faith. During his first week at the Duluth church in
March, 1934, he addressed a high school assembly on the archeological confirmations of Old Testament history. Ten area ministers, dubbed by Rimmer as "The Terrible Ten," quickly protested the speech in the local paper, argued that Rimmer's "discarded ideas" would create problems for young students who would have to study "real science" at the university, and asked that Rimmer be prohibited from future school appearances. In his response in the paper, Rimmer admitted that he was faithful to "the truth once delivered to the saints" (though he had not mentioned the Bible in his high school appearance). charged that his opponents were a "Sanhedrin of apostacy" who represented the "repudiated school of German critics" and were "far behind the real scholarship of the day," and challenged any one or all ten of the ministers to debate on the question of "Resolved: that the Book of Genesis is historically and scientifically accurate." Since they had started the squabble, Rimmer urged his assailants "to show the courage of their convictions," by saying "Let us procure a neutral hall, invite the city of Duluth to attend, and let us argue the matter on the basis of evidence." The leader of the ministerial accepted the debate offer and agreed to secure the Duluth Armory, but, after hearing of Rimmer's reputation, backed out of the debate, saying it would do no good, and could not be kept on a "gentlemanly plane." Rimmer was disappointed that he could not silence his critics by "bringing the conflict to
the public, and winning it overwhelmingly," and had to settle for renaming the group "The Timid Ten." The attempted debate was important, however, for rallying members of the First Presbyterian Church, adding to Rimmer's stature, and launching a rival, conservative ministerial association in Duluth.

The most important debate was between Rimmer and former Duluth congressman J. Adam Bede. Bede was a traveling speaker, humorist, "prominent atheist," and gadfly, who liked challenging fundamentalists. The debate on "Evolution or Creation" was held at the Duluth Armory on December 17, 1937. Bede's humorous description of the debate format hinted at Rimmer's growing interest in Near Eastern archeology: Bede had forty-five minutes on Darwin and the animals; Rimmer had forty-five minutes on Adam and Eve; Bede had fifteen minutes of rebuttal on the zoo; Rimmer would follow with a "twenty minute trombone solo on an instrument recovered from King Tut's tomb," and Bede would have five minutes to "put neglected relatives back in their cages, and close the show." Because Rimmer wanted an audience vote, Bede distributed handbills to attract a "few fairminded people without blinders on," and promised that "gas masks will be permitted as a Fundamental[ist] precaution." Over 5,000 people came to see the "spicy debate," which was filled with quips, anecdotes, and humorous allusions. After opening by noting the irony that "Adam was appearing for the Ape, and I'm defending Adam,"
Rimmer covered familiar ground by carefully defining science, refuting missing links and inherited characteristics, describing embryology and paleontology, and explaining divine design. After asserting the truth of progressive evolution, Bede attacked fundamentalists, saying that missing links were "merely fundamentalists who missed the upward climb and went off on a detour," and charging that "every person burned at the stake because of his opinions was burned by a fundamentalist." The vast majority of the arguments and points in Bede's debate book attacked the Bible; he noted the passages on executing witches, polygamy, Christ's claim that he came to bring war, and problems such as the origin of Cain's wife. One spectator recalled with irritation that "the debate was supposed to be on creation, but Bede just knocked the Bible."

Rimmer won the debate, according to the local paper, by a "thumping majority." Though the audience which decided the matter was undoubtedly on Rimmer's side before the debate, the debate was a confirmation for fundamentalists of the truth of the creation. Fifty years after the event, the majority of Rimmer's remaining Duluth parishioners cited this debate as a highlight of his pastorate.

The Rimmer-Bede debate attracted wide attention. A Lecturer for the Winnipeg Humanist Society, Marshall Gauvin, followed the affair and, a week afterward, demanded
his own debate with Rimmer on the question "Resolved: That the doctrine of evolution is more reasonable and more likely to be true than the story of creation given in the book of Genesis." Rimmer accepted the debate but altered the question to "Resolved that the theory of organic evolution is scientifically untenable," and insisted on debating scientific evidence, not the Bible. Noting that Humanists never present scientific evidence in a "scholarly manner" and ever stray far from the field of discussion, Rimmer, perhaps still disgusted with Bede's irreverence, declined to debate if Gauvin only desired "to ridicule and criticize the holy Word of God." Gauvin refused to debate on the new resolution, and, after huffing that Rimmer should defend the Bible that he preached from, withdrew his challenge.

Bede challenged Rimmer again in November, 1938, and tried to collect the hundred dollar reward that Rimmer offered for proven errors in the Bible. Realizing that there was a "trick" to Rimmer's record of fifteen years without a proven biblical error, since "Dr. Harry" determined what constituted an error, Bede insisted that his Bible problem on the long day of Joshua be referred to the bureau of standards in Washington. He lamented that fundamentalists were "bomb-proof against scientific proof," but hoped to change their minds. Bede's challenge was essentially ignored. Rimmer had already resigned the Duluth pastorate, had just returned from a trip abroad, and
was again busy with the lecture and conference circuit. While the challenge was anti-climactic compared to the sensational debate a year earlier, Bede's new challenge suggests his irritation with Rimmer's standing as a Christian scientist and apologist.

The impact of these debates and challenges was to enhance Rimmer's reputation in fundamentalist circles. He defended, or was willing to defend, the Christian faith in debates with any adversary on topics of science, archeology, and the Bible. Though he was growing into a Christian apologist, Rimmer was still a confrontational apologist. These successful encounters built Rimmer's reputation as a defender of the faith. One Duluth church member, describing Rimmer's confrontation with the "Terrible Ten" and J. Adam Bede, stated with pride that "Dr. Rimmer always came out on top."
CHAPTER SIX:

THE EVANGELICAL STATESMAN, 1939-1952

During the last decade of his life Rimmer was involved in a number of different ministries. Though he continued his apologetic work by defending the Bible against evolution and Higher Criticism, he increasingly dealt with traditional, pietistic, doctrinal and devotional topics. With the onset of World War II, Rimmer emphasized millennial doctrines, the need for civic righteousness, and social and political problems in the United States. He continued his itinerant conference and evangelistic ministry, became a popular radio speaker, and traveled abroad in support of missions. Eschewing denominational ties, he tried to encourage cooperative ventures among conservative Christians and evangelical ecumenism. Brandon Rimmer said that his father remained locked into the issues of the Scopes Trial, and, because he never made the transition to new apologetic issues after the thirties, was less in demand, spoke in smaller churches, and saw his influence diminish. He was at least partially correct. Though Rimmer became a "big name" and greatly influenced conservative Christians during this period, his ministry lacked a central thrust or dominant theme, and his audiences became narrower, restricted mainly to fundamentalists, or conservative evangelicals.
Symbolic Creationist

In the last decade of his life Rimmer continued the creationist crusade. Though he did no new research, the continuing popularity of his works and conferences perpetuated his reputation. A highly publicized court case in 1940 gave him national publicity and appeared to make Rimmer the leading American creationist. At the same time that he was becoming more famous, however, some evangelicals criticized his anti-evolution style and work, and most conservative Christians discounted and repudiated his unique brand of creationism. Though his gap theory increasingly encountered criticism, Rimmer remained important as one of the original anti-evolutionists, a symbol of the innovative defense of the scriptures, and a model of creationist activism.

A sensational court case in 1940 brought Rimmer national exposure and confirmed his position as a leading Christian apologist. During a Bible Conference at New York's Central Baptist Church, in which he lectured on "The Harmony of Science and Scripture," Rimmer repeated his challenge of giving a thousand dollars for a proven Biblical error, and the offer was placed in city newspapers on October 31, 1939. William Floyd submitted a list of alleged errors and, after receiving no immediate response
from Rimmer, filed suit to collect the award. The resulting case obtained wide media coverage in Newsweek, the Sunday Mirror Magazine, national wire services, and on 150 radio stations. Rimmer concluded that the entire nation heard of the "celebrated case" as soon as it was filed. Because of the case, he observed, the "Bible got more publicity than could have been purchased with millions of dollars," and "correspondence swept over us from every state in the Union." Though the media reported the case as a novelty or curiosity, Rimmer basked in the attention and the case's success.

Because of its issues, personalities, and theatrics, the case was likened to the Scopes Trial and dubbed "Monkey Trial, 1940." The Sunday Mirror Magazine captured the irony of the suit by describing it as a battle between "skeptical science and enduring faith," in which a "died-in-the-wool evolutionist," aided by a lawyer who had spent his life spreading the "Gospel of Atheism," was challenging a Presbyterian scientist-preacher, whose own counsel was a practicing Sunday School teacher. The plaintiff, William Floyd, was the editor of The Arbitrator, a small "atheistic magazine," a member of the First Humanist Church of New York City, a self-professed "freethinker" and Bible critic, and a descendant of a signer of the Declaration of Independence. Joseph Wheless, Floyd's lawyer, was a veteran of church-state lawsuits, and a director of Freethinkers of America. Rimmer noted the strange
coincidence that Wheless had been counsel in the suit Ode C. Nichols had filed against Rimmer a decade earlier, and was using the same 1929 court brief. Floyd even called as a witness Charles Francis Potter, a Unitarian minister who had been a defense witness in the Scopes Trial. The plaintiff hoped to gain publicity, stop Rimmer's "irresponsible statements [about Biblical infallibility]" and, through court action, "convince Fundamentalists that there are errors in the Bible." Rimmer responded by saying that the case should be known as "Infidelity vs. the Word of God," since "Atheists, Freethinkers, Modernists, Humanists, and Liberal Jews" were attacking and discrediting God's Word, and "the brains and ability of the Free(?) Thinking(?) world were assembled to crush the Bible once and for all. . . ." A Jewish judge completed the cast of characters for Scopes Two.

The suit itself was hastily prepared, sloppy, and often ridiculous. Rimmer was served with a legal summons for refusing to pay the claim only a day after receiving Floyd's list of errors. Floyd explained that he had to hurry the case for fear that Rimmer, an itinerant, would skip town. Rimmer concluded that Floyd was not sincere in looking for answers to Bible difficulties and only sought a pretext for a lawsuit and publicity. He felt that the whole trial was a farce, designed to discredit the Word, and an "excuse to propagate unbelief." Rimmer further complained about the poor quality of subpoenas, the
plaintiff's court briefs, and the resurrection of identical arguments from the 1929 trial. Floyd explained that the cases were similar because both plaintiffs had copied Bible problems from Robert Ingersoll's *Is It God's Word?* This case about science was further marred by Floyd's failure to secure any expert witness on science. On January 14, 1940, just a month before the trial, Floyd contacted the American Association for the Advancement of Science to see if they could locate such a witness, and offered to pay all travel expenses. They could not help. Wheless admitted that the New York area scientists they had contacted refused to testify in the trial. Rimmer bragged that he did not know "one accredited scientist who would take the stand to testify under oath that there were scientific fallacies in the Word of God." Floyd finally called four witnesses: a liberal Jewish rabbi, Floyd's pastor, a Unitarian minister who had been in the Scopes Trial, and the Vice President of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism.

The first, and ultimately most critical question of the trial was whether Rimmer had placed or authorized the *Herald Tribune* advertisement offering the $1,000 award. Since the advertisement omitted important conditions of the Research Science Bureau offer and been submitted without Rimmer's knowledge or authorization, the court ruled that he could not be sued for breach of contract for failing to pay Floyd. Because of this technicality, the case was over.
before it began. The court allowed the trial to continue, however, arguing that if the plaintiff could show a prima facia contradiction in the Scriptures Rimmer was liable to pay the award.

Floyd launched his case against the Bible by presenting over fifty errors under five headings. The first two attacked the Genesis creation account. He charged that the Bible erred in teaching a six day creation six thousand years ago, because science taught that the universe evolved over millions of years. Rimmer answered by denying that the Bible taught a six thousand year old earth and questioning the ability of science to speak philosophically on the question of origins. He attempted to undermine scientific credibility by describing the wild discrepancies of "guessiologists" and explaining to the court: "Very few of the scientific dogmatisms that I studied thirty years ago are still in vogue now. Therefore the most that can be brought to bear upon the question of infallibility of the Bible is the general opinion of each age, and that is unacceptable legal evidence."

By denying that the Bible taught an early date for creation (4004 B.C.), as Floyd charged in his brief, Rimmer diffused one of the plaintiff's strongest points. According to Rimmer and his attorney James Bennet the Bible taught that God "created" the earth at some unspecified time and then, after a cataclysmic event rendered it
"without form," reformed or "made" it in the six days of Genesis 1. The court stenographer, Max Rosenfeld, was a Hebrew scholar and confirmed their definitions of the Hebrew terms. The judge was fascinated with this interpretation, asked Bennet "on the level" if that was what Genesis taught, and requested further clarification. Bennet recalled that "I then had the opportunity of showing what the Bible really teaches. We had kind of a Bible class, most of which was off the record." On the next charge, dealing with the contradictions between Genesis 1 and 2, even Floyd's witness, the Jewish rabbi, agreed with Rimmer's contention that chapter one presented the basic chronology while chapter two was used in a common literary fashion to develop central themes of the narrative. With the judge indoctrinated in the finer points of the gap theory and Floyd's star witness siding with Rimmer, the plaintiff could do little but press on to the next points.

Floyd's next charges concentrated on animals, ranging from the number of animals on the ark to the characteristics of such diverse creatures as camels, coneys, and quail. Rimmer argued that ark was large enough to hold all the animals described and that Floyd's brief was mistaken on the size of the ark, and the number of "unclean" animals and "pure species" rescued during the flood. According to the Biblical evidence, Rimmer maintained, the Noahic flood was not impossible or
contradictory. The next charge, taken from Ingersoll's "Mistakes of Moses," said that the list of unclean animals in Leviticus 11:4-6 inaccurately described coneys as cud-chewers and camels as having uncloven hooves. After the rabbi became confused about whether camels chewed the cud and the judge amused the gallery by arguing with Wheless about the public's general knowledge of camels (Floyd had argued that it was common knowledge that camels had uncloven hooves), the plaintiff dropped the point. Rimmer defused the coney question by insisting that it was an extinct animal, not a rabbit. He offered to give Floyd $1,000 to produce one so that they could observe its eating habits. The court concluded that the only eye witness, Moses, had observed the coney chewing its cud; Floyd had not. In the final problem, Floyd contended that the Bible's description of the quail in Exodus was impossible, since it required nineteen trillion quail, covering 2,992 square miles, to descend on the Israelites who, in turn, needed to collect eighty-five birds each second. Rimmer responded by showing the statistical discrepancies between the 1929 and 1940 cases. In the 1929 brief, "scientific" speculation concluded that twenty nine trillion quail covered 4,569 square mailes. Perhaps, Rimmer suggested, the figures would be changed in another decade. He further argued that the figures were absurd because they were based on faulty premises. An average day's journey for the Hebrews was four or five miles, not twenty eight miles as
Floyd maintained. He further denied that the quail were packed two cubits deep on the earth. Since the term translated "upon" was better rendered "above," Rimmer claimed that the Bible simply described low-flying, migrating quail, rather than huge piles of birds.

Throughout the trial both sides tried to gain maximum media exposure and seemed eager to recreate the carnival atmosphere of the Scopes trial. Rimmer complained that his opponents were "snooping around" on a "glorified fishing expedition", and resorting to "cheap wit" to ridicule God's Word. Bennet entertained the court by getting one of Floyd's experts to mention, as an example of evolution, the transformation from Negro to mulatto. Rimmer's lawyer seemed to thoroughly enjoy the show. He mentioned with pride the following exchange with a plaintiff's witness:

He admitted. . .that his body was two-thirds water. I said, "I will admit that and even go farther and admit that you are all wet." Nevertheless I thought that he must have some solid parts, even if it was only from the neck up.

Even the judge argued religion, joked with the participants, and charged witnesses with egotism and "guessing" at science. It is hard to determine how partisan the judge was. Rimmer felt that he was fair but gave too many advantages to the plaintiffs. Bennet, in an attempt to show how ridiculous the opposing argument was, hinted that the judge was forced to dismiss their ludicrous points. During the debate over creation, he said that "The
judge seemed to think, and properly so, that the plaintiff would need some witnesses who were present when creation occurred to be proper witnesses." The Associated Press release titled a "Comedy of Errors" described the trial as a "prolonged session of science and sarcasm," while the Newsweek article on the "Monkey Trial, 1940" included the obligatory exchange between combatants on whose ancestors were the "real monkeys."

The case was finally dismissed, both because of the technicality that Rimmer had not placed the advertisement, and because Floyd had not demonstrated errors in the Bible. The judge rebuked Floyd for "wasting the court's time" and for failing "to prove one single item." The nature of the decision allowed both sides to claim success. A few weeks after the trial the plaintiffs had a victory celebration, claiming that they had really won but had lost on the technicality. Rimmer's claim of victory was more persuasive, since the case was dismissed, the Research Science Bureau kept its thousand dollars, and Rimmer enhanced his reputation as the foremost defender of the Bible. Rimmer's lawyer even became famous in fundamentalist circles for his part in the trial. Haldemann-Julius's bitter criticism of the trial and Rimmer's exploitation of it is suggestive of case's impact.

He said that Rimmer was:

making much of the fact that he had won [the] suit [and is] making the little comedy serve his ends. [T]he whole thing is a joke, but Rimmer
will, from now on, tell his dupes that he beat the Atheists who said they could prove certain statements in the Bible were inaccurate. Rimmer is capable of any intellectual enormity, for his appeal is directed to the lowest mentality in the community. He frequently makes use of a story about Robert G. Ingersoll which always goes over with a bang. The story is a pure fabrication,... [but] Rimmer's hallucinated congregations get a big kick out of the story that's nothing more than the invention of a fourth rate mind.

Haldeman-Julius concluded that, though Rimmer was never fair in his thousand dollar challenge and it was fatuous for Floyd to sue him, there were scores of proveable errors in that "wretched piece of supernaturalism," and suggested a poll on biblical errors in a popular magazine. Haldemann-Julius's vicious tone and eagerness to try the Bible in another court of opinion suggests that Rimmer scored a decisive victory in the lawsuit.

Rimmer made the most of his publicity, and featured the story of the lawsuit in his lectures and sermons. Nearly fifty years after the trial, one man still had notes of a lecture Rimmer gave at the time of the proceedings, and could recall his dynamic presentation:

The notes are nothing like hearing Dr. Rimmer tell it as he told of trading Ingersoll for a mule; or as he told of travelling in the mid-East and mounting a camel with its foot folded clearly showing; or his offer to witness the eating habits of a coney if the plaintiff could produce one of the extinct animals.19

Rimmer was ecstatic in victory. In at least one subsequent conference, he offered ten thousand dollars for proof of a specific error in the Bible. Pitted against the infidel was a small group of simple, steadfast
Christians whose confidence in biblical infallibility was justified in as "complete a victory as has ever been recorded." In the courtroom, where objective proof was required, Rimmer continued, Biblical inerrancy was legally established. God was able to sustain His Word. According to the court, he concluded, "it is all right for Christians to go right on reading and believing the Bible! In the face of this court decision, we bless God, take new courage, and press on."

Rimmer's only new work on science in the last decade of his life was Lot's Wife and the Science of Physics, published in 1947. Concerned about the "continuous assault" on the Christian faith in American schools, he wanted to show that "in an age of science an educated person can believe the Bible to be the word of God." Though most of the information and arguments were lifted from his earlier works, Lot's Wife was probably Rimmer's fullest and most convincing discussion of the philosophy of science. He covered old ground by carefully defining science and the limits of its authority, "exploding" the theory of organic evolution, especially attacking theistic evolution, which he called the "silliest school of evolution," comparing the relationship between "divine revelation and human research," and defining miracles in scientific terminology. His new material, in a chapter on "Lot's Wife and the Science of Physics," is representative of his scientific method. The problem arose at a "bull session"
during a college Bible Emphasis Week, when a student asked about the transformation of Lot's wife into salt and the transmutation of elements. Rimmer answered by broadly defining "salts" as any chemical compound and describing the archeological recovery of Pompeii. Suggesting that the fire and brimstone of Sodom's destruction was a volcanic eruption, he argued that Lot's wife tarried in the valley, was covered with ash, and became a "deposit of crystallized chemical matter, commonly called salt, as did the people at Pompeii." The transmutation of elements in cyclotrons, he continued, "well-known to workers in physics, and to all who keep up to date in their reading," was similar to the metamorphosis of butterflies, and illustrated the transforming and regenerative power of Christian salvation. Even at the end of his life, then, Rimmer used his brand of science as a handmaid to evangelism.

Though Rimmer's reputation as a creationist grew throughout the forties because of his popular conferences and books on science, he represented an outmoded type of creationism. Christian scientists fell into three categories. The "gap theory," a system of origins taught by Scofield and embraced by many dispensationalists, accommodated the fossil record and defused geological arguments about the earth's antiquity by holding that a very old earth was destroyed and recreated in the first chapter of Genesis. Rimmer was committed to the gap theory.
throughout his life and probably received an honorary Sc.D. degree because the president of Wheaton College was an ardent proponent of the theory. Theistic evolution or progressive creationism was an accommodationist system which held that the theory of evolution was compatible with the Genesis account, usually by arguing that the days of creation represented great eras of time. The third school of flood geology, which largely followed the teachings of Seventh Day Adventist George McCready Price, held to a young earth, twenty-four hour days of creation, and a catastrophic flood that radically altered the original creation. By the late thirties and early forties, as the number of gap theorists dwindled and most evangelical scientists aligned themselves with the two alternative systems, Rimmer, by clinging to an increasingly obsolete system, became an anti-evolutionist relic and an archaic creationist.

Theistic evolutionists, especially those in the American Scientific Affiliation, were hostile to Rimmer. Begun as an evangelical association in 1941, the Affiliation included a large number of "day-age" theorists, some of which, by the late forties, were accused of endorsing "threshold evolution." Van Kampen Press asked Affiliation members to critique Rimmer's Voices From the Silent Centuries and The Theory of Evolution and the Facts of Science, when it considered reprinting the works in
1947. While some respondents praised Rimmer and acknowledged their indebtedness to him, the majority were very critical. Though sympathetic to Rimmer's general thesis, critics of *Voices From the Silent Centuries* pointed to the work's "comical errors," "straw man" of Higher Criticism, and "abundance of nauseating ridicule and pseudo-science." Comments on the *The Theory of Evolution and the Facts of Science* was even more "brusque." Edwin Monsma of Calvin College, noting Rimmer's "inexcusable carelessness" and charging that ridicule is not a "respectable form of scientific argumentation," said "I hope a book like this will not get the backing of our association." The geology critic showed how Rimmer "substituted ridicule and word play for carefully collected and interpreted facts" and suspected that "the author's knowledge of geology is derived from museum guidebooks and similar popular scientific sources." Association secretary J. Frank Cassel, commenting on Rimmer's "glaring faults" of derision, false premises, misunderstanding, and misrepresentation, declared the book "hopeless." In response to the harsh reviews, one Affiliation member worried that they might "become known as an anti-Rimmer organization." In 1988, noting how Rimmer had "the ear of fundamentalists," Frank Cassel recalled that "we were after Rimmer, not [George M.] Price." The largely negative critique of Rimmer's work, distributed in a confidential American Scientific Affiliation report in 1948,
demonstrates the low level of respect for Rimmer among 23
some evangelical scientists.

Flood geologists were also critical of Rimmer. He was
respected and cited in the Creation-Deluge Society
publications, but this society collapsed in 1945. The
directors of the Religion and Science Association were more
antagonistic to Rimmer, even though he had spoken at their
original 1936 convention and was suggested as a committee
member. According to George M. Price, Dudley Joseph
Whitney, the force behind the Association, wanted a new
organization to support flood geology and repudiate the
alternative theories of the the day-age and pre-Adamic
ruin. Whitney complained of the "deplorable confusion" and
"hopeless mess" of fundamentalist science, specifically
referred to "Rimmer's tommyrot," and insisted that "Rimmer
never knew anything," though he felt that Rimmer's
"goodwill" would help the Association. Though Rimmer had
helped him on God and the Cosmos: A Critical Analysis of
Atheism, Association leader Theodore Graebner warned a
correspondent that "Rev. Rimmer must be read with great
cautions because he is careless about his facts and
figures." Even Henry Morris, founder of the Institute
for Creation Research and leading contemporary advocate of
flood geology, criticized Rimmer for "some obvious
scientific weaknesses" and unnecessary "humorous sarcasm,"
and charged that, like other, older creationists who held
to "compromising theories" about a regional flood, old

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earth, and the gap theory, he was "blind to the overwhelming evidence against the great age concept." Even biblically oriented flood geologists, then, his erstwhile allies, viewed Rimmer with suspicion because of his outmoded gap theory, sloppy scholarship, and sarcastic tone.

Though evangelical scientists repudiated his style and brand of creationism, they recognized his contributions to their movement and his continuing influence in conservative circles. Bernard Ramm, a leader in the American Scientific Affiliation, said that Rimmer was "Fundamentalism's outstanding spokesman in the matters of the Bible and science until the time of his death." Many fundamentalist and creationist leaders, including G. Campbell Morgan, S.J. Bole, W. A. Criswell, and John Brown, acknowledged their indebtedness to Rimmer and the way he influenced the creationist movement. Most significant was Rimmer's influence on Henry Morris, guru of modern creation scientists. Rimmer's work converted Morris from theistic evolution, pointed him to flood geology, moved him to write *That You May Believe*, and provided a model for his future work. Morris recalled meeting Rimmer and hearing him speak "so effectively" in an "unforgettable week" in 1943. "Modern-day neo-evangelicals who like to carp about his Rimmerisms," he continued, were "mere pygmies in comparisons to such a giant." Morris called him the "most
widely known and influential creationist" before the Darwin Centennial, and the "greatest Christian apologist of his generation." Though his system of flood geology originated with George Price, Morris saw Rimmer as a more important symbol and antecedent. In contrast with Price, Rimmer did primary research in the sciences and actively campaigned for the creationist cause in public meetings, debates, and legislative hearings. Perhaps most importantly, Rimmer was orthodox (Price was a Seventh Day Adventist, with whose theology Morris and other fundamentalists felt uncomfortable) and, like later creationists, used science in the service of evangelism. Though his form of creationism was rejected by both camps of competing, evangelical scientists in the forties, Rimmer remained popular and very influential as a creationist. He was, in short, needed as a creationist symbol.
Evangelical Pietist

During the last decade of his life, Rimmer authored many doctrinal and devotional works. These books followed the themes of his conferences and earlier works, but had a different tone. The apologetic materials of the thirties, especially the volumes of the Frost Memorial Library, tended to be critical, antagonistic, and directed to defending the Bible from Modernism. The devotional material of the forties were more positive, pietistic, and directed toward edifying Christian audiences. Though Rimmer was still dedicated to the "fundamentals" of the faith and occasionally made slighting references to modernists, defending the faith from "infidels" was no longer Rimmer's major concern. Kathryn Rimmer Braswell claimed that her father was not really a fundamentalist, but, as he preferred to be called, a conservative evangelical. The primary difference between the two was essentially a matter of tone: fundamentalists were more pugnacious, critical, and separatisitic; while evangelicals, though committed to the fundamentals of the faith, were more temperate, congenial, and willing to compromise. Rimmer's devotional works on piety and traditional doctrine suggest growing evangelical sympathies.

Rimmer wrote two books on the Bible during the
period, based on earlier works, such as Voices From the Silent Centuries and Internal Evidences of Inspiration. While the older material was apologetic, defensive, often technical, and fiercely opposed to higher criticism, Rimmer's new material was simpler, positive in tone, filled with stories, and directed to a popular audience. His 1943 work, Seven Wonders of the Wonderful Word, for example, extolled the wonders of scripture and was designed to entice people to read the Bible. His infrequent references to higher criticism were almost condescending, implying that these "weird," "childish" "fairy tales" were not worthy of rebuttal, only pity. The book stressed themes of the Bible, such as unity, diversity, antiquity, modernity, and, most importantly, the centrality of Jesus Christ. In Inspiration Plus Revelation Equals the Bible, Rimmer argued for divine inspiration and biblical infallibility. Though he wrote the book against "theories of inspiration" used by wolves with "pastoral pelts" to deceive "nominal Christians," Rimmer rarely savaged the higher critics, and concentrated, instead, on constructive arguments and illustrations about the reliability of eyewitnesses, anthropomorphisms and divine condescension, the dictation theory, and biblical inerrancy. In contrast to his apologetic work of the thirties, Rimmer's work on biblical themes in the forties was written for a different audience and possessed a different tone; it was devotional, not apologetic.
Rimmer's favorite theme during his last decade was Christology. The outline for these studies sprang from earlier Research Science Bureau booklets on the life of Christ. Outlines for Study in the Trial and Death of Jesus, in 1928, included an outline of the trial, scripture harmonies on the trial and crucifixion, and evaluations of various modernistic theories of the resurrection. The Ultimate Triumph of Jesus Christ, a popular sermon, covered eschatology and the Second Coming of Christ. In the forties he increasingly lectured on the life of Christ at Bible Conferences, and seemed to deemphasize scientific topics. Rimmer might have surprised a Little Rock group in 1947, for example, which had advertised science lectures, by talking about the "The Magnificence of Jesus." A pastor who had Rimmer present a conference series on that topic recalled that he was "magnificent." In 1941 and 1942 he taught summer courses on Christology at Wheaton College. The growing interest in the topic led him to change the sixth volume of the Frost Memorial Library from the "Antiquity of Man," a previous area of concern, to The Magnificence of Jesus, in 1943. In the early forties, then, Rimmer's concern for Christology supplanted the Bible, his major concern in the thirties.

A major focus of Rimmer's treatment of the life of Christ was Calvary. His first works dealt with the psychological impact of the passion week on the lives of individuals. The Crucible of Calvary, in 1938, showed the
response to Christ of "avaricious" Judas, "vacillating" Peter, "faithless" Pilate, "apostate" Caiaphas, "timid" Joseph of Arimethea, "mother" Mary, and "the lamb" Christ. Rimmer printed a series of Easter sermons, which some considered to be his best messages, in Voices From Calvary. He used vivid descriptions to recapture the events of the crucifixion and the inner turmoil of participants, such as Pilate, the people of Israel, Simon the Cyrene, the mob, the centurion, and the converted thief. The messages and stories in each volume were emotional and pietistic, designed to convert unbelievers and move Christians to greater devotion.

In The Purposes of Calvary, which originated as a popular conference series, Rimmer covered the divine intention of the cross and atonement. He vigorously defended the doctrine of the substitutionary atonement and vicarious sufferings of Christ, which he said was anathema to "apostate theologians" and "false teachers" who proclaimed a "crossless Christ." In addition to individual regeneration, forgiveness, and salvation, Rimmer stressed the impact of the gospel on nations, and concluded with a treatment of the millennial rule of Christ and the eternal destiny of the saints. Rimmer was concerned about proper Christology, because it was a foundation for the proper theology of redemption.

Rimmer also touched on a number of Christological themes in From Cana to Calvary. Chapters on the deity of
Christ, the offer of salvation, communion, and the crucifixion were complemented by a long discussion of non-alcoholic wine at Cana. The purpose of the work was clearly evangelistic; Rimmer concluded by presenting the gospel message and asking "What will your decision be?"

Rimmer's fullest treatment of Christology was in The Magnificence of Jesus, which he considered his best work, the sixth and final volume of the Frost Memorial Library in 1943. Rimmer decided that this volume was necessary, because the true faith was "Christocentric: the true Christian is he who 'lifts up his eyes and sees Jesus only.' Christianity is Christ. To know him was life eternal." The work was designed as a basic textbook on the subject. Rimmer developed biblical themes of the pre-existence, virgin birth, and deity of Christ, the person of Christ, and the ministry of Christ as prophet, priest, and king. He stated, surprisingly, that while the "fact" of the virgin birth was essential for salvation, "faith" in the virgin birth was not necessary for one to be saved. Rimmer also extended his Bible challenge to his new topic, offering a thousand dollars for proof that Jesus Christ was ever guilty of a "selfish deed," or "mean or unworthy act," or ever harmed or hurt his fellow man. (Rimmer said he was so confident in his offer that he could have offered a billion dollars.)

Rimmer's evangelistic and devotional concern was also manifest in a very popular book on regeneration entitled
Flying Worms. As a doctor of science, he set out to investigate the phenomenon of the new birth. The book's title arose from a discussion over being "born again" with the head of the Biology Department at a secular college's "Religious Emphasis Week." Rimmer began by explaining Christ's command to be born again and the experiential aspects of conversion. He then illustrated the transformation of the sinner into a Christian with the metamorphosis of a worm into a flying butterfly. Rimmer frequently used "Flying Worms" on the conference circuit, and released the book in Spanish.

Rimmer's popularity as an evangelical leader and devotionalist is seen in The Golden Text For Today, a book of daily devotional readings for an entire year. Each essay was built around a biblical text, usually included one of Rimmer's pithy illustrations, and emphasized an "evangelical truth." The essays were compiled from Rimmer's weekly series on "The Golden Text" in The Bible Expositor and Illuminator. In addition to being a devotional guide, pastors and radio preachers used it as a guide for short homilies. His growing authority was also seen in Thats a Good Question, a book compiled from a program at John Brown's radio station, in which Rimmer responded to listeners' questions. Brown felt that Rimmer's "strong and interesting messages" should be "preserved and widely circulated" to future generations. By the end of his life, Rimmer was an old, respected
evangelist, whose comments were cherished by readers and listeners.

Fundamentalist Prophet

In the last decade of his life Rimmer spoke increasingly about national and international affairs. Emphasis on theological and devotional topics did not preclude involvement with earthly affairs. Rimmer focused on these issues largely because of his concern for the fulfillment of prophecy.

Rimmer, like most fundamentalists, was captivated by eschatology in the mid-twentieth century because of the apocalyptic nature of the two world wars, their blessed hope in the imminent return of Christ, and Zionistic expectations of the restoration of Israel. As staunch premillennialists, most lived "in the shadow of the Second Coming," awaited the sudden termination of the present age, and longed for the thousand year rule of Christ. Most felt vindicated by World War II; they had proclaimed the depravity of man, the foolishness of liberal aspirations for universal peace and brotherhood before Christ's
return, the collapse of the League of Nations, and the inevitability of wars, especially prior to the end of the age. Fundamentalists were keenly interested in the state of Israel, since they saw it as the prophetic key to understanding God's plan. According to their dispensational scenario, Christ, after "rapturing" the church out of the world, would re-establish the covenant with Israel, subject them to a seven year tribulation, and then include them in the golden age of the millennial kingdom. When Rimmer addressed the World Christian Fundamentals Association convention on "The Second Coming of Christ" in May, 1929, he predicted the restoration of Israel and the return of Christ before the end of the generation. He frequently lectured on prophetic topics during his conference tours after 1939, and became increasingly specific in his biblical predictions about the future.

Rimmer's concern for Israel and eschatology was encouraged by his trip to Palestine in 1938. As a correspondent for a Duluth newspaper, he explained that "it is the old, old story; the enemies of Israel are determined to drive the Jew from the land that is his own." Israel had a right to the land, he continued, not only because the Jews had been hounded across Europe and left without a refuge, but because "God gave it to Abraham and to his children, forever." Students of prophecy, Rimmer concluded, knew from the Bible that Israel would return to
Palestine in unbelief, and suffer persecution and distress before being rescued by the Messiah. He warned, however, about the "radical Jews" and "communists" who had immigrated to Palestine. They had rejected their ancient faith for the "wild doctrines" of "godless" communism and hence brought "dissension and strife." Immediately after returning to Duluth, he started a series of messages on pivotal nations in prophecy, such as Italy, Germany, Russia, and Egypt.

Rimmer's accentuated the critical role of Israel in prophecy in *Palestine, the Coming Storm Center* in 1940. He described the work of English Zionist leader Chaim Weizmann, the British promise in the Balfour Declaration to create a Jewish homeland, and General Allenby's liberation of Jerusalem in 1917. He warned about threats to Jewish security from English capitulation to Arab pressure, Mussolini's designs on Palestinian territory, and refugees from Germany and Russia who were "impregnated with higher criticism" and atheism. The tremendous mineral wealth of the Dead Sea, he predicted, would be the catalyst for a future invasion of Israel and the bloody battle at Hamon-Gog that would lead to Christ's return and the millennial kingdom. He later noted the irony that Hitler, who hated the Bible and the Jews, did more to create a Jewish nation than any one person. For Rimmer, then, Palestine was the geographical locus of God's future action with mankind.
In *The Coming League and the Roman Dream*, Rimmer deviated from standard dispensational interpretations of prophecy and developed his own predictions of the future. Many fundamentalist speakers had predicted that Mussolini was the anti-Christ, who, presiding over a resuscitated Roman empire and League of Ten Nations, would dominate the world. Rimmer felt that such Biblical interpretation was "sheer fantasy and wishful thinking," and was designed for the "idly curious" and the "wildly excitable masses," who loved the "lurid and the bizarre" and, with "itching ears," longed to hear that Hitler, Stalin, Mussolini, or Roosevelt was the anti-Christ. Since the rapture was associated with the coming of this anti-Christ, Rimmer felt that fundamentalist leaders, eager for the Lord's return, had too quickly dubbed "Busted Benny" the anti-Christ.

Rimmer's innovative interpretation of the role of Italy in prophecy was very controversial, but showed his deep commitment to the Bible, rather than traditional interpretations. Rimmer admitted that he believed in the "Roman League" theory for twenty years because of his "unlimited confidence" in "great and godly" Bible teachers who had presented it. After personal study in the late thirties, however, he realized that he believed that doctrine only because it "was a footnote in my favorite edition of a study Bible." His repudiation of the theory created a "storm," a "tempest," and brought the "unlimited censure" of prominent Bible teachers. "Ultra-super-
fundamentalists" called him every name, he recalled, and "Modernist was the least of these!" Brandon Rimmer even claimed that BIOLA purged his father's books from their library because of Rimmer's eschatological change. Rimmer explained, though, that since modernists were guilty of "cowardice" and "deliberate deceit" for persisting in teaching errors after they were proven wrong, that no fundamentalist should practice the same "reprehensible conduct." During the height of the controversy, he explained to his wife:

I needs must teach what I believe the Word states. When a preacher or teacher finds out he has been mistaken in his premise, and has spent twenty years arguing for what isn't so, he is fundamentally dishonest if he doesn't admit it. That is what we blame modernists and evolutionists for!

With Italy's defeat, Rimmer felt vindicated and triumphantly suggested that "the majority of American prophetic teachers are going to have to quit business, I'm afraid, now that the ex-anti Christ Mussolini has followed his paper Roman Empire into the wastebasket!" His repudiation of the "Roman theory," which Rimmer saw as an example of courageous fidelity to God's Word, enhanced his reputation as a prophetic commentator, especially after his various eschatological works were collected in The Shadow of Coming Events in 1946.

Instead of a Roman league, Rimmer argued, scripture warned of a Russian controlled league that would dominate the world and attempt to destroy Israel. The Coming War
and the Rise of Russia in 1940 confirmed Rimmer's status as a leading fundamentalist interpreter of prophecy. For ten years he had warned that the recent world war was imminent, he said, though it had brought "persecution," "scornful derogation," and a reputation for being "backward" and "reactionary." He recalled the "Pollyanna psychology" of the "starry-eyed intellectuals," who trusted the League of Nations and the Kellogg Pact, believed that "civilised nations" would never again have war, and were totally unprepared for the conflict. Rimmer predicted another war, and hoped that, this time, people would be ready. Using Ezekiel 37 and 38 and other texts, Rimmer predicted a future war in which Russia and its Balkan (Armenia), African (Ethiopia and Lybia), and Persian (Iran) allies would fight against Israel. Russia, he argued, not England, Italy, or Germany, would be the new world power, head of a new League of Nations, supplying a universal dictator. In addition to biblical prophecies about Tubal, Meshech and the northern kingdom, he stated that Russia was "definitely dedicated to atheism," was the "official center of an organized hatred of all that represents God and His will," and was "determined to go on that way to the inevitable end." According to the prophecy, he claimed, the battle between Russia and Israel would be fought with wood and rubber weapons (modern technology would make metal weapons obsolete), and would conclude with Christ's return. With this understanding of prophecy, early in the war he
predicted an English victory and fulfillment of the Balfour Declaration, war between Germany and Russia, who did not trust each other and would soon "stab and rob the other," the destruction of Italy, and the enhanced power and prestige of Russia, which would emerge with "her hands filled with the spoils of war and her teeth gripped like a bulldog on new territories."

The success of his predictions pleased Rimmer and impressed his contemporaries. In 1986 two fundamentalist historians gave Rimmer as a prime example of a Bible scholar who "correctly discerned the meaning of the Scriptures, and forecast future events with mind-boggling accuracy." When his prediction of the defeat of Italy and the emergence of Russia as the foremost enemy of the United States and Israel proved correct, the authors continued, "Rimmer's standing in the evangelical community rose tremendously."

In outlining his eschatology, Rimmer was torn between two conflicting desires and theological commitments. He was committed, first, to the blessed hope of Christ's return. All human, earthly endeavors were destined to fail, since, for Rimmer, true peace and righteousness could only come in the millennial reign of Christ. On the other hand, Rimmer believed strongly in the transforming power of the gospel. As one who had seen bowery drunks saved and rehabilitated through grace, he also felt that nations and cultures could be renewed by Christianity.
In *The Ultimate Triumph of Jesus Christ*, Rimmer stressed human limitations and the hope of the millennium. Though the Kingdom of Heaven was "frustrated," "obviated," and "wrecked" at the crucifixion, its promise of a "literal throne" and an "earthly kingdom" had to be fulfilled. Relegating these kingdom promises to the church age, Rimmer insisted, was "sheer nonsense." The roar of the "blood-thirsty" and the "meat-hungry," such as the lion which was to lie down with the lamb, he continued, "can never be silenced by the preaching of the Gospel and the conversion of individual men." Christ came the first time to die for man's sins; the second coming was to establish the Kingdom of Heaven. Hostility, troubles, and wars would continue and increase, he concluded, "until Christ returns to change everything in one clean sweep." In a 1943 work on *Straight Ahead Lies Yesterday*, Rimmer contended that Christians were to evangelize, "not make pacifists of all the races!", adding that Jesus warned that "the earth would never know a warless age or generation of peace until his return." He later used *The Ultimate Triumph of Jesus Christ* as the framework for "The Coming King," the concluding chapter in *The Shadow of Coming Events*. He argued again that scripture promised a "literal, physical, earthly kingdom. Arguments about a "spiritual kingdom" in which people gradually yielded to Christ were "comical," he argued, and figurative interpretations of prophecy were but "cowardly subterfuge." Noting that there would always be
Hitlers, Mussolinis, and Stalins, Rimmer concluded that "our only hope is the **blessed** hope that Christ will return."

Though looking toward Christ's return, Rimmer believed that the Christian message could improve the conditions in the world and United States. At times, his message even sounded similar to the Social Gospel. He attacked, for instance, the "false charge" that "Christians are so concerned with the souls of men that they have neither time nor desire to do anything for their physical welfare."

After noting the charitable works of Christians throughout history, Rimmer argued that since Christ died for the "whole man," salvation was "progressive in its application and manifestations." Advocates of the "so-called 'social gospel'," he added in another piece, have been vociferous critics of orthodox Christians and evangelistic outreach, charging that they are too concerned about their own salvation to help others, and only promise that "You'll eat pie in the sky, bye and bye." Insisting that this was rarely, if ever, true, Rimmer documented the amazing, challenging, and matchless record of evangelical Christians, who had sacrificially poured out "uncountable millions of treasure for the redemption of mankind."

Though a critic of the "social service" Christianity which neglected evangelism, then, Rimmer affirmed the mission of the Church in helping the needy.

Rimmer also believed that the Gospel could encourage world peace. He was critical of political and bureaucratic
attempts to secure peace, believing that organizations such as the League of Nations and the United Nations were naive, corrupt, and destined to fail. Though war-weary world governments frantically searched for ways to abolish war, and spent million of dollars on programs, treaties, and organizations to bring peace, Rimmer explained, they turned against the only true solution to conflict:

And the one plan that cannot fail they will not even consider: Win the world to Christ, evangelize all races of men everywhere and our troubles would be ended. No man or group who truly loved God could hate and destroy his fellow men. The tragedy of the situation is apparent to all true Christians. The cost of one battleship, if spent in aggressive evangelism, would change the entire psychology and outlook of the Japanese race—the same amount which was spent for the development of the atomic bomb would change the entire current of future history, if it was invested in the salvation of the souls of men.

Rimmer repeatedly mentioned how the failure of evangelism affected Japan. Because liberal missionaries educated the Japanese in science, mechanics, technology, and military arts, but left them "completely pagan in religion," Rimmer said, "all we got for our pains was Pearl Harbor! We can credit modernism with at least two wars in our generation." Noting that you cannot redeem the Devil's "dupes" with the "three R's—only the blood of Christ," he insisted that if missionaries had preached Christ, "Japan would have been converted and the war would have been avoided." His program to bring peace to hostile Yaruba, Ibo, and Hausa tribes in Nigeria in 1948 was also rejected; Rimmer recalled that though "I suggested to various leaders that
they get together and submit to Jesus Christ, they refused to listen!" Noting elsewhere that when men were at peace with God, they would not go war to each other, he argued that the secret to improving worldly affairs was "to get right with heaven, then all earthly relations will automatically adjust themselves." Rimmer occasionally sounded more postmillennial than premillennial, as when he offered an "unfailing formula" for world peace and progress: "Let all peoples make the Lord THEIR God—and blessing will flood the earth from pole to pole." Though he usually maintained that peace was illusionary and wars inevitable until the Second Coming of Christ, Rimmer also believed, paradoxically, that the world could be improved through Christian evangelism.

Rimmer, like many fundamentalists, also equivocated on the possibility of national renewal. According to their theological system, the current age would end in the apostacy which preceded the Second Coming. Because of their confidence in the power of regeneration, however, they also believed that individuals and nations could be changed. In Straight Ahead Lies Yesterday, for example, Rimmer described the national, moral failure of Rome, Germany, and France, and warned that the United States would pursue the same path. He explained in detail the problems in France (his favorite example of a debased country): race suicide, love of pleasure, alcoholism, syphilis, self indulgence, contempt for authority,
atheism, labor agitation, and Sabbath desecration. The United States, he warned, was in a "desperate spiritual state," since there was "growing apostasy in its churches" and a "drift into mass unrighteousness." As a nation of "apostates and idolators" who were sodden with liquor, he continued, America was no longer a "Christian nation." Yet Rimmer was not pessimistic: he emphasized the hope of renewal and offered the choice of "revival or ruin," saying "let us for once make a wise decision; in confession of our sins and return to God there is a cure for our national ills." In another essay, Rimmer challenged his countrymen with "true patriotism: Keep America Christian, and God shall keep her great!" Even when predicting the rise of Russia and its eventual mastery of the world, according to his prophetic scenario, Rimmer still believed, almost inconsistently, that the United States could be revived and maintain a position of world prominence. Because of that conviction, Rimmer increasingly emphasized the theme of civic righteousness.

During the forties Rimmer frequently wrote about political topics. Earlier in his career, he had made friends with political leaders, such as Georgia governor Lamartine Hardman and Los Angeles mayor John Porter, and alluded to political issues in his works. Brandon Rimmer said that his father had many political connections in the Bible Belt and friends on the Congressional Military Affairs Committee. According to Mignon Rimmer, he met
Herbert Hoover, converted a Michigan senator, and twice offered the invocation for the United States Senate. Though Rimmer was a Republican, he was comfortable with conservatives in both parties. While his early comments on politics were restricted to moral and social issues, his interest in political issues escalated during World War II, and he increasingly addressed broader political problems.

Because of the war, Rimmer was passionately committed to the issue of national strength and preparedness. In wartime works on Straight Ahead Lies Yesterday and Christianity and Modern Crises he emphasized the need for national defense, urged strong support for United States allies, and attacked pacifists. Believing that many pacifists were naive and unrealistic, Rimmer described the "visionary projects" of the "dwellers in Wonderland." Other pacifists, he said, motivated by un-Christian and anti-American ideas and prompted by liberalism and communism, were guilty of treason, for deliberately undermining the war effort and softening the American will. After threatening to fight and chasing off a Jehovah's Witness, who was passing out anti-war literature at his soldiers' center, Rimmer proved to his own satisfaction that "their so-called 'pacifism' is predicated on physical cowardice." He warned about Russian post-war expansion, especially in Finland and the Baltic Republics, but, surprisingly, encouraged giving the Soviet Union all the territory it lost in World War I as a way of preventing
further conflict. Convinced that the United States had abandoned China earlier, Rimmer emphasized the need for future support and an end to British colonialism in Hong Kong. Though some of his specific suggestions were surprising, Rimmer's main emphasis was on the failure of appeasement diplomacy and the need for patriotism and national readiness.

Rimmer was a fiscal conservative, who mistrusted Roosevelt and spoke against government intervention in the economy. He criticized federal deficits, increased government spending and the departure from the gold standard, and blasted the destruction of agricultural products as immoral. After debunking "government paternalism" and the desire to save the world by "tinkering with details," Rimmer said that, if he were president, he would not try to amend, rescind, or annul the Law of Supply and Demand. During the 1940 Bible trial, he declared that insects could take care of themselves on the ark, not needing any "new deal" to preserve their rights or provide their nourishment or occupation. He spoke contemptuously of "international New Dealers" as well. Rimmer characterized Roosevelt as a "sophist," who bought the votes of "mendicants" and appealed to "special interests and mass opinion," rather than principles of right and wrong. He did not present any systematic work on economic problems, however, and delivered most of these comments as illustrations on other topics.
Rimmer also dedicated his attention to labor unions and labor agitation during the war. He thought that many of the strikes during the Depression were foolish and ill-advised. During the war, however, strikes seemed treasonous, and Rimmer denounced them in harsh terms. That laborers demanded forty-hour work weeks while boys were fighting on the front and dying for lack of needed material was, to Rimmer, inexcusable. Since he felt that they did not require members to work hard and earn their pay, Rimmer also thought that unions were guilty of theft and were, hence, immoral. Fearing that unions were growing too powerful because of government pampering and favoritism, Rimmer decried the "arbitrary despotism" of union bosses. His greatest concern was that communists had taken over the movement and were manipulating unions. In an essay on "The Church and Organized Labor," Rimmer tried to offer a positive solution to these problems. Noting that he had been a union member, Rimmer said that the church should evangelize the "laboring masses," and that there was something wrong with the church that was not filled with working people. He argued, further, that unions were indebted to the church, since unions were not allowed in non-Christian or totalitarian countries. Rimmer suggested cooperation between the church and labor, and proposed a workers' church named "The Church of Jesus Christ the Carpenter." Though his proposal was simplistic and unsuccessful, these essays demonstrate Rimmer's desire to
address current problems, his concern with radicalism in America, and his genuine affection for common people.

Rimmer also spoke out on racial problems during the war. He had continually stressed that the gospel was color-blind. Rimmer maintained that God's family was open to all races, and that Christians were obligated to love all brothers and sisters in Christ regardless of "race, color, economic status or place of birth or residence." He explained this theological point further in a devotional essay in *The Golden Text For Today*:

Honor [is] due all men since we are made of one blood and one substance. Differences in color, the shape of the eyes, or the texture of the hair cannot alter the fact that no group of the human family is made more in the image of God than is every other group. We are all His creatures. The nation that believed this and practiced it would have no problem of racial minorities, and the rights of one group would never be denied to advance the interests of a more favored company.

Rimmer believed that this equality before God should also be present in the nation. Though he bitterly criticized Japan during the war, he lauded the unexcelled bravery of Japanese-American soldiers, and explained that "Their parents came from Japan, ours from Europe, but we agree that our land is well worth defending." Specifically mentioning the problems in Detroit, Rimmer said that Blacks did not receive economic or social justice in any section of America, were "given only such jobs as the lordly white man does not covet," had their income kept below the level of the average white worker in the same category, and were
forced into the less desirable sections of our cities. For a nation to be truly Christian, Rimmer implied, it must recognize the dignity of all people.

As an elder statesman of fundamentalism, then, Rimmer touched on national and international issues in the last years of his life. He was concerned about world events, because they seemed to be point to the Second Coming of Christ. His accurate, though controversial, predictions about the future enhanced his reputation as a biblical scholar. His works on national problems were both conventional, in stressing national strength, the menace of communism, and the threat of unions, and, in fundamentalist circles, innovative, for stressing racial equality and criticizing discriminatory practices in the United States. In all of these discussions, Rimmer struggled with a theological tension about social change. He believed that all earthly efforts were destined to fail, since true peace would only come with the Messiah's return. On the other hand, he believed that the Christian message of redemption offered hope for individuals, nations, and the world. In all of these works, Rimmer was a fundamentalist prophet, both by predicting the future and speaking with authority on the problems of the day.
Ecumenical Missionary

In the last decade of his life, Rimmer continued his "peripatetic" ministry. In addition to conference work and student evangelism, he engaged in military evangelism during the war and traveled abroad in support of foreign missions. He also drifted away from formal denominational ties. The missions he supported were independent. He urged cooperative evangelical ventures, first for mission work, and then in informal, ecumenical associations. Though his theology and evangelistic emphases remained the same as earlier in his career, he was more eager to interact with other conservatives, distanced himself from separatistic fundamentalists, and embraced the growing evangelical movement.

Throughout the forties, Rimmer held meetings at college and university campuses. Having resigned from the pastorate to return to student evangelism, he visited universities such as Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Texas Tech, Louisiana State, and Tulane. At Northwestern, where, according to Mignon Rimmer, he converted a physics professor with his presentation on "Lot's Wife and the Science of Physics." Lot's Wife, his only scientific work during the period, was written specifically for college
After United States entry into World War II, Rimmer frequently traveled to army and navy bases around the country. In 1942 he totally dedicated himself to military work, starting a servicemen's center in the first half of the year and, from August to December, traveling to various posts. By 1943, he claimed that he had spoken at camps in thirty-six states, and helped start five evangelistic centers for soldiers. He was a popular speaker, for, as one soldier who heard him in Buffalo recalled, the men were "wild to hear him." Rimmer was serious about his work, since converting soldiers could be a matter of life and death. After he told a Buffalo audience about how special white-bound New Testaments were distributed to soldiers at Pearl Harbor, enabling them to be saved prior to the attack, a man brought Rimmer one of those blood-stained Testaments at the conclusion of the service, saying it had been taken from the bullet-ridden body of his son.

The most visible part of Rimmer's military evangelism was his work at Morning Cheer, a servicemen's center in Wrightstown, New Jersey near Camp Dix. The project was begun by George Palmer, a Philadelphia evangelist, who sought Rimmer's advice, since he had done this type of work in World War I. Rimmer stayed at Morning Cheer for seven months after its dedication in January, 1942, supervising building renovation, program development, fund raising, and the daily operation. Built for a maximum capacity of 250
men, the center frequently attracted a thousand guests, including a record crowd of 1163. Rimmer had two objectives: to provide a clean Christian atmosphere for relaxation and recreation, and to win soldiers to Christ and eternal life before they went to "the battlefields of the world." The center's motto was "Everything Free--Including the Gospel," and everything, including food, books, and postage stamps, was provided free of charge to the soldiers. Rimmer commented on the "galloping consumption" of the men and described supplies used in one, typical day: 146 cakes, 200 dozen donuts, 800 cookies, 102 pounds of coffee, 300 pounds of sugar, two crates of oranges, three bushels of apples, forty cans of milk, and twenty-six pounds of candy. The center included a coffee room, writing room, lounge, library, which included "several thousand" books in Moody Colportage series and Rimmer's complete works, a gymnasium, and a playground. In addition to large donations of money, food, and baked goods, the center depended on volunteer help; Rimmer said that his "MOMS" were as vital to the war effort as the WACS, WAVES, or WAAFS. Rimmer held evangelistic services twice a week, vespers services each evening, and a Bible classes for new converts, in which Rimmer distributed and taught soldiers to study Scofield Bibles. Approximately 2,000 men were converted during Rimmer's tenure, including Indians, Catholics, Jews, and drunks (he said that only nine inebriated soldiers entered the center, and seven were
converted before they left). In Miracles at Morning Cheer, the story of the center, Rimmer mentioned dramatic conversions, including one man who was converted a half hour before his death, another who launched a revival in a Methodist church in Iowa with a letter containing his moving testimony, and even a Modernist chaplain. The center was so successful that Rimmer helped organize other centers, including a smaller Morning Cheer center in Philadelphia. The Morning Cheer center was an excellent example of Rimmer's wholistic style of evangelism; it tried to help soldiers by offering them a decent environment, an alternative to bars, and, ultimately, the gospel.

Rimmer's concern for foreign missions led to two African trips in 1948 and 1949. Much of the four months of his first tour in Africa in 1948 was dedicated to hunting; in addition to hippos, buffalos, and innumerable small game, Rimmer shot five elephants. He also led evangelistic services, conducted meetings for missionaries, taught the natives. He addressed 250 Nigerian nationals, for instance, by request, on "Philosophy, Science, and Revelation." The trip was tremendously important for Rimmer. In the introduction to The Fire Inside, for example, Mignon Rimmer described her husband's experience of explaining the cosmos to African natives as the fulfillment of his "life-long dream." Kathryn Rimmer Braswell explained that "Africa was the nearest thing to heaven on earth, and to see it and hunt in it while he was
doing the Lord's work was the greatest thrill of his life."

From July through September, 1949, Rimmer worked with Charles Trout at a leprosarium in the Belgian Congo, bringing funds, clothing, medicines, and medical equipment to aid the work. Rimmer took extensive films, which he showed around the United States on subsequent trips. The African trips demonstrated his dual commitment to evangelism and humanitarian relief.

Rimmer was also concerned about conditions in Latin America. In September, 1946, Rimmer conducted special services in the Panama Canal Zone. He was treated as a great celebrity by the governor, feted by the heads of the United States Army and Navy, and did lots of fishing. The trip was fruitful, as two of his converts went into missionary service. Rimmer continued to Ecuador, where he was to speak over the famous missionary radio station HCJB. He was moved by the poverty in the country and decided to raise money for a hospital. He purchased land for the facility, publicized the need, and raised funds throughout the United States until the time of his death. The Rimmer Memorial Hospital was dedicated in Quito, Ecuador in 1955, and still functions as a large teaching hospital. Rimmer also tried to reach Latin Americans through his publications. A Brazilian man told Rimmer that he had read three of his works in Portuguese before coming to the United States. Rimmer dedicated conference honoraria to translating *Flying Worms* into Spanish (he ultimately
Rimmer used a number of associations, contacts, and organs for encouraging missions work. His most important contact was the Baptist evangelist George Palmer, who, in addition to supervising the Morning Cheer Servicemen's Center, Tent Campaign, and Bookstore, hosted the Morning Cheer radio program, a daily radio broadcast. Rimmer first appeared on the program in February, 1947, to describe the conditions in Ecuador and to raise money; he returned each February thereafter to continue the project. Morning Cheer contributors donated money for the hospital, books, and medical missionaries. Rimmer also worked with John Brown's missions-oriented organizations, doing radio programs for the Brown stations and serving on the Board of Directors of John Brown University from 1945 to 1952. He also served as a director of the Voice of the Andes Radio Station (HCJB) in Quito. Using contacts at his many Bible, youth, and missionary conferences to support foreign works, he increasingly relied upon informal evangelical associations.

Rimmer was very critical of liberal ecumenical ventures. Fears of bureaucratic despotism probably made him cautious about mainline organizations and led him to sharply criticize the "ecumenical church." He published The Last of the Giants, which had a fierce anti-authoritarian tone, in 1948. More important was his concern
for true doctrine. He warned that the Federal Council of Churches had rejected the doctrine of regeneration and predicted disaster for the modern church if it joined the Federal Council. Rimmer did not oppose attempts at ecumenism itself, only those ecumenical unions which endangered his fundamentals of the faith.

Throughout his career Rimmer had emphasized broad cooperation and had denounced "denominationalism." Explaining that Christians were part of a family, he described the Cain's murder of Abel as the "first 'denominational' argument." His concern for Christian unity was manifest in a warning that "schisms in the body of Christ are spiritual cancer!" He noted in 1950 that in the previous year he had spoken in churches in twenty different denominations, and was even listed as a minister in five different denominations. He cared so little about labels, he said, that he did not bother to correct the erroneous statements about his affiliation.

Rimmer's commitment to Christian unity and cooperation blossomed into membership in early evangelical associations. In the early thirties, for instance, Rimmer toured with the New England Fellowship, the first evangelical association to gain national recognition, and described it in glowing terms. He was one of the 147 original signers of the National Association of Evangelical's organizational charter in 1942. The N.A.E. attempted to be a constructive, visionary, evangelical
organization, not reactionary or negative, as was often charged against the American Council of Churches, an organization of strict, separatistic denominations, formed in 1941. Rimmer was in full accord with the doctrinal statement of the N.A.E., which emphasized both the fundamentals (biblical infallibility, the trinity, the deity, virgin birth, miracles, vicarious atonement, resurrection and second coming of Christ, necessity of regeneration, indwelling of the Holy Spirit, resurrections to eternal life or damnation, and the spiritual unity of believers) and Christian unity. In doing so, Rimmer distanced himself from the strict fundamentalists who felt that the N.A.E. and the "new evangelicalism" had compromised the integrity of the faith, and became an advocate of evangelical ecumenism.

Rimmer returned to his original concerns with missions and evangelism in the last decade of his life. He continued to lecture on science, drew publicity, and expanded his influence as a creationist, but did little new work, and was sustained by his original reputation. He increasingly moved into pietistic, devotional and theological topics. Rimmer also developed a reputation as a prophet, because of largely successful, biblical predictions about the course of the war and his concern with civic righteousness. His interest in informal cooperative ventures and fundamentalist ecumenism bore fruit in the N.A.E. Rimmer concluded his career in the
same way he began it—as an itinerant evangelist. Perhaps most importantly, he was able to fulfill his original dream of being a African missionary, both by touring the dark continent and raising support for foreign missions. Though Rimmer had no major apologetic issue, and, as Brandon Rimmer suggests, lost influence within his denomination and the broader public, Rimmer's influence and reputation within evangelical circles grew during his last decade, as he became an evangelical statesman.

According to Mignon Rimmer, the theme for Rimmer's early ministry was II Corinthians 5:17, which proclaimed that in Christ all men are new creatures and "all things became new." That concern for regeneration, conversion, and the "new birth" characterized his entire ministry. As an anti-evolutionist and creationist, he also stressed that in God's creative work, "all things were made new." Finally, in eschewing the bickering and schisms that characterized early fundamentalism, and emphasizing the spiritual unity of conservative Christians, he was a harbinger of and spokesman for a new form of uncompromising, yet cooperative evangelicalism.

Harry Rimmer died at home on March 19, 1952. He had been ill in the last months of his life, and finally succumbed to lung cancer. The fundamentalist community grieved over his death. Of the bundles of letters and sympathy cards she received, Mignon Rimmer recalled one which read: "We have been accustomed to see him standing
like David, between us and the enemies of God's Word—never wavering, always courageous and articulate." One of his last projects was to write a moving and often-quoted article about heaven, in which he described going through the Valley of the Shadow, and arriving in the land he had waited so long to see. For Harry Rimmer, finally, all things became new.
ENDNOTES

CHAPTER ONE: THE MAKING OF A FUNDAMENTALIST, 1890-1917

1. For references to the Rimmer's 1940 trial, see footnotes 2-20 in chapter 6.


3. C. Brandon Rimmer, Harry (Carol Stream, Illinois: Creation House, 1973; Originally published as In the Fullness of Time, Berne, Indiana: Berne Witness Company, 1948.), pp. 17, 33. Harry is the fullest account of Rimmer's early life. Though it is a fictionalized biography, Brandon Rimmer based it on interviews with his father and tried to be as accurate as possible. See C. Brandon Rimmer, Taped Interview with Ronald Numbers, Panorama City, California, 15 May 1984. In the Fullness of Time was written as a biography, while the fictional nature of Harry is noted by name changes (e.g. Rimmer/Rogers, Stubbs/Stone). He said "Other names and personality details have been altered as well, but the incidents are true and the character of Harry is as close to life as I can make it." (p. 10.) Joaquin Murieta, a semi-fictional, Robin Hood type character, and his partner Three-fingered Jack were killed by Texas Rangers in 1853, who, to collect the California legislature's reward, removed and pickled in whiskey the head and hand of the respective bandits. These body parts were taken on world tour, including a stop in Rimmer's boyhood Stockton, until they were lost in the San Francisco earthquake of 1906. See W. Eugene Hollon, Frontier Violence: Another Look (N.Y.: Oxford University Press, 1974), pp. 68-70; Irving Stone, Men to Watch My Mountains: The Opening of the Far West, 1840-1900 (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1956), p. 160. Robert Vine argues that the abused and mistreated Murieta, who took revenge on his oppressors, was an excellent symbol for frustrated California Mexicans. See Robert Vine, The American West: An Interpretation (Boston: Little and Brown, 1972), pp. 212-214. Murieta may also have been a symbol for Rimmer who grew up in an abusive home. Though Rimmer remembered the Murieta myth, he incorrectly believed that Three-fingered Jack was alive during his childhood. See also Brandon Rimmer, Harry, pp. 30, 33, 36, 41. The outlaw's
death had been a suicide. It is hard to determine if these events really occurred, or if they were a product of Rimmer's fertile imagination. Even if the events did not occur, they still are important since Rimmer used them to define the nature of his childhood environment.

4. Brandon Rimmer, *Harry*, pp. 47-50; and Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside: The Harry Rimmer Story* (Berne, Indiana: Publisher's Printing House, 1968.), p. 200. Written and compiled by Rimmer's wife, *The Fire Inside* is the most complete biography of Rimmer's life. Though it is often unreliable and difficult to follow, the book is valuable for tracing a chronology of Rimmer's career and including excerpts from his correspondence. Mignon Rimmer claims to have had nearly ten thousand letters from her husband over a forty year span (*The Fire Inside*, foreword), but she destroyed it after finishing completing the biography (Telephone interview with C. Brandon Rimmer, 11 December 1986). At one point Rimmer supported his family by shooting game birds and wholesaling them to markets. Kathryn Rimmer Braswell, "Harry Rimmer--Defender of the Faith," *The Sunday School Times* 95 (April, 1953): 263.

5. Duluth News Herald (an undated clipping), Biographical file, Duluth Public Library, Duluth, Minnesota. Though the collection included guns from all periods of American history, weapons from the western frontier were especially prominent, such as a .50 caliber Buffalo gun (like those used by Buffalo Bill), Pony Express revolvers, Colt revolvers used by, and presented to him by, Texas Rangers, and the type of firearms used by railroad bandits. Rimmer admitted that this might seem like a "queer hobby" for a minister. The Chicago gangster, Lou Hill, went on to become a revival preacher after his conversion. Rimmer said he hoped to do more gun collecting on a forthcoming trip to Europe [1936]. The weapons that he collected there were important enough that the purchases made news back in the states. See Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, pp. 241, 248. For Rimmer's early fascination with guns, see Brandon Rimmer, *Harry*, p. 20. While in Duluth, Rimmer and his son (probably Duncan) were championship skeet shooters. Interview with Paul Hendricks, Brainerd, Minnesota (March 19, 1987).

6. Brandon Rimmer, "Interview with Ronald Numbers." Harry Rimmer refused to see his impromptu surgery as an act of bravery. He said, "You'll do anything to live."


11. "Harry Rimmer," *National Cyclopaedia of National Biography* (N.Y.: James T. White, 1956.), 41:21. I have been unable to confirm Rimmer's boxing title, since his name doesn't appear in standard boxing references. See Bert Randolph Sugar, ed., *The Ring: Record Book and Boxing Encyclopaedia* (N.Y.: Atheneum, 1981). The title was probably an unofficial title for army boxers. Brannon Rimmer says that he was listed as the former Welterweight Champion of the Coast Artillery" for his first professional bout, but doesn't mention a professional championship. See Brandon Rimmer, *Harry*, p. 228. Such titles are easily confused and magnified. Mrs. Rimmer notes that Harry Rimmer won the John Renstrom trophy at the Swedish Club marathon in San Francisco in 1911. See Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, p. 169. Brandon Rimmer, however, remembered that his father held a world record in the marathon but was prevented from running in the Olympics because he was a professional boxer. See Brandon Rimmer, "Interview with Ronald Numbers."

12. *Billings Gazette*, April 13, 1923; April 22, 1923. Rimmer was not an Olympic boxer in 1919, and it is impossible to know if the responsibility for this wild claim rests with Rimmer, the Y.M.C.A. promotional committee, or a newspaper error. The Belgian Olympics occurred in 1920, and Rimmer is not listed among the United States welterweight representatives. See *New York Times* August 23, 1920, 13:6. Some three million soldiers did participate in army sponsored boxing clinics during World War I, and some of these fighters went on to the Olympics. See *New York Times* May 11, 1919, 11:4:5. It is possible that Rimmer, since he was working on military bases during the War, participated in some of the clinics and perhaps even in some Olympic trials (though his professional status should have disqualified him). It is possible that he was offered $10,000 to continue fighting, but it is unlikely. In any event, by 1919 Rimmer had already been preaching for at least five years.


in his 50s) to a bout, but realized after a few seconds that he was no match for a professional. See Brandon Rimmer, Interview with Ronald Numbers.


17. Ibid., pp. 181-185.


21. Ibid., p. 171. The secretary to whom he was dictating the article had written "crowbar" instead of "claymore." Rimmer remarked that his ancestors were Scottish, not Irish.


24. Brandon Rimmer, Harry, pp. 22, 24, 56. The account of Rimmer's early childhood is only available in this, fictionalized account. Since Brandon Rimmer interviewed his father before writing the book, it reflects Rimmer's own memories of childhood. Where quotes are attributed to Rimmer in the book, I have followed suit, though they may only be Brandon Rimmer's reconstructions of his father's memories.

25. Ibid., p. 151. Mrs Rimmer notes that Rimmer never knew his own father, and "was subjected to a lack of love and even cruelties of a stepfather." Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside Manuscript, Muntz Papers, (CN 108, Box 2, File 1), p. 72; Billy Graham Center Archives, Wheaton, Illinois. This is one of the few manuscript passages edited out of the book, The Fire Inside.

27. Ibid., pp. 14, 40, 187. This sister, Elvira, is a fictitious character. See Brandon Rimmer, interview with Ronald Numbers. She was probably a composite figure for the many siblings that Rimmer did have. Since Brandon Rimmer tried to recreate the atmosphere of the family, I have assumed that while no Elvira experienced these things, the experiences described were reflective of the family's problems.

28. Ibid., p. 73. This sister was married at age 14 to remove her from the home because of the way the stepfather "studied" her. Rimmer's mother felt that "early marriage was the lesser of two evils."

29. Ibid., p. 33.

30. Ibid., pp. 22, 56.


32. Ibid., pp. 172, 175, 179.

33. Ibid., pp. 121, 124, 130, 205.

34. Ibid., pp. 185-186.

35. Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, p. 26. See also Brandon Rimmer, *Harry*, p. 254, where Rimmer dramatically eschewed the chance of revenge because of his new faith. In a later interview Brandon Rimmer said that the stepfather died about the time of Rimmer's conversion, but that he left him alive in *Harry* for dramatic effect. Brandon Rimmer, interview with Ronald Numbers.


37. Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, p. 28. She said that "Harry was not person whose life was characterized by long periods of indecision. He was more likely to run ahead of God's leading, than to run behind, once convinced that he had it."

38. Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside Manuscript*, Muntz Papers, (CN 188, Box 2, File 1), p. 51. Mrs. Rimmer told a group of Y.M.C.A. boys that "Before I married Harry Rimmer he used to write me about fantastic episodes and adventures which were constantly happening to him. I didn't believe them but thought he made them up just to amuse me. . . . But now I know they happen because I've experienced them with him." This is one of the few manuscript passages edited out of the book. Brandon Rimmer further notes that
that "there is something irresistible about the personality of young Harry." Brandon Rimmer, Harry, p. 10, 174.


40. For an account of Rimmer's antics, see Interview with Paul Diehl, Duluth, Minnesota, 17 March 1987: Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside Manuscript, Muntz Papers, (CNI08, Box 2, File 1), p. 38, and The Fire Inside, pp. 1, 26, 28, 43.

41. A person close to the family, who offered many insightful comments on Rimmer's life, influence, and work, suggested that Rimmer was basically an insecure person. I have not identified the source of the comment because this person, like some of the others interviewed, was reluctant to make negative comments and asked not to be identified.


43. Brandon Rimmer, Harry, p. 248.

44. Ibid., p. 258. This idea is even clearer in the original title, In the Fullness of Time. The book closes with the story of Rimmer's conversion and resolution to enter the ministry. The closing line is: "In the fullness of time, God sent His son." Though the meaning of the passage is ambiguous, since "son" is not capitalized, it can be understood as "Harry Rimmer finds a father."


46. See interviews with Florence Nelson, Stuart Sikkink, and Curtis Sanford, Hinckley, Minnesota 17 March 1987. Rimmer was in Hinckley for a series of Monday night meetings in the 1930s. They were impressed that Rimmer, something of a celebrity, was friendly and felt at home with the common people of this small, farming community. They remembered his kindness because, at the conclusion of the services he contributed his (large) honorarium to start a manse fund for the church. They remembered his clothes because Rimmer didn't have time to change out of his hunting clothes for one session. Paul Hendricks, a close friend of Rimmer, was pastor at Hinckley at the time.
47. Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, pp. 78, 189. Even in difficult circumstances, she notes that his equilibrium was restored by "the overflowing optimism which was part of his nature" and "his deep abiding trust that 'all things work together for good'."

48. Letter from Jean Macrae, 18 March 1897. After the interview Miss Macrae added extra comments in this letter, which especially highlighted Rimmer's "delightful, lovely, sparkling sense of humor."

49. Brandon Rimmer, Interview with Ronald Numbers. He gave the example of a Denver debate he attended in about 1933 where his father debated the president of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism. Rimmer's opponent said that if they were to stick to the Biblical data on the ark, he would win the debate. Since there was no mention of a manure chute, there was no way to eliminate wastes. Rimmer responded by saying that by paying close attention to the Genesis account, he would win the debate. The Bible said that the ark had three sides and a roof, but doesn't say it had a bottom. "And if you don't have a bottom, you don't need a manure chute." Rimmer's response "brought down the house," and swung the audience to his side.

50. Telephone Interview with Kathryn Rimmer Braswell, 25 June 1988. Though Brandon is more critical of the family, most of his animosity is directed toward his mother, and differences with his father were mostly over religion. Brandon seemed to have enjoyed his father's company. See Brandon Rimmer, Interview with Ronald Numbers. Mrs. Rimmer said that "Because he never knew his own father, and ... was subjected to a lack of love and even cruelties of a stepfathers, he showered his own children with constant attention. ..." Mignon Rimmer, *Fire Inside Manuscript*, Muntz Papers (CN 188, Box 2, File 1), p. 72.


53. Ibid., p. 199.


55. Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, p. 193. This humorous comment should not be taken too seriously. Given the emotional problems that did exist in the family, however, the quotation is ironic.
56. Ibid., pp. 3-4. She used the term "breakdown" and "depressed," but claimed she was cured with eyeglasses. She included the doctor's comment that "I don't know why you aren't in an insane asylum; you've needed glasses since you were born."

57. Ibid., p. 31.

58. Ibid., pp. 188-189. Shortly after Thanksgiving in 1932, Mrs. Rimmer said that "her heart decided to take a rest. In fact it almost stopped!" The doctor said the heart had "no resilience." The illness wasn't serious enough for Rimmer to cancel his engagements, and in mid-February Mrs. Rimmer was able to leave the children behind to travel with her husband. Though it is dangerous to read between the lines of her lengthy discussion of her health, it seems that Mrs. Rimmer was attempting to justify her decision to abandon the children and become a burden for her husband. She wrote that "In spite of what I could do for myself, much of Harry's time was spent in waiting on me. I felt that the whole idea of my coming had been a mistake, but I was gaining, and he said to be able to see me, and not have to worry about me, was more than compensation for the extra duties my presence entailed. He was patience and thoughtfulness personified, and never for an instance gave me any reason to think I was a burden." (p. 190)

59. Ibid., p. 196. Rimmer said he would always remember his wife as the "Laughing Lady," since he remembered "far more laughs and smiles than complaints and tears." The letter to his wife, at least the part excerpted by his wife, has a very positive sound. It is certainly possible that the letter was upbeat because Mrs. Rimmer was prone to depression. Without access to the full correspondence, one can only guess at Rimmer's meaning. The letter does mention the "tears," "complaints," and problem with "nerves."

60. Ibid., p. 226. Though Mrs. Rimmer usually omitted names of those she criticized and was very cautious about discussing problems of acquaintances, she fully described the emotional breakdown of Rev. Arthur Perkins. His ecclesiastical trial (for which Rimmer was a defense counsel) had been too much for him, and he "began to fail mentally, brooding over the condemnatory words (of) his fellow ministers. . . and feeling an exaggerated unworthiness." Before long, Rev. Perkins insisted on riding of the floors of cars, considering himself inadaquate to occupy a seat, and was finally committed to a mental sanitarium.

61. C. Brandon Rimmer, Mayhem and Mercy (Carol Stream, Illinois,: Creation House, 1972), pp. 5, 21, 86, 90. He
said that there was no freedom because his mother constantly inquired about what he was doing and whether his bowels had moved. Mayhem and Mercy is a sad story about a young man living in the shadow of his father and under the thumb of his mother. The book has many references to bowel movements, whorehouses, and "Get Rimmer Committees" (of people trying to harm Brandon). A psychiatrist ultimately explained that his mother was the source of his problems since she had pressured him to succeed in music so much that he became physically ill when attempting to succeed in anything else. Mayhem and Mercy portrays the Rimmer household as neurotic and disfunctional.

62. These observations were made by people close to the family who asked not to be identified. Rimmer did travel extensively—for up to months at a time. Concerning denominations, one person interviewed said "Rimmer would have been a rector, if Mrs. Rimmer knew Episcopalians made more money." While there is perhaps some truth in this assertion, it neglects Rimmer's sincere theological convictions. Though his theology had some baptistic elements, Rimmer was one of a number of fundamentalistic, dispensational Presbyterians. He practiced infant baptism, the watershed doctrine separating Baptists and Presbyterians. See Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 302. On the question of status, Rimmer suggests that his wife urged him to become an author. The dedication to his wife in Voices From Calvary, though probably simply noting his wife's support and encouragement, reads "Because she made me write—because she has been my guiding star for more than a score of happy years." Harry Rimmer, Voices From Calvary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1948), p. 6.

63. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 213, 229, 249. In Duluth the Rimmers lived in the Sebenius mansion, a huge lakefront home complete with pistol range and caretaker adjacent to the Congdon estate, and the home of the publisher of the Duluth News-Tribune. Initially they lived in the Hotel Duluth, because Mrs. Rimmer liked room service and none of the Presbyterian church's five large manse's suited her. Though I am unable to confirm this observation by an acquaintance of the Rimmer's, it certainly showed a strong negative perception of Mrs. Rimmer. Mrs. Rimmer noted with pride her acquaintances on New York's Fifth Avenue, such as Helen Gould Shepard. See The Fire Inside, p. 164.

64. Brandon Rimmer, Mayhem and Mercy, p. 33.

65. She was active in Christian work before meeting her husband, and continued to be concerned about evangelism while a widow. After Rimmer's death, she tried to find someone to advance the creationist cause. See Harold Hill,
66. There is considerable disagreement as to when Rimmer was converted. I have followed Mrs. Rimmer on the January 1, 1912 date which fits with other statistics of Rimmer's life. See Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 1, 26. Brandon Rimmer gives the fullest account of the conversion, and says it occurred on January 1, but gives no year. See Brandon Rimmer, Harry, p. 257. Rimmer's daughter gives the conversion date as New Year's Eve, 1913. See Braswell, "Harry Rimmer," 263. Mrs. Rimmer claims, however, that Rimmer was already preaching by then (The Fire Inside, p. 5.). The conversion probably occurred while Rimmer was a student at Hahneman Medical College (1912), but certainly before he was a student at San Francisco Bible College (probably 1913). See Brandon Rimmer, Harry, 252; "Harry Rimmer," National Cyclopaedia of American Biography (N.Y.: James T. White, 1956), 41:21; and "Harry Rimmer," Who Was Who, 1950-1960 (Chicago: Marquis, 1960), 3: 728. Some earlier histories give his conversion date as 1920. See Stuart Cole, History of Fundamentalism (N.Y.: R. R. Smith, 1931), p. 264; and Norman Furniss, The Fundamentalist Controversy, 1918-1931 (Hamden, Conn.: Anchor Books, 1954), p. 68.


68. For the fullest account of the conversion and decision to preach, see Brandon Rimmer, Harry, 247-257.


70. Ibid., pp. 49-50. Rimmer urged the man (an alcoholic who was threatening to return to the bottle and kill himself) to try Christ, using the same pragmatic appeal that had led to his own conversion. He concluded by saying that "If you're not convinced then open the bottle and use the gun, for you might as well get it over with tonight instead of dragging it out. Don't take too much of the bottle, though, because then you won't be able to shoot straight."

71. Harry Rimmer, A Scientist's Viewpoint of the Virgin Birth of Jesus Christ (Glendale, California: Research Science Bureau, 1925), p. 3. At one point Rimmer claimed to have been doing scientific research since 1908, but this is certainly too early--probably a reference to doing some reading on scientific topics.

73. Brandon Rimmer, Harry, pp. 18, 22, 44, 136, 139, 174, 176, 178, 183, 185, 216. Rimmer's hypothetical sister Elvira was a San Francisco Bible College student and instructor who left for the missionfield in China shortly after Rimmer's conversion. Though a ficticious character, she was probably created to represent the evangelical peity in the Rimmer home.


75. Rimmer may have been making a theological distinction between conversion and service, or between religious experiences of acknowledging Christ as Savior and Lord. His deathbed article said that he had been "aquainted" with the Lord for fifty-five years, but had held "clear title" to property there for "over forty years," i.e. since around 1912. Evangelists would often make distinctions between being saved and gaining assurance of salvation (as Rimmer did). If Rimmer was making this distinction, then he was converted as a child, around 1897, but gained assurance of salvation during his dramatic rededication in 1912.


78. Rothstein, American Physicians, p. 160; Kaufman, Homeopathy in America, p. 27. In some rural areas, especially with many German immigrants, homeopathy was very popular. See Keeney, et. al., "Sectarians and Scientists," p. 49.

79. Keeney, et. al., "Sectarians and Scientists," p. 66. Osteopathy was similiar to the chiropractic movement of Daniel David Palmer, though the advocates of the two systems argued vociferously.
San Francisco had boasted at least one Homeopathic school since 1884. See George Martin, "History of the Hahnemann Hospital College of San Francisco," in Master Hands in the Affairs of the Pacific Coast (San Francisco: Western Historical and Publishing Company, 1892). Osteopaths were prominent part of the register of physicians of 1906. See Inventory of the County Archives of California, vol. 39, The City and County of San Francisco, vol. II (San Francisco: Northern California Historical Reconstruction Survey Program, 1940), p. 53.


82. Kaufman, Homeopathy in America, pp. 26, 31, 37, 38. This evidence is not conclusive, since, after the mid nineteenth century, American homeopaths didn't emphasize Hahnemann's doctrine that "chronic disease was the result of the allopathic [orthodox medicine] suppression of psora (the itch). Rimmer did try to treat the condition, in a manner, by reducing coffee consumption and limiting travel, though there is no mention of medical treatment. It is at least ironic that Rimmer suffered from the symptoms for which homeopaths were ridiculed.

83. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 308. The only reference to this incident is that "At Eureka a good osteopathic physician took him in hand, enabling him to preach through the week at the Presbyterian church, and supplied him with a stock of vitamin B complex." The "took him in hand" phrase probably refers to an adjustment.

84. Ibid., pp. 193-194.


86. Interview with Paul Hendricks, Brainerd, Minnesota. Dr. Hendricks thought this was strange. He might have been referring to the desert trip Rimmer made while seriously ill, but before the diagnosis of cancer. See Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 359. I have found no other reference to Rimmer trying to cure his cancer, once diagnosed, by sitting in the sun. In any event, at least before the analysis, Rimmer tried to cure this severe, fatal illness by natural means.

87. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 359. Mrs. Rimmer seemed surprised that he made no objection to seeing a doctor, and it appears that Rimmel shunned medical treatment in the past. He appears to have respected his doctor, for Rimmer declined to go to the Mayo Clinic, saying that
"if God and Bill [Dr. William Stahl] together couldn't do anything for him, no one could." (p. 360)

88. Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, p. 347; Braswell, "Harry Rimmer," p. 264; and Interview with Paul Diehl, Duluth, Minnesota. Dr. Charles Trout, with whom Rimmer worked, was commissioned by the Belgian government to work with a leprosarium in the Congo. Though Trout probably practiced conventional medicine, he was also a graduate of Hahnemann Medical College of San Francisco.

89. This comment was by someone close to the family who did not want to be identified. The comment suggests that Rimmer continued to subscribe to homeopathic principles, but probably was not a purist. We know that he did take medications for some illnesses. See Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, p. 358.


92. Rimmer, *Spiritism in the Light of Science and the Bible* (Los Angeles: Research Science Bureau, 1928), and *The End of the Sabbath Day* (Minneapolis: L. W. Camp, n.d.). Though Rimmer argues against the Adventist observance of the seventh day, his tone was cordial. Unlike many fundamentalists, who saw Adventism as a cult, Rimmer dedicated the tract to his "Adventist friends." (p. 17)


Rothstein, American Physicians, pp. 296-297, chapter 16; Keeney, et. al., "Sectarians and Scientists," p. 58; and Kaufman, Homeopathy in America, pp. 166, 184. For the dispute in California, see Hruby, Mines to Medicine, p. 67.

Kaufman, Homeopathy in America, pp. 149, 170-171, 200. It is unclear whether there was one or two homeopathic schools in San Francisco, and, if two, which one Rimmer attended. His index lists two schools; Hahnemann Medical College (San Francisco), and Hahnemann Medical College of the Pacific, but there is no explanation of the differences. Kaufman says that in the early 1890s the officers of the Hahnemann Medical College (San Francisco) "suddenly repudiated homeopathy and announced that they intended to affiliate with an orthodox college." (p. 149) In 1915, the Hahnemann Medical College of the Pacific merged with the University of California Medical School in San Francisco, and, "although homeopathy was still on the curriculum, one more college had taken the first step toward its obliteration." (pp. 170-171) Though this may refer to two different schools, it might also refer to the same school, which in 1915 finally accomplished what it first proposed in the early 1890s. In its history and catalog, published as part of a larger work in 1892, Hahnemann Medical College of San Francisco was still loyal to homeopathy, proclaimed itself to be "in a measure, the representative of homeopathy on the Pacific Coast," and declared allegiance to Hahnemann's law of "similia similibus curantur." Martin, "History of Hahnemann Medical College," pp. 110, 113. It is possible that these statements reflect the school's position before its change (so that the 1892 publication included antiquated information), or reflected a partial commitment to homeopathy in a school with a shifting vision. To confuse matters about the Hahnemann school/schools, Rimmer's biographical sketches are imprecise about the names. He is listed as attending the Hahnemann Medical College, San Francisco (Who's Who in America) and the Hahnemann Medical College of the Pacific (National Cyclopaedia of American Biography). In any event, Rimmer attended a school that had either just repudiated homeopathy or were in the process of phasing it out.

Brandon Rimmer, Harry, pp. 232, 233-234.

Brandon Rimmer, Harry, pp. 102, 147-148.


Braswell, "Harry Rimmer," pp. 263-264. She may claim too much in saying "He read extensively in all branches of science, philosophy, religion, and law, and had
a retentive mind which enabled him to recall facts and ideas many years after reading them. His mastery of subject matter and research in certain fields were recognized and rewarded by [his] honorary degrees." (p. 264) The types of books Rimmer read suggest that he did read widely, though superficially, since he usually read popular, but not academic or technical works. Many of his acquaintances referred to his excellent memory and broad knowledge. Rimmer was not, as his enemies sometimes charged, an ignoramus or a buffoon. The debate halls of America were littered with those who had underestimated his ability.

101. Quoted in Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 256, 258, 154. The Rodeheaver quote seemed to be a common description of Rimmer, since Rimmer said it was "his line with which he describes me. . ." Once when Rimmer was booked at a Conference to speak on the same topic as Evans, his former teacher begged to have Rimmer work up the new material, since "Rimmer could handle so many subjects." (p. 293)

102. For information on the school's cosmopolitan air, academic reputation, community support, and Rimmer's performance, see Brandon Rimmer, Harry, pp. 215, 219, 223, 229-230. For a list of the school's requirements and course offerings, see Martin, "History of Hahnemann Medical College."


108. Bernard Ramm, The Christian View of Science and Scripture (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955). Ramm continually cites and attacks Rimmer's literalistic interpretations. See also Clark Pinnock, A Defense of Biblical Infallibility (Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1977), p. 15. Pinnock says that "the intended sense of Scripture must neither be artificially restricted (e.g., by Bultmann's anthropocentric bias) nor arbitrarily expanded (e.g., by Rimmer's scientific contraband smuggled into Scripture)." That Rimmer was listed without explanation (with Bultmann) assumes the audience's familiarity.


112. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside Manuscript, Muntz Papers (CNI02, Box 2, File 1), p. 1. She said that "In
that week the foundation was laid upon which he built through the years his at-home-ness with God's Word."


114. Ibid., p. 1. It is not entirely clear that he attended the Bible school. Mignon Rimmer does not mention it, but other sources mention a "brief" or "few months" enrollment. See Braswell, "Harry Rimmer," p. 263; and "Harry Rimmer," *National Cyclopaedia of American Biography*, 41:21.

115. Rimmer was a lifelong friend of Trout, with whom he visited and worked on African trips in 1949 and 1950. Rimmer's fictional sister Elvira was also a San Francisco Bible College graduate and instructor and was preparing for mission work in China. Brandon Rimmer, *Harry*, pp. 185, 216, 255-258. The only faculty member mentioned in Mignon Rimmer's biography was James R. Pratt, who is given the highest fundamentalist honors by being referred to as a "venerable Bible teacher." (p. 1.)


119. Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, pp. 26-27. She wrote that Florabel Rosenberger "taught him how to study. From her he learned how to grasp the essential thought, the important sentence, paragraph, or page in doing research." When he left he told her that because of her, "I feel competent to . . . go on learning." (p. 27-29)

120. Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside Manuscript*, pp. 52-53. The stolen notes were from both Whittier and Biola.

121. Brandon Rimmer, Interview with Ronald Numbers.


123. Ahlstrom, A Religious History, II: 287; Marsden, Fundamentalism, pp. 118-123.
CHAPTER TWO: THE FUNDAMENTALIST EVANGELIST, 1912-1926


13. Memphis Commercial Appeal (February 3, 1929), 5:10; Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 6-9; and "Campaign Arousing Opponents," Poplar Bluff Interstate American (April 21, 1925), pp. 1, 5;

15. Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, pp. 9-22, 312. See also David Warren Ryder, *Memories of the Mendocino Coast* (San Francisco: N.p., 1948). Though his position was terminated, Rimmer had very positive feelings toward Union Lumber Company and years later tried to quell a workers' strike by mentioning Union's good record.


and J. Vernon McGee, "Through the Bible" Radio broadcast (June 28, 1988). Rimmer told of a Massachusetts prisoner granted a pardon by the governor, but, in refusing to accept the pardon was similar to the one who refused God's grace. This story is a good example of how Rimmer used prison examples as graphic illustrations. That McGee credited the story to Rimmer, over thirty-five years after his death, is suggestive of Rimmer's stature as a fundamentalist evangelist.


26. Rimmer was the second pastor of a relatively new church. "Pastors in Order of Service," Manuscript supplied by the Lindsay library; Directory: Lindsay Friends Church (Lindsay, California: Lindsay Friends Church, n.d.); and Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 23.

27. Lindsay Gazette (October 8, 1915), p. 1; Lindsay Gazette (October 8, 1915), p. 8; Lindsay Gazette (January 21, 1916), p. 6. The latter article announced a Rimmer message on "Missionary Opportunities of the Modern Church." See also Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 24; Lucy Cox, "A Brief Sketch of the Lindsay Friends Meeting," (From 1945 manuscript, copy supplied by the Lindsay Public Library); Lindsay Gazette (April 21, 1916), p. 6.
28. Cox, "A Brief Sketch of the Lindsay Friends Meeting." Cox said she knew little of Rimmer's ministry, but had heard him speak once and remembered his great speaking ability. See also Lindsay Gazette (November 5, 1915), p. 7; Lindsay Gazette (February 18, 1916); Lindsay Gazette (October 8, 1915), p. 8; Lindsay Gazette (November 5, 1915), p. 3. Rimmer's reference to starting a San Francisco Christian sports league "four years earlier" could not be quite correct, since he was not converted until January, 1912. Since he started Christian ministry almost immediately after his conversion, however, Rimmer probably started these sports leagues in early 1912.

29. Lindsay Gazette (February 18, 1916). Socialists were active in the area. See Lindsay Gazette (September 15, 1916), p. 2.


35. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 27-29, 32-34, 40. Rimmer preached at the El Modena, Long Beach, Pasadena, and Los Angeles Friends churches. In November, 1916, Rimmer drew $50/month, which was raised to $100/month in early 1917 when Rimmer was asked to stay for a year, and
$120/month in March, 1917 when he was invited to stay at the church for eighteen months. In September, 1917 the church provided $200 for New Testament distribution among the Seventh Regiment at Fort MacArthur in San Pedro, California. For Rimmer's evangelistic work, see "Does God Care For the Individual," Poplar Bluff Interstate American (April 30, 1925), p. 1.; and "Christianity Way of Success," Poplar Bluff Interstate American (May 11, 1925), p. 1. In the former article Rimmer described a Syrian wedding where he was given a beautiful robe at the door. He used the symbolism of the coins in the Syrian wedding as an illustration of God's care. Harry Rimmer, Christianity and Modern Crises (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947), pp. 59-60.


44. Brandon Rimmer, Harry, pp. 199-200. Rimmer was supported by J.H. Henry of St. Louis and H.P. Demand of Denver, both of whom were Secretaries of the International
Committee of the Y.M.C.A. See 1921 YMCA Yearbook, pp. 162, 169, 175, and 1924 YMCA Yearbook, pp. 83, 89.


47. "Cain and Abel," Hanford Daily Sentinel (January 11, 1924), p. 6; "Rimmer Shows Explosive," Hanford Morning Journal (January 12, 1924); "Tent Filled at Rimmer Evangelistic Services," Poplar Bluff Daily Republican (April 25, 1925), p. 1; "Strong Appeal Made By Tots," Poplar Bluff Interstate American (April 25, 1925), p. 1; and Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 59. For an extended discussion on explosives see Harry Rimmer, Modern Science and the Second Day of Creation (Los Angeles: Research Science Bureau, 1930), pp. 16-17. While I have found no evidence that Rimmer was trained in demolitions while stationed at the Presidio, as he claimed, the latter work demonstrates Rimmer's familiarity with explosives, and it is possible he did receive military in this area.


61. Steven Levi, Committee of Vigilance: The San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and the Law and Order Committee, 1915-1919 (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, 1983), pp. 2-8; Pine Bluff Commercial Appeal (May 14, 1926), p. 12; "Campaign Arousing Opponents," Poplar Bluff Interstate American (April 21, 1925), pp. 1, 5; Brandon Rimmer, Harry, p. 257. For more on Shepard and Rimmer's view of communism, see Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 164, 171; Who Was Who, 1897-1942 (Chicago: Marquis, 1942), p. 1115; and Cleveland Amory, Who Killed Society (N.Y.: Harper, 1960), pp. 450-451. Mrs. Shepard had many pet charities and funded many conservative and Christian projects. In addition to concerns about communism, she launched a "crusade against Mormonism," and attempted to stop "Mohomedanism" by distributing several hundred thousand Bibles in the Mideast. She was also a member of the Daughters of 1812, and perhaps secured Rimmer's speaking appointment for their convention. For more on Rimmer's views on communism, see Harry Rimmer, Christianity and Modern Crises (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans,
1947), pp. 15-18. It is worthy to note that Rimmer was very congenial to labor in this essay.


64. For Rimmer's positive racial dealings, see "White Golf Players, Negro Dancers Are Assailed by Harry Rimmer," Muskogee Daily Phoenix (January 31, 1926), p. 1; Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 38, 65, 77; and Harry Rimmer, Christianity and Modern Crises, pp. 126-127.


66. "Rimmer To Conduct Program," Poplar Bluff Daily American (November 14, 1924), p. 1; "Rimmer Has Big


79. "Salvation Free But It Isn't Cheap," Muskogee Daily Phoenix (January 11, 1926), p. 4; "Modern Habits Insults Holy Spirit in Our Bodies," Muskogee Daily Phoenix (January 6, 1926), p. 5; and "Worry Positive Sin," Muskogee Daily Phoenix (January 5, 1926), p. 4. Rimmer's language in the latter message was odd, as he usually proclaimed that peace could come only with the return of Christ, and charged that
tale of a universal Christian brotherhood was a liberal shibboleth.


86. "Rimmer Considers Request to Remain," Muskogee Daily Phoenix (February 1, 1926).


CHAPTER THREE: CREATION OF A SCIENTIFIC PROPHET, 1920-26


2. Harold Hill, From Goo to You by Way of the Zoo (Plainfield, N.J.: Logos, 1976), p. xiv. Hill, a scientist, began to research the book after Mrs. Harry Rimmer sent him a copy of The Harmony of Science and Scripture with the prayerful appeal for another scientist to continue her husband's work. I am indebted to Rimmer's daughter, Kathryn Rimmer Braswell, for calling my attention to the book.


7. Harry Rimmer, Modern Science in an Ancient Book (Los Angeles: Research Science Bureau, 1927), p. 2; and Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 30, 40-41, 63. The conversation was with a graduate of Hartford Seminary who repudiated the doctrines of scripture and eternal life and believed in "man made doctrines from modernism, unitarianism, and evolution." The letter was to Theodore Richards, an evangelical leader who was sponsoring Rimmer's YMCA tour in Hawaii.

argument is with Darwinism, not evolution per se.


10. R.A. Torrey, "The Certainty and Importance of the Bodily Resurrection From the Dead," in The Fundamentals, II:322. Torrey's comment that scientific theory changes every ten years reappears in Rimmer's work on The Virgin Birth.


15. Ibid., pp. 111-112. See also Braswell, "Harry Rimmer", p. 263.

16. C. Samuel Campbell, "Rev. Harry Rimmer--God's Scientist," The Debunker (May, 1931), p. 36. Though the article is full of Rimmer-bashing, it offers insight into the emphases of Rimmer's meetings. As late as 1931, evidently, Rimmer was still publicizing the Bureau.


19. "Dr. Rimmer to Open Museum Here," The Collegio 5:36 (June 10, 1927), p. 1. Rimmer may have been over-eager to start a teaching center, since he was described, in his
1926 Pine Bluff crusade, as holding the chair of research science in a California university. Pine Bluff Daily Graphic (April 7, 1926), p. 1.


22. Rimmer, The Research Science Bureau, Inc., pp. 2-3. The Bureau was also interdenominational. Rimmer claimed, during his 1926 Muskogee campaign, that the Bureau employed six Roman Catholics.


24. Cole, History of Fundamentalism, pp. 264-267; and Norman Furniss, The Fundamentalist Controversy (Hamden, Conn.: Anchor, 1954), p. 69. Furniss argued that the Bureau declined because Rimmer spent too much time with the World Christian Fundamentals Association. The opposite is probably true, as the WCFA provided excellent exposure for Rimmer. Though both Cole and Furniss suggest that the Bureau was relatively unimportant, it was important enough for them to evaluate.


26. "Crowd Hears Dr. Rimmer," Arkansas Democrat 21 January 1947, p. 6. Rimmer was probably including the sale of his numerous booklets in the two million figure. Eerdmans, one of Rimmer's publishers, published over 300,000 of his books. Letter from Danford Gibbs (Eerdmans Customer Service Manager), October 20, 1988.

27. I have described Rimmer as a "scientist" since he was interested and involved in science, and defined himself as a scientist. It could certainly be argued that Rimmer does not deserve to be called a scientist because he lacked formal education and scientific recognition. The
historians of science, with whom I have spoken, however, suggest that it is very hard to define "science" and "scientist"; science is something that scientists do. Unlike pornography, science is easier to recognize than define. I have described Rimmer as an amateur scientist for two reasons: he was not trained or skilled in scientific research, but, according to the original idea of amateur, truly loved science. For an early assessment of Rimmer's standing as a "scientist", see David Swenson, "An Open Letter," The Minnesota Daily (February 4, 1927), p. 2.

28."Evolution Not Scientific," Poplar Bluff Interstate American (April 28, 1925), p. 1. Rimmer said that he was "too great a friend of science to allow error and miscalled theory to be propagated amongst students." Rimmer used the redundant terms "years," "a number of years," and "a long time" in three consecutive sentences. Although the repetition might have sounded worse because of the newspaper reporter, the reporter did convey the sense of Rimmer's emphasis on lots of personal research. "Dr. Rimmer to Open Museum," The Collegio 5:36 (June 10, 1927), p. 1 (The Collegio is the student newspaper at Pittsburg State University); "Pittsburg's Centennial Hall of Fame," The Pittsburg Morning Sun (May 20, 1976), p. 9J. For the six month research requirement for school teachers, see "The Collapse of the Theory of Evolution," Christian Faith and Life 43:4 (October, 1937): 242. See also Harry Rimmer, "Autobiography," Biograpahy File, Duluth Public Library.


30.C. Brandon Rimmer, Interview with Ronald Numbers; Rimmer described his experiments with rabbits and acquired characteristics in "Rimmer Ridicules Theory of Evolution," Muskogee Daily Phoenix (February 2, 1926), p. 5. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 102. The family's housekeeper refused Rimmer's offer of releasing one to the laboratory's gopher snakes to rid the home of mice. Rimmer horrified a group on an outing by catching, playing with, and

31. "Dr. Rimmer to Open Museum," The Collegio, p. 1; "Pittsburg's Hall of Fame," The Pittsburg Morning Sun, p. 93; "Dr. Rimmer Adds New Specimens," The Collegio 6:37 (June 22, 1928), p. 1. According to the reports, Rimmer's collections were extensive. The skulls originated in Arizona, Georgia, Tennessee, Missouri, California, and Mexico. The butterfly collection included specimens from Malaysia, Indo-China, and Central and South America. Research Science Bureau members were located in all of these foreign areas, and it is possible that they sent Rimmer the items.


33. Ibid., p. 78.


38. "Unearths More Skeletons of Indians," Hanford Daily Sentinel (January 7, 1924); "Remains of Extinct Indians Tall Men," Hanford Daily Sentinel (January 12, 1924), p. 5; and "Rimmer Ends His Hanford Lectures," Hanford Daily Sentinel (January 21, 1924). See also Mignon Rimmer, The
39. "Evangelist Digs Up Skeleton on Ancient People Near City," Muskogee Daily Phoenix (January 1, 1926), p. 1; "Rimmer Will Hunt For More Proofs of Ancient People," Muskogee Daily Phoenix (January 11, 1926), p. 1; "Muskogee Once Buried Under Sea," Muskogee Daily Phoenix (January 12, 1926), p. 5. See also Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 85-86; "Dr. Rimmer Adds New Species," The Collegio, p.1. The Collegio article said that Rimmer collected 180 human remains at Muskogee, while initial article claims that the site yielded 17 human remains, pottery and relics. Though the claim of "180 human remains" is undefined and may be technically correct, it might represent Rimmer's inflation of statistics to make his work sound more significant.


42. Scott, "Fundamentalism in Kansas State Teachers College," p. 379. See also Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 40-41. In 1924, Rimmer claimed that he had done research "for a number of years" in anthropology, paleontology, biology, and geology.

43. Brandon Rimmer, Interview with Ronald Numbers. He estimated that the laboratory was 15 feet by 20 feet., which included the darkroom.


46. "Rimmer Party on Outing to Keener Spring," Poplar Bluff Interstate American (May 11, 1926), p. 3; Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 54, 104, 300. One shouldn't
be biased against Rimmer just because of his unorthodox or unscholarly method of collecting information. He sincerely sought to learn about his topics, and gathered information from whatever sources were available to him.

47.Ibid., pp. 52-54. There is no way to determine the value of Rimmer's archeological samples. At least one institution declined his offer of samples. In any event, collection rock samples does not necessarily constitute research geology. He did lead student tours, and the Pittsburg State team recovered a dinosaur fossil in western Kansas. Brandon Rimmer even recalled the names of two brothers, Merrill and Jack Jensen, who accompanied Rimmer on one of his geological expeditions. See Brandon Rimmer, interview with Ronald Numbers.


62. Harry Rimmer, *Modern Science in an Ancient book*, p. 19; Interview with Paul Diehl, Duluth, Minnesota. For Rimmer's claim to world-wide research, see "Evangelist Digs
Up Skeletons of Ancient People Near City," Muskogee Daily Phoenix (January 10, 1926), p. 1. The article refers to excavations in Utah, Missouri, Mexico, Central America, and Polynesia. For Rimmer's references to himself as a "traveler", see "Scientist to Deliver Series of Lectures," Detroit Free Press (November 11, 1932), p. 9; "Noted Revivalist to Lecture," The Birmingham News (May 3, 1930), p. 4, in which Rimmer is described as the "eminent Presbyterian evangelist," President of the Research Science Bureau, archeologist, geologist "of note," and an "extensive world traveler." See also "Tabernacle Fund," The Birmingham News (May 4, 1930), p. 10, where in addition to being described as a scientist, Bible expositor, and archeologist, Rimmer was called an "explorer."

63."Rimmer Coming Monday Nite," Poplar Bluff Interstate American (December 12, 1925), p. 1. The proposed expedition was to the region around Elat, West Africa. Included among the twenty "scientist" was J.C. Watson, a former Oklahoma YMCA secretary and associate of the Rimmer evangelistic crusades. See also the "Pittsburg Hall of Fame," Pittsburg Morning Sun, p. 9J, an article which claims that Rimmer took the 1926 trip to Africa. It is doubtful that Rimmer took the trip. This article, which contained other errors as well, was probably based upon accounts of Rimmer's future itinerary in early 1926. Mrs Rimmer does not mention a 1926 trip to Africa, and clearly states that Rimmer's first trip to Africa was in 1948 (he made a subsequent trip in 1949). Since she described it as the fulfillment of a life-long dream, it is unlikely that Rimmer had gone to Africa during his earlier travels abroad. See The Fire Inside, foreword and pp. 253, 321, 347. Brandon Rimmer said that his father was in Africa once--for a safari [1948]. See Brandon Rimmer, interview with Ronald Numbers.


67.Most people remembered Rimmer's photography on the overseas tour. Brandon Rimmer said his father had to devise a way to take pictures through the glass in the British Museum, which suggests that Rimmer was not considered a visiting scholar. Number's interview with Brandon Rimmer. Since, according to one Duluth parishioner, it was illegal for people to take photographs of Mussolini's Italy, Rimmer had to smuggle the film out
of Italy and treated the people of Duluth to one of few glimpses of fascist Europe. Interview with Paul Diehl. Mrs Rimmer only noted that Rimmer photographed the stadium in Rome. This claim is suggestive of how Rimmer's reputation as a world-traveler grew. No doubt Rimmer encouraged the stories about his secret photography when he showed the films at the church.

68. Mignon Rimmer, "The Fire Inside Manuscript," p. 303. Mrs. Rimmer said that Rimmer's pictures and recorded facts "proved" the accuracy of the New Testament. Perhaps because this claim was so excessive it was edited out of the book. In any event, Mrs. Rimmer believed that her husband's archeological work had finally demonstrated the truthfulness of the scriptures.


70. For the story of Rimmer smuggling the leprosy into the country, see interview with Ted Engblom. While perhaps apocryphal, the story depicts Rimmer as a courier for a researcher on the verge of a dramatic medical discovery. For Rimmer's assistance to Trout, and Trout's reputation, see Braswell, "Harry Rimmer--Defender of the Faith," p. 264. She said that Trout "had succeeded in cultivating Hansen's Organism, which causes leprosy—a feat which research laboratories in the country still claim is impossible." He also developed a "serum which effectively controlled the various types of leprosy, and was experimenting with a vaccine [to] eliminate the disease." Trout was working with the Belgian government.


72. David Swenson, "Open Letter," The Minnesota Daily (February 4, 1927), p. 2. Swenson said that though Rimmer made the point of being an ordained minister with "great vigor, Mr. Rimmer does not actually claim that this makes him a scientist or even enables him to understand a closely reasoned scientific treatise when he attempts to read it." William Bell Riley defended Rimmer against this "scoffing" attack. Rimmer insisted that he was an ordained Presbyterian minister only because The Minnesota Daily had published a statement that Mr. Rimmer "was not even an ordained preacher." William Bell Riley, "An Open Letter to David Swenson," The Minnesota Daily (March 11, 1927), p. 3.

74. Harry Rimmer, "Autobiography." His actual wording is even more ambiguous. Rimmer wrote that "In my youth I was deprived of the peculiar benefits of formal schooling, which lack I later attempted to compensate for by the use of tutors. Through this means I was more or less prepared for such college work as I acquired and for the technique that carried me for many years of laboratory work."


76. Ibid.; Harry Rimmer, "Autobiography."

77. Swenson, "An Open Letter," p. 2. There is no evidence that Rimmer sold pieces to museums. Swenson undoubtedly used this bit of his own demagoguery because he envisioned or wished to depict Rimmer as an unprincipled charlatan.

78. Oscar Whitenack, A Twentieth Century Churchman's Viewpoint of Science (Denver: 1933), p. 16. Whitenack believed that Rimmer was a deceitful fraud. He said that "As a scientist Rimmer is a joke, and no one is more aware of it than he is himself." Whitenack's assessment of Rimmer is wrong. Rimmer sincerely believed that he was a legitimate research scientist.

79. Ibid., pp. 3, 8.


86. Bennete Greer to AAAS secretary (June 14, 1937), AAAS archives, Box 8: Membership--Questionable. From copies in the possession of Ronald Numbers.


88. "Remains of Extinct Indians Race of Tall Men," Hanford Daily Sentinel (January 12, 1924), p. 5. Rimmer planned on attending this meeting and presenting his Hanford findings, though I have found no evidence that he did. For Rimmer's comments on a paper at the 1926 meeting, see Harry Rimmer, The Theories of Evolution and the Facts of Human Antiquity, p. 23.

89. See also Harry Rimmer, The Harmony of Scripture and Science, p. 39, and Harry Rimmer, The Theories of Evolution and the Facts of Science, p. 50.


94. Ralph Kennedy and Thomas Rothrock, John Brown of Arkansas (Siloam Springs, Arkansas: John Brown University Press, 1966), pp. 47-48. John Brown insisted that the school would have "no jazz associations, no jazz dancing, no jazz dressing, etc." His intended to build a nationally known university at Sulphur Springs for students able to pay their own tuition (the Siloam Springs campus was aimed at needy students unable to pay the costs of schooling).


96. Harry Rimmer, Modern Science and the Fifth Day of Creation (Los Angeles: Research Science Bureau, 1931),


99. Harry Rimmer to Miss Morey (November 13, 1937, in "Autobiography," Biography File, Duluth Public Library. In this letter Rimmer said that he had in his possession a document naming him curator of the Pittsburg museum, and offered it to her for inspection. Though Mrs. Rimmer claimed that he was listed in the school's catalog as the museum curator, I have found no confirmation of that. See Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 111.


104. Hovencamp, Science and Religion, p. 27.


119. Harry Rimmer, Modern Science and the Youth of Today, p. 10. Quotations in the original are all in capital letters.


121. Harry Rimmer, Modern Science and the Youth of Today, p. 9. According to Rimmer, the 150,000 year old remains were from an Indian massacre seventy years earlier and the 25,000 year old remains were discovered with iron nails close by. Though these were some of Rimmer's favorite stories about extravagant scientific claims, he might have been guilty of the same type of exaggeration. These recent Indian remains were found at Poplar Bluff, where Rimmer initially dated the remains he found at 500 years. See "Skeletons of Six Indians," Poplar Bluff Interstate American, (May 20, 1925), p. 5.


125. Harry Rimmer, The Virgin Birth, p. 3. See also Stuart Cole, The History of Fundamentalism (N.Y.: R.R. Smith, 1931), p. 266. Cole argued that fundamentalists believed that science "changed" with each discovery. See also R. A. Torrey, "The Resurrection of Jesus Christ," in The Fundamentals, II: 321-322. Torrey said that every student of geology and astronomy knows that things have occurred in the past which are entirely outside the experience of the fifty years preceding it. Radium discoveries, for instance, totally contradicted the earlier theories of chemistry.

126. Harry Rimmer, "How Science Sustains the Bible," The


130. Harry Rimmer, The Virgin Birth, pp. 5-6.


136. Louis Gaspar, The Fundamentalist Movement (The Hague: Mouton, 1983). See also "Evolution Not Scientific," Poplar Bluff Interstate American (April 28, 1925), p. 1, where Rimmer insisted that he was a good, true friend of science— one of the best friends of science in the United States, in fact, since he tried to prevent science from making grievous errors.


143. Harry Rimmer, The Harmony of Science and the Scriptures, pp. 5-6, 8.


150. Harry Rimmer, Lot's Wife, p. 44.


153. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 208. "If he preached the gospel," his critics claimed, after seeing the success of Rimmer's scientific lectures, "he'd never get these crowds." See also Whitenack, A Twentieth Century Churchman's Viewpoint, p. 16. Whitenack suggested that Rimmer was popular because he was peddling anti-evolution "twaddle."


157. Harry Rimmer, Modern Science and the First Fundamental, p. 20. For the Duluth man converted by Rimmer's creationist preaching, see interview with Walter Engblom (March 17, 1987). See also telephone interview with Bernard De Remer (June 25, 1988). After his conversion at a Rimmer meeting, DeRemer attended and worked at Moody Bible Institute, and wrote an article on Rimmer's life--"Harry Rimmer--Ardent Defender of Creation," The Fundamentalist Journal 3 (December, 1984): 44-46. For a critical evaluation of Rimmer's scientific preaching, see interview with Paul Hendricks (March 20, 1987). Hendricks was a friend of Rimmer's and a member of the Duluth Presbytery, but felt Rimmer spent too much time "chasing evolution."


159. Ibid.


CHAPTER FOUR: THE CREATIONIST CRUSADE, 1924-1934

1. "Rimmer Meeting Climax Wednesday," Poplar Bluff Interstate American (May 14, 1925), pp. 1, 4. The newspaper report from the Rimmer meeting said that "The world has had several periods of revival around a new theme. Evangelist Rimmer has launched in Poplar Bluff a new and definite movement in evangelism—to bring to the fore the youth of community."


8. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 62-66. Rimmer explained that he had been interested in scientific research "for a number of years," and that he had done research in "anthropology, paleontology, and biology and geology." Rimmer continued to say that "the microscope is the greatest ally of our Bible." Noting that he had spoken

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against the theory of evolution, Rimmer explained that "I believe that it is contrary to the now known facts of biology."

9. Ibid., pp. 89, 106, 109, 156, 175.


15. John Scott, "Fundamentalism in Kansas State Teachers College," pp. 379-380. Scott said he taught at Pittsburg for two years. The tone of the article is very caustic, as he repeatedly tied fundamentalism to ignorance and the Klan. Scott refers to Rimmer as "Dr.", although this is before Rimmer received his first honorary degree. Scott had, incidentally, complained about President Brandenburg's honorary doctorate, and the school's tendency to call "ordinary Campbellite evangelists...doctor, in order to impress the student body."


17. "Noted Lecturer At Assembly," The Collegio 5:37 (June 17, 1927), p. 4.


19. For the story of Rimmer convincing President
Brandenburg to add a third floor to the library, see interview with Gene DeGruson. Though Mrs. Rimmer said that they "listed him as curator of the new museum in the school's catalog (p.111)," I have found no confirmation of that. Rimmer evidently did have some official document, since his wife said the document made it much easier to gain access to collections. In a letter to a Miss Morey (December 13, 1937), Rimmer mentions that he had a document naming him as the Museum Curator and offered to send it to her. See "Autobiography," Biography File, Duluth Public Library.


23.Mignon Rimmer, The Fire inside, p. 68. See Ralph Kennedy, John Brown of Arkansas (Siloam Springs: John Brown University Press, 1966), pp. 49-50. Since the university did not open until 1924, the academic post might not have been attractive to Rimmer. The offer was for the new Sulphur Springs campus. See "Man and Monkey Declared No Kin," The Collegio, p. 1. On Bryan College, see Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 147, 151. I have no way of confirming the offers of faculty appointment or college presidencies. I am depending on Mrs. Rimmer's biography and her inclusion of Rimmer's correspondence. It is possible that the schools were only considering Rimmer for these posts, though that suggests he was held in high esteem. The details about the Bryan College offer are specific enough that there was probably a legitimate offer. Mrs. Rimmer said that her husband was offered the presidency when Bryan College was first contemplated. In 1930, he was approached in Birmingham by Malcolm Lockhart and an Orlando pastor "urging him to reconsider" and making a "very attractive offer." Rimmer again refused, feeling no call to Dayton or a college presidency. On Rimmer's special teaching assignments at Northwestern Bible School, see telephone interview with Earl Wilder (March 16, 1987). For Rimmer's interim offerings in Christology and Apologetics at Wheaton College and Gordon College, see Braswell, "Harry Rimmer," p. 264; "Harry Rimmer," National Cyclopaedia of American Biography, 41: 22; and Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 292.

and Letter from Walter Kaiser (October 20, 1988). Kaiser, who is a respected Old Testament scholar and Academic Dean at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, a leading evangelical seminary, was commenting on my dissertation on Rimmer. See also "Harry Rimmer, The Christian Fundamentalist (December, 1929), p. 461, where Rimmer is described as a "great blessing to young people of our land."


church. See also Szasz, "William Jennings Bryan," p. 267.


38. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 129-133. I have found no other reference to Rimmer's presence in Dayton. Mrs. Rimmer said, however, that for several hours he was a "deeply concerned onlooker" at the trial.

39. Harry Rimmer, Harmony of Science and Scripture
(1927), p. 5. For an admission that hoaxes were unwittingly used as evidence at the Scopes Trial, see Lamont Cole, "Current Thoughts on Biological Evolution," in D-Days at Dayton, ed. Tompkins, pp. 106-107, 170-172. The pro-evolution brief at Dayton, submitted by Cole's father, emphasized Java, Peking, and Piltdown man.


41. C. Brandon Rimmer, Mayhem and Mercy (Carol Stream, Illinois: Creation House, 1972), p. 96. Brandon Rimmer said that his father's apologetics were addressed to the "limited point of view" of the issues of the Scopes Trial.

42. Immediately after the Scopes Trial Rimmer published a number of works on science and the Bible. Articles on "The Virgin Birth," "Jonah," "Joshua's Long Day," and "Noah and the Ark" appeared in Leon Tucker's Bible study magazine Wonderful Word. The Research Science Bureau published many booklets on science, such as Modern Science, Noah's Ark, and the Deluge, and A Scientist's Viewpoint of the Virgin Birth in 1925, and Monkeyshines the following year. The Theories of Evolution and the Facts of Human Antiquity, the work which "exploded" from the Scopes Trial, appeared in 1929.


44. Gatewood, Preachers, Pedagogues and Politicians, p. 5.

45. Bailey, "The Anti-Evolution Crusade of the Nineteen Twenties," p. 255; and Hofstadter, Anti-Intellectualism, pp. 132-133. Hofstadter argues that "fundamentalism became a militant nationalism," in which the fundamentalism of the "cross" was transformed into the fundamentalism of the "flag" because so many fundamentalists became leading anti-communists. Gatewood argues that the anti-evolution movement was a socio-intellectual disturbance more than a reaction to a biological theory or a clash of two divergent theologies." See Gatewood, Preachers, Pedagogues, and Politicians, p. 230.


47. Larson, Trial and Error, p. 47; Szasz, "William Jennings Bryan," p. 278.


57. Larson, Trial and Error, pp. 28, 30-32, 37.


60. Hofstadter The American Political Tradition, p. 264; See also Anti-Intellectualism, pp. 128-129.

61. Larson, Trial and Error, pp. 33-36.


68. Ibid., Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 129.

69. Bryan, Orthodox Christianity, pp. 7-8, 21-22, 26, 48.


73. For Rimmer's frequent presence at Northwestern and his special course on archeology, see interview with Earl Wilder (March 16, 1987). Rimmer delivered the Northwestern commencement address, for instance, on May 31, 1929. See Riley papers, Northwestern College, SB 40, pp. 87-88. For Rimmer's appearance at Riley's Medicine Lake Conference, see "The Medicine Lake Bible Conference," The Christian Fundamentalist (August, 1930): 57-59, and (September, 1930): 96.


75. Harry Rimmer, Lot's Wife, p. 120. See also Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 190, where Riley was described as one of the great "old-timers" of fundamentalism.


78. Russell, Voices of American Fundamentalism, pp. 97-98, 243n; and "Officers of the WCFA," The Christian Fundamentalist (June, 1928), p. 5. Rimmer was standing member of the Committee on Resolutions.


95. "Riley Says Views Backed By 5-1 Majority" and "Rival Sides Prepare," The Minnesota Daily (January 18, 1927), p. 1, and (January 15, 1927); "Riley Will Welcome Supreme Kingdom Aid," Minneapolis Sunday Tribune (January 16, 1927), p. 7; and "Open Letter," The Minnesota Daily (February 1, 1927), p. 2. Rimmer mentioned that he had brought human and gorilla skulls to show audiences the differences.


98. Ibid.


101. "Evolution Bill Loses First Test" and "State Buries


121. DeFord, Uphill All the Way, pp. 217-218.

122. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 107. For Rimmer's earlier concern with textbook distortions, see "Man and Monkey No Kin," The Collegio (July 17, 1924), p. 1. See also DeFord, Uphill All The Way, p. 221. I have pieced together the two accounts. Mrs. Rimmer does mention the Heisinger Bill, omits dates, and does not identify the "Dr. " who accompanied Rimmer. The unnamed preacher was probably Riley, who was not identified out of respect. Though Mrs. Rimmer omits details about these events, she stressed that the hearing was a major accomplishment and watershed in Rimmer's career.


127. Ben Bogard, *Baptist and Commoner* (August 8, 1929), p. 1. In another place Bogard invited Charles Smith, head of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, to come to Arkansas to help his brethren, such as Hay Watson Smith. See *Baptist and Commoner* (May 2, 1928), p.1.


134. Hanford Daily Sentinel (January 1, 1924); "After Death What?"

135. "Two Kinds of People," *Hanford Daily Sentinel* (January 11, 1924), p. 8; "Rimmer Answers Modernist Theory," *Hanford Daily Sentinel* (January 8, 1924), p. 5; and "Rimmer Declares Modernists Seek to Undermine the


139. Kennedy, John Brown of Arkansas, p. 31.

140. Benton County Record (July 4, 1924), p. 4, and (July 18, 1924), p. 4. Though this small newspaper had only limited coverage of the Bible conference, its coverage suggests that Rimmer was the favorite speaker. Though the paper gave him no advance publicity, by the end of the conference, the paper gave him exclusive publicity. Rimmer was listed here as "Dr. Rimmer" (in 1924), even though he did not receive his first honorary doctorate until 1926.


144. "Bible Conference Opens Tomorrow," Memphis Commercial Appeal (January 26, 1927), p. 14. Mrs. Rimmer claimed that Rimmer spoke at every school and club in town; see Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 127. The newspaper account of his itinerary reported Rimmer speaking at four churches, seven schools, and three clubs during the first
week. See also "Dr. Ironsides Leaves," Memphis Commercial Appeal (February 9, 1929), p. 8; and "Bible Conference Ends," Memphis Commercial Appeal (February 8, 1929), p. 10.


149. Mignon Rimmer, "The Fire Inside Manuscript," Muntz Papers, pp. 281 a-j. Mrs. Rimmer claimed that this article was published in the Birmingham News (May 13, 1930), though I did not find it. Though included in Mrs. Rimmer's
manuscript, the article was not printed in The Fire Inside. Though the article was not printed in the Birmingham News, it is likely that Rimmer wrote it for publication and that it reflects the emphasis of his conference ministry.


157. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 218-219. According to Mrs. Rimmer, Winona Lake Conference director Biederwolf liked Rimmer and paid him more than other speakers because he brought "the crowds and the money."

158. Ibid., pp. 146, 153, 154, 157, 178, 201, 218.

160. Rimmer, "Embryology," p. 64; Riley, "Open Letter," *The Minnesota Daily* (March 11, 1927), p. 3; Rimmer, *Monkeys, Fables and Fallacies Concerning Evolution* (Los Angeles: Research Science Bureau, 1926), p. 2; it is interesting that Rimmer insisted on debating "accredited" scientists, since his own credentials were weak.


165. Three debates drew between 4,000 and 5,000 spectators. The 1925 Rimmer-Noe debate in Polar Bluff drew 4,000; the 1930 Rimmer-Riley debate at BIOLA drew 4,000; and the 1937 Rimmer-Bede debate in Duluth drew over 5,000. Even on college campuses debates were very popular. The Rimmer-Schmucker debate at the University of Pennsylvania drew a crowd of 2,500. See Beale, *Pursuit of Purity*, p. 105; "Dr. Rimmer Defeats Bede," *Duluth Herald* (December 18, 1937); "Evolution Debate Draws Wide Interest," *Poplar Bluff Daily Republican* (May 26, 1925), p. 1; and Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, p. 93. See also "Debate Turns Away 1,000" (undated clipping in Riley Manuscripts), SB 65, p. 21, which described a large turnout for an Anglo-Israelist debate.


169. Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, p. 133; William Bell Riley, "Debate on Days of Creation," *The Creation Fundamentalist* (November, 1929): 409-413. The Rimmer-Riley debate, unlike the other debates, was not characterized by hostility. Riley said that "this is a debate between fundamentalist brethren who have submitted to the same confession of faith. It is also a debate between personal friends, and on that account is not likely to be characterized by a critical spirit or acrimonious speech." Mrs. Rimmer said of the debate that "there was none of that cold antagonism so manifest in all Harry's debates with evolutionists, and we could relax and enjoy it. There was no bitter anti-Christian sentiment either in the audience or the platform."


174. Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, pp. 116-120. See also Rimmer, "Embryology," p. 64. Rimmer liked and respected Dorland. He said he would not have minded losing to such a respected man—apart from the damage to his "testimony." Rimmer noted with amusement one double conversion at the debate. Debate sponsor Dr. Brown had two girls working in his clinic: a very bright girl, who was an evolutionist, and a "Dumb Dora," who was a creationist. As a result of the debate, Rimmer said, "both got converted. Dumb Dora became an evolutionist, and the other one an anti-[evolutionist]."


180.Interview with Earl Wilder (March 16, 1987). Wilder said that this was the only time Riley lost a debate. "Debate over the Days of Creation," (November-December, 1929); Riley and Rimmer, The Creative Days of Genesis (Colton, California: World Prophecy Ministry, 1974); William Berntsen to Bernard DeRemer (March 19, 1979). Berntsen is president of Northwestern College and said in this letter that he had recently seen a 16 mm movie of a "very animated debate" between Rimmer and Riley.

181."Debate Turns Away 1,000," (Unidentified newspaper clipping, Riley manuscripts) SB 65, p. 21. This debate probably occurred in Minneapolis in 1929, 1935, or 1946. Since this is probably the debate Wilder saw, it most likely occurred in 1935. See interview with Earl Wilder (March 16, 1935); and Braswell, "Harry Rimmer," p. 263.

182.Interview with Paul Diehl (March 17, 1987); Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 90; "Dr. Rimmer Beats Bede," Duluth Herald (December 18, 1937); "Challenge to Dr. Rimmer," Duluth News Tribune (December 28, 1937); "Dr. Rimmer Accepts Challenge," Duluth News Tribune (January 3, 1938); and "Lecturer Refuses Rimmer Limitations," Duluth News Tribune (January 7, 1938).


187. Harry Rimmer, That Lawsuit Against the Bible (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1940), p. 9. For the offer of money in gold, see Harry Rimmer, The Harmony of Science and Scripture (1927), p. 7; and Monkeyshines, p. 43.


195. Oscar Whitenack, A Twentieth Century Churchman’s Viewpoint of Science (Denver, 1933). Whitenack’s title is probably a spoof on Rimmer's title for his work on virgin birth: A Scientist's Viewpoint of the Virgin Birth of Christ. Whitenack wrote to Haldeman-Julius asking for a refutation of Rimmer's claims about evolution, though this correspondence is now lost. See interview with Gene DeGruson (June 30, 1988).


198. "Crowd Hears Dr. Rimmer," Arkansas Democrat (January


201. Ibid., pp. 7-8, 11. For more on the controversy over the comparative religions approach, see Ferenc Szasz, The Divided Mind of American Protestantism, 1880-1930 (University of Alabama Press, 1982). For more on the controversy over virgin birth, see J. Gresham Machen, The Virgin Birth of Christ (New York: Harper and Row, 1930).


204. Ibid., pp. 5, 10, 19-26.

205. Rimmer said that though the biblical writers did not know the scientific truths behind their statements, the Holy Ghost guided their pen, so that "God's Word anticipated a modern (?) discovery some 1500 years." See also Harry Rimmer, "How Science Sustains the Bible," The King's Business (August, 1931): 353-355. For evangelical attacks on Rimmer, see Bernard Ramm, A Christian View of Science and Scripture (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1955), pp. 40, 125-131, 159-162; and Clark Pinnock A Defense of Biblical Infallibility (Nutley, N.J.: Presbyterian and Reformed, 1977), p. 15, where Pinnock refers to "Rimmer's scientific contraband smuggled into Scripture."

206. Harry Rimmer, Modern Science and the Youth of Today (Los Angeles: Research Science, [1929]). These dubious stories recurred in different forms. In another place, Rimmer said that the 150,000 remains dated from a massacre fifty years old. See "Monkey and Man No Kin," The
Collegio 2:40 (July 17, 1924), p. 1. Rimmer was also guilty of inflating the age of these Poplar Bluff remains, originally estimating that the remains were 500 to 700 years old. See also "Science, Youth, Rimmer Topic," The Greenville News (December 6, 1930), p. 2.

207. Harry Rimmer, Modern Science and the First Fundamental (Los Angeles: Research Science Bureau, 1928), pp. 3-4, 6, 19-20. For treatment of animal instinct and natural law in the world, see pp. 8, 11, 14. For Rimmer's claim that only a handful of the American Association for the Advancement of Science members were atheists, see p. 18.


209. Ibid., pp. 27-29; and Harry Rimmer, "Some Scientific Fallacies Exposed," The King's Business (July, 1927): 429. He explained that Ussher's problem was to rely on the Hebrew dates, which were manipulated by the enemies of Jesus. "The priests changed the dates in the Holy Record...to prove that the Messiah would not come for a thousand years! Sacrilege? Certainly: but what is sacrilege to perjured murderers?


213. On the day-age theory, see Rimmer, Modern Science and the First Day of Creation, pp. 3-4, 11. In his debate with Riley and in other booklets, Rimmer was more emphatic about the twenty-four hour days. See also Harry Rimmer, Modern Science and the Third Day of Creation, pp. 4-5. On the gap theory, see Rimmer, Modern Science and the First
Day of Creation, pp. 12-14; Modern Science and the Third Day of Creation, pp. 19-22; and Modern Science and the Fifth Day of Creation, p. 5.


215. Ibid., pp. 29-30.


218. Ibid., pp. 19, 22.

219. Ibid., pp. 37, 49.


222. Harry Rimmer, Modern Science and the Sixth Day of Creation (Los Angeles: Research Science Bureau, 1934), pp. 45-47. For references to the debates, see pp. 29, 32, 33, 40, 42.


224. Ibid., p. 11-13, 24. Rimmer cited Edwin Bell and C.A. Totten as scientific authorities on the loss of a day in the earth's chronology. Joshua's long day, however, only accounted for twenty-three hours. Rimmer attributed the rest of the lost time to the sign to Hezekiah in Isaiah 38:8. Ibid., p. 25.

225. Ibid., p. 26. Rimmer said that "as long as time shall last, the Long Day of Joshua will be attested as a scientific fact!" "SEARCH THE HEAVENS INDEED, BUT SEARCH THE WRITTEN WORD AS WELL! FOR THE HEAVENS ONLY TESTIFY TO THOSE WHO HAVE SEEN FIRST THE TESTIMONY OF THE WORD. FOR THOUGH THE WORDS AND WORKS OF GOD AGREE, THE WORD IS HIGH ABOVE THE WORKS, AND WHEN THE WORKS SHALL MELT AND PASS AWAY, THE WORD SHALL EVER ENDURE."

227. Rimmer, Modern Science, Jonah, and the Whale, pp. 14-20. Rimmer cited Dr. Ransome-Harvey from Cleveland Plain Dealer and Sunday School Times articles about a dog which survived six days in a whale, A. C. Dixon on Jonah, and a Literary Digest article on a "Twenty-first Century Jonah" who survived for forty-eight hours in a whale.


229. Ibid., p. 17.


235. Ibid., p. 24-25.


of horses, see pp. 97-113.


240. Ibid., pp. 42-44.


242. Ibid., pp. 60-66.

ENDNOTES

THE PRESBYTERIAN APOLOGIST, 1934-1939


2. Ibid., pp. 139, 165-166, 176, 188, 193.

3. Ibid., pp. 199, 201-203, 213; The First Presbyterian Church of Duluth, Minnesota: One Hundredth Anniversary, 1869-1969 (Duluth: 1944), p. 13; "Minutes of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Duluth," entries for October 6, October 19, and November 17, 1931, April 11, 1933, and January 9 and March 28, 1934; "Reverend Rimmer is Installed," Duluth News Tribune (September 7, 1934); and "Dr. Rimmer Set to Take Pulpit" Duluth Herald (March 30, 1934). The biographical information in the latter article is both interesting and misleading. Rimmer's work as the superintendent of the San Francisco City Rescue Mission and physical director of the Pacific Fleet is highlighted. The article also claimed that Rimmer was ordained in the Presbyterian Church in 1912 (rather than 1920), was a graduate of Whittier College (there was no mention of BIOLA), and was a pastor for four years in Los Angeles (there was no mention of Rimmer's service with the Quakers). Rimmer's reasons for accepting the call, at least according to his wife's account, was related to health, family, and finances, which are not considered legitimate grounds within the Reformed tradition. John Calvin argued that a true, inner call to the pastorate arose "neither from ambition, nor avarice, nor any other selfish feeling, but a sincere fear of God and desire to edify the church." (See Calvin, Institutes of the Christian Religion, Trans. Beveridge, IV:3:11.) While Rimmer undoubtedly had sincere, spiritual motives for accepting the call, Mrs. Rimmer emphasized the "fleshy" motivations. The original call did not provide for six months leave each year, but did allow Rimmer to fulfill obligations and to accept new dates. With his wife's improving health and an influx of new speaking invitations after the family's 1936 trip to England, Rimmer felt the "Macedonian call" to return to the lecture circuit, and the session then allowed...
him the six months leave per year. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 249.


5. The First Presbyterian Church of Duluth, Minnesota, pp. 13, 335; Centennial History of the First Presbyterian Church, Pine Bluff, Arkansas, 1858-1958 (Pine Bluff: 1958), p. 9; Interview with Paul Diehl (March 17, 1987); and "Minutes of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Duluth," entries for December 1, 1932, and February 13, 1934.

6. "Minutes of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Duluth," entries for October 27, 1930, December 8, 1931, January 10 and May 31, 1932, and January 7 and March 10, 1936; and Interview with Jean Macrae (March 17, 1987).


8. "Dr. Rimmer Resigns," Duluth Herald (September 27, 1938); "Ex-Duluth Pastor Dies," (undated clipping in the Biography File, Duluth Public Library); Interview with Jean Macrae (March 17, 1987); Interview with Paul Diehl (March 17, 1987); and "Minutes of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Duluth," entry for September 11, 1938.

9. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 209; The First Presbyterian Church of Duluth, Minnesota, p. 13; Interview with Paul Diehl (March 17, 1987); and Interview with David Gabriel (June 12, 1988).

10. Interviews with Florence Nelson, Mary Diehl, Walter Engblom, and Jean Macrae (March 17, 1987), and Mrs. Paul K. Hendricks (March 19, 1987). Both Mrs. Hendricks, Mary Diehl, and Walter Engblom were married by Rimmer. Mrs. Hendricks' first husband, knowing of Rimmer's prank, did not put any money in the envelope. Rimmer was embarrassed when the bride opened the envelope to find it empty.


12. The First Presbyterian Church of Duluth, Minnesota, pp. 13-14; "Chicagoan Gets Call to Church," Duluth News Tribune (December 12, 1936); Minutes of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Duluth," entry for December
11, 1936; Interview with Jean Macrae (March 17, 1987); and "Dr. Honeywell is Dead at 68," Duluth Herald (December 12, 1938). Honeywell formally began at the church on December 15, 1938. Honeywell was hired because Rimmer was increasing his outside speaking engagements. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 249.

13. The First Presbyterian Church of Duluth, Minnesota, p. 13; Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 213-214, 250; "Minutes of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Duluth," entry for September 11, 1938; Interview with Dean Carlson (March 14, 1987); and "Minutes of the Duluth Presbytery, 1929-1944," pp. 119, 134, 153-157. Honeywell's letter was presented by Ernest Loft, Rimmer's close friend and a conservative leader in Presbytery. Loft was moderator of Presbytery in April, 1935, when conservatives took control, and helped Rimmer argue the Perkins' Case before the Winnebago Presbytery. The possible problems between Honeywell and Rimmer might have divided Presbytery conservatives. The conservative stated clerk of Presbytery certainly felt that Rimmer had treated Honeywell unfairly.

14. Interviews with Mary Diehl (March 17, 1987), Mr. and Mrs. Paul K. Hendricks (March 19, 1987), and Dean Carlson (March 14, 1987).

15. The First Presbyterian Church of Duluth, Minnesota, p. 13; and interviews with Lloyd Peabody, Jean Macrae, and Walter Engblom (March 17, 1987).


bothered Rimmer with its tendencies toward missions and liberalism. The most dramatic piece was the "Hocking Report," a report edited by William Hocking entitled Rethinking Missions: A Layman's Inquiry After One Hundred Years, which condemned the "narrow, irresponsible, and shallow extension of nominal Christianity", in which non-Christian were seen as false and idolatrous, nobler traits of other religions were not appreciated, and there was a sharp cleavage between Christian and non-Christian faiths. The Hocking Report urged missions agencies to teach the Christian ethics identified in the Sermon on the Mount and deal with social problems, even prescribing socialism, but discouraged traditional proselytizing and said little about fundamental Christological or redemptive doctrines. Missions support, financing, and candidacy in mainline denominations plummeted during the Twenties. The Foreign Missionary Conference of North America had 2,700 student mission participants in 1920, while only 252 students volunteered in 1928.


21. Ibid., pp. 170-173, 184, 286-288. The trial was unusual for many reasons. Machen was technically under the jurisdiction of the Philadelphia Presbytery, not the Presbytery of New Brunswick. Machen was tried for violating a General Assembly ruling, which could not be made binding on ministers without Presbytery ratification (as in the case of the Auburn Affirmation). The Presbytery refused to hear Machen's rationale for creating an Independent Board, and only allowed evidence on the narrow question of whether he had obeyed the General Assembly. The judiciary council was further compromised of partisan members. One member was a signer of the Auburn Affirmation, in defiance of the 1923 General Assembly ruling, and another member held Machen's chair in Apologetics at Princeton Seminary. See also Coray, J. Gresham Machen, pp. 92-108; and Stonehouse, J. Gresham Machen, pp. 489-508.

22. Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 210-211; Interview with Dean Carlson (March 14, 1987); and Interview with Paul Hendricks (March 19, 1987). Carlson was the long-term stated clerk of the Presbytery, while Hendricks was a close friend of Rimmer and a moderator during this turbulent period. Both would be considered evangelical--fairly conservative in theology, but also comfortable with a broad, pluralistic church. Both men, however, voted against the Van Dyken ordination, feeling that the candidate was totally modernistic. See also "Minutes of
the Duluth Presbytery," pp. 74, 78; and Harry Rimmer, "The Trend to the Left," The Presbyterian (November, 1934), pp. 2, 8, 11.


24. Ibid., p. 8; and "Minutes of the Duluth Presbytery," p. 74.


30. "Minutes of the Duluth Presbytery," pp. 82, 86. The vote on the First Presbyterian Church's resolution was thirty-four to twenty-five. Since this was similar to the margins on other votes in the Presbytery controversy over modernism, it suggests that conservatives held a solid majority of just under sixty percent of the Presbytery by the Spring of 1935. See also Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 222. Pearl Buck later said that she admired Machen more than "the princes of the church" who "play their church politics and trim their sails to every wind." Perhaps this was also true in Rimmer's case. When the Board could not force disciplinary action against him in Presbytery, perhaps they tried to be more conciliatory. Buck herself was forced to resign, and the Board accepted her resignation "with regret." Buck said that she met the same fate as Machen: "I was kicked out the back door of the church, and he was kicked out of the front one." See The New Republic (January 20, 1937); quoted in Stonehouse, J. Gresham Machen, pp. 476-477.


At the close of the General Assembly, Rimmer commented that "we are started on a new year with the machinery--and thats that!"

33. Carrie Marie Fenton, A Costly Dream (Salem, Oregon: Panther Printing, 1979), pp. xiii, xiv, 22, 33-34, 37, 59-60, 98. Perkins had two camps (one at Crescent Lake and one at Lake Lundgren), but the Crescent Lake Camp was the real problem since it was so close to the Presbytery's camp. Perkins' camp was very dispensational, since Bible lessons dealt with "Dispensational Truth" and "Rightly Dividing," in addition to "Personal Evangelism." See also Rian, The Presbyterian Conflict, pp. 210-211.

34. Fenton, A Costly Dream, pp. 59-60, 98. Fenton made special reference to Rimmer's defense. Perkins was seen as a hero at Crescent Lake. Though he was martyred, Fenton said, "Rev. Perkins's evangelistic work could not be stopped." The title of the Fenton's history of Crescent Lake came from Perkins' last journal entries, where he said "Praise God for this camp, which has cost so much, but is being used so of God. It is all worth the cost. Thank God I never turned back." Perkins received honorable mention in a history of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church for his faithful Bible camp, unwavering convictions though it meant suspension from the ministry (this history noted that Perkins was suspended at the same General Assembly as Machen), assistance in founding the Old Stockbridge Orthodox Presbyterian Church with another deposed minister from the Crescent Lake Bible Fellowship (Harold Hillegas), and his moving August 19, 1936 sermon on "Why I am No Longer in the Presbyterian Church, U.S.A." See The Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1936-1986 (Philadelphia: Committee for the Historian of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church, 1986), p. 125. See also Rian, The Presbyterian Conflict, p. 210-211; and Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 224-225. Rimmer was assisted by Ernest Loft, the Presbyterian pastor at Virginia, Minnesota, and Warren Allen, pastor of First Presbyterian in Minneapolis. See also interviews with Dean Carlson (March 14, 1987); and Paul Hendricks (March 20, 1987). Ironically, one of the things that unified conservatives in the Duluth Presbytery was their acquisition of a nearly defunct Presbyterian camp. For Rimmer's praise of this work, see Last of the Giants, pp. 281-282. Mignon Rimmer described Perkins' emotional breakdown in uncharacteristic detail; she noted his growing lack of self worth, how he sat on the floor of the car since he did not feel worthy to occupy a seat, and commitment to a mental institution.

35. "Minutes of the Duluth Presbytery," p. 82; Harry Rimmer, "The Drift to the Left," p. 2; Brandon Rimmer,
interview with Ronald Numbers (May 15, 1984); and Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 226, 249. The letter came from Ernest Tremblay, who had served as a home missions pastor in Wisconsin for twenty-five years. Since he was Perkins's partner in starting the camps at Crescent Lake and Lake Lundgren, he was not impartial. Whether the charges were true or not, they were important for motivating Rimmer to sever connections with the Board of National Missions. There is no other evidence that Rimmer took the church in hopes of changing its missions policy. Brandon Rimmer's comments do suggest, however, that Rimmer considered the revamping of the mission program was one of his biggest accomplishments. The First Presbyterian Church is still very active in, and proud of, its mission work. See The First Presbyterian Church of Duluth, pp. 38-35.

36. Harry Rimmer, The Last of the Giants, pp. 52-53, 60-63, 185-187, 211-214, 234, 243-246, 263-264; Harry Rimmer, "The Trend to the Left," pp. 8, 11; and "Minutes of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church," entries for June 1, 1934, and May 9, 1939. The session at Duluth's First Presbyterian asked for clarification of its relationship to and responsibility for Sorenberger in 1934. Though Rimmer said that Sorenberger was on the payroll of the Duluth's First Presbyterian Church until the time of his death, in 1939, the Presbytery refused the session's request to directly support Sorenberger after his retirement from the Board of National Missions. Though the technical relationship between the sky pilot and the church is unclear, the church, as Rimmer claimed, had a special interest in Sorenberger. Rimmer did not necessarily endorse all of Sorenberger's antics; of the latter's break with the National Mission Board, Rimmer said "rightly or wrongly, he felt he was being exploited."

37. Interviews with Paul Hendricks (March 20, 1987), and Dean Carlson (March 14, 1987). Rimmer tried to remove Rev. Wittenberger, a liberal pastor from Cloquet, after one year of a three year term as stated clerk, because his son was sentenced to a reform school, but was resoundingly defeated by a margin of about 60-4. During a subsequent pastorate in St. Paul, however, Rev. Wittenberger's son raped a girl in the church basement after his release from reform school. "Resolution Adopted by the Session and Congregation of the First Presbyterian Church of Duluth, Minnesota, on the Resignation of its Pastor Dr. Harry Rimmer," (April 9, 1939), quoted in Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 279-280.

did take his church out of the Presbytery because of the modernist problem, but he was a loner and was not greatly respected in the Presbytery. His church joined with the Independent Fundamentalist Churches of America.


43. Brandon Rimmer said that John Laurence Frost had repudiated Christianity before Rimmer won him back, and that this was the reason for Howard Frost's enthusiasm about Rimmer. Frost had Rimmer preach the funeral service, and dedicate a John Frost Memorial Chapel in Rome, Georgia in 1937, in addition to the apologetics library. See Mignon Rimmer, *The Fire Inside*, pp. 227, 232-234, 250-251; and "Minutes of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church in Duluth, 1934-1941," pp. 42, 48. Rimmer received $300 in the summer of 1935 for four months of secretarial assistance, and $900 in October of 1935 for the Frost fund. The session minutes do not include the largest of the Frost gifts, noted by Mignon Rimmer, which funded the family's trips abroad. It is almost impossible to tell how many volumes were published in the Frost series, since the titles, and sometimes each title, were published by many different houses: Research Science Bureau, Van Kampen, Berne, and Eerdmans.

44. Harry Rimmer, *The Harmony of Science and Scripture* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1936), p. 5; Mignon Rimmer, *The
Fire Inside, p. 227; and Letter from Danford Gibbs, Eerdmans representative (October 20, 1988). Mrs. Rimmer notes that there were seventeen editions of the work by 1958 ("Editions" almost always meant reprint. Eerdmans, for instance, published a "seventh edition" in 1938, only two years after Harmony was first published. I have found no differences in the various editions of Rimmer's works.) Eerdmans eventually published 66,000 copies of Harmony in twenty two printings.


47. For Rimmer's trip to England, see Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 235-246. In her only reference to Rimmer's research, she described going to see "what Harry was doing" and getting to see the Rosetta Stone, Bach's music manuscripts, and the Codex Sinaiticus. For Rimmer's repeated references to the British Museum, see Harry Rimmer, Dead Men Tell Tales (Chicago: Van Kampen/Eerdmans, 1946), pp. 6, 50, 142-144, 207, 220-221, 261, 274-276, 298-299, 312, 341-343. In one example that sounds like a museum guidebook, Rimmer said "In the British Museum will be found tablets, stelae, portraits, and sculptured remnants from Egypt which have been derived from these unsettled times. In the Egyptian Collection of the British Museum the exhibit numbered 1358 contains a portrait of Hophra. There are also a number of scarabs in Table Case "B" in the Fourth Egyptian Room, and a fragmentary sistrum in the Fifth Egyptian Room, all of which bear the name Hophra and authenticate his record." For other references to British Museum research, see Harry Rimmer, Crying Stones (Berne, Indiana: Berne Witness Company, 1941), pp. 46, 134, 140, 157; Kathryn Braswell Rimmer, "Harry Rimmer--Defender

48. "Rimmers to Make Study of Archeological Data," Duluth News-Tribune (January 2, 1938) -- according to the article, even Mrs. Rimmer was going to Palestine to do research; Harry Rimmer, Dead Men Tell Tales, pp. 239-244; Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 249-276; Harry Rimmer, "Jerusalem Knows Wars Horrors," Duluth News-Tribune (February 20, 1938); The First Presbyterian Church of Duluth, Minnesota, p. 13; Braswell, "Harry Rimmer," p. 263; Brandon Rimmer, interview with Ronald Numbers (May 15, 1984); and interviews with Paul Diehl and Jean Macrae (March 17, 1987).

49. Harry Rimmer, Dead Men Tell Tales, pp. 6, 23-27, 42, 109, 206, 259-260; Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 228-229; and Letter from Danford Gibbs (October 20, 1988). Mignon Rimmer said that there were twelve editions of the work by 1962. Eerdmans released 30,000 copies in sixteen printings. The 1946 edition was a joint release by Van Kampen Press and Eerdmans. A student at Northwestern said that this book was their archeology textbook. Interview with Earl Wilder (March 16, 1987).


53. On Bede's persona see Minneapolis Morning Herald

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(February 20, 1934), where Bede debated a Methodist minister of the question of repealing the the Eighteenth Amendment (Bede was the affirmative), and Duluth Herald (March 16, 1938), p. 8., which, in announcing Bede's part in an upcoming play, described him as a "humorist, public speaker, former congressman, and editor--who started acting as a hobby." On Bede's debate preparation, see the handbill "Evolution and Creation" and Bede's notebook on the debate, "Evolution and Creation," in the Bede Papers, Northeast Minnesota Historical Society. For the account of the debate see "Evolution Theory Debated, Fundamentalist is Victor," Duluth News-Tribune (December 18, 1937); and interview with Mary Diehl (March 17, 1987).

54. "Dr. Rimmer Beats Bede," Duluth Herald (December 18, 1937); Evolution Theory Debated, Fundamentalist is Victor," Duluth News-Tribune (December 18, 1937); interviews with Jean Macrae and Paul Diehl (March 17, 1987), Paul Hendricks (March 20, 1987), and Earl Wilder (March 16, 1987).


57. Interview with Jean Macrae (March 17, 1987).
CHAPTER SIX: THE EVANGELICAL STATESMAN, 1939-1952

1. C. Brandon Rimmer, interview with Ronald Numbers (May 15, 1984). Interview with Phillip Lasse (April 17, 1989). Lasse presently a missionary to Kenya, grew up on an African Inland Mission station (where he was delivered by Dr. Charles Trout, the man who had converted Rimmer), attended Moody and Wheaton in the mid-fifties, and remembered that Rimmer was a "big name."

2. New York Herald Tribune (October 31, 1939), p. 2. During the trial Rimmer claimed that he had not authorized this particular advertisement, though similar challenges had been issued from the church at which he was speaking, radio broadcasts, and other New York newspapers. For Rimmer's itinerary and speaking topics, see New York Herald Tribune (November 4, 1939), p. 12. See also Harry Rimmer, That Lawsuit Against the Bible, p. 16. The national media used the case as a curiository item, though not a major news story. The case, however, did not seem to attract much attention in the fundamentalist press at the time. Moody Monthly, for instance, did not mention the trial. See also Harry Rimmer, The Research Science Bureau, Inc. (Duluth, Minnesota: Research Science Bureau, 1940), p. 4.

3. "Monkey Trial, 1940", Newsweek 15 (February 26, 1940): 47-48. The article received its title because the case "strongly reminded observers of the Dayton, Tennessee 'Monkey Trial of 1925.'" Rimmer's lawyer also made the association with the Scopes Trial. He said that "The celebrated and so called "Monkey Trial," which occurred in Dayton, Tenn. in 1925 was for the purpose of determining whether Prof. Scopes had committed a misdemeanor by teaching evolution as a fact in a school supported by state funds. He admitted that he did and was found guilty. His eminent counsel, Clarence Darrow, tried to justify his act by pointing out alleged errors in the Bible, which was defended by William Jennings Bryan. But the issue in the case was not whether the Bible was wrong, but whether it was a breach of the law to teach evolution in the State of Tennessee in a tax supported school. In our case, however, the direct question was an attempt on the part of atheists, agnostics, and freethinkers to prove that the Bible was unscientific and the burden of proof rested entirely on

4. *Sunday Mirror Magazine Section* (December 10, 1939). After playing up the clash of world views in the trial, the article closed by noting that, whatever the conclusion, the outcome will not shake the faith of the world's 683,000,000 Christians, nor threaten the Bible's position as the all time best seller.

5. “Freethinker vs. Pastor,” *Newsweek* 14 (November 20, 1939): 33. For Floyd's reputation and a bitter assessment of Rimmer, see E. Haldemann-Julius, *Questions and Answers* 20th series (Girard, Kansas: Haldemann-Julius Publications, [1940]), pp. 47-48. Bennet, *The Bible Defeats Atheism*, p. 6. Bennet makes the comment about the "atheist magazine" and membership in the "First Humanist Church." *Newsweek* notes that Floyd was a member of John Hayes Holmes's Manhattan Community Church, while the *Mirror Magazine* stated that The Arbitrator was devoted to "outlawing war, abolishing poverty, and unveiling superstition."

6. *Newsweek* (Nov. 28, 1939), p. 33, and Rimmer, *That Lawsuit Against the Bible*, p. 16. See also "Freethinker's Fight," *Newsweek* (December 4, 1939), p. 47. At the same time as the trial, Wheless was a counsel for the New York State League for the Separation of Church and State and was trying to abolish the Albany prison chaplancy and the prison chapel. Rimmer's lawyer Bennet was also a veteran of religious disputes, and had published a number of fundamentalist tracts.

7. Rimmer, *That Lawsuit Against the Bible*, pp. 9, 16-17, 77; *Newsweek* (Nov. 28, 1939), p. 33; and *Mirror Magazine*.

8. Bennet, *The Bible Defeats Atheism*, p. 6. Bennet added that Rimmer was half Scotch. Anyone who thought they could write to someboy who was even half Scotch and receive a thousand dollars by return mail really was a "free thinker!" Bennet said that the legal summons came the day after Floyd's original letter, while Rimmer said, at one point, it was a couple of days, and, at another point, it was under forty eight hours. Rimmer, *That Lawsuit Against the Bible*, pp. 15, 64.


10. Rimmer, *That Lawsuit Against the Bible*, pp. 18-25,
Floyd's brief did not fulfill the Research Science Bureau's conditions which required that 1) applicants must submit five duplicate typewritten copies, 2) proof and evidence of errors, 3) the committee would not be obligated to harmonize scripture with "scientific theories"--only with "established fact[s] of science", 4) the committee would meet quarterly to consider claims of the past three months, and 5) the decision of the committee's majority would be final in all cases.

11. Rimmer, That Lawsuit Against the Bible, pp. 38-41, 65; and Bennet, The Bible Defeats Atheism, p. 40, 22-25. Bennet even fabricated the name of a bulletin which offered new evidence on the age of the earth and tricked the defense witness into saying he had read the publication. Bennet concluded that the witness "was relying upon his imagination and was not proceeding in a scientific manner."

12. Bennet, The Bible Defeats Atheism, pp. 33-34. The "gap theory", which was outlined in the Scofield Bible and was very popular amongst dispensationalists, stated that God "created" (bara) the earth in Genesis 1:1 the unknown, distant past. After a great cataclysm produced by Satan's fall and judgment the earth was left, according to Gen. 2:1a and Jer. 4:23, "without form and void." The entire creation account, after Gen. 1:2a, is really the story of how God recreated or "made" (asa) the earth. The gap theory allowed fundamentalists accept long geological ages and, in some instances, the existence of pre-Adamic peoples. The judge was familiar with the six day and day-age theories of creation, but was unfamiliar with and fascinated by the gap theory. Bennet's book covers the theory in depth. pp. 32-37.

13. For the full discussion of the trial's arguments, see Rimmer, That Lawsuit Against the Bible, pp. 41-62; and Bennet, The Bible Defeats Atheism, 12-14.

14. Rimmer, That Lawsuit Against the Bible, pp. 55, 67; and Bennet, The Bible Defeats Atheism, pp. 28, 25. For an evaluation of the judge see Rimmer, pp. 14, 17, 50-51, 69, 80, and Bennet, pp. 11, 43. For the Associated Press story, see "Comedy of Errors," San Francisco Chronicle (February 18, 1940). The Newsweek coverage in "Monkey Trial, 1940" included a repartee between Bennet and a Woolsey Teller, the vice president of the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism, on the age of the earth, the evolution of man from apes, and on the question of Bennet's tail. Throughout the exchange Bennet made snide, "offstage comments."

15. Rimmer, That Lawsuit Against the Bible, p. 87.
16. Haldemann-Julius, Questions and Answers, p. 48; and Bennet, The Bible Defeats Atheism, p. 45. Bennet mentions the atheists' victory celebration as a face saving gesture.

17. Bryce Augsburger, Shall We Cooperate With the Graham Crusade? (Chicago: Marquette Manor Baptist Church, [1962]), p. 12. In this booklet, written twenty two years after the trial, Bennet was introduced simply as "lawyer to the famous Harry Rimmer case on 'Evolution and the Bible'." "Dr." Bennet had become a spokesman for strict fundamentalism, and was quoted for his opposition to Billy Graham, who allegedly invited "modernists, liberals, and infidels" to participate in his crusades.


19. Letter from Earl Wilder, April 5, 1987. Wilder's notes are from a Rimmer presentation on January 1, 1940, at First Presbyterian Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Rimmer's lecture was over the upcoming trial. That Wilder attended only this lecture suggests that the lawsuit was of vital interest to evangelicals of the time. While a student at Northwestern Wilder had taken a course from Rimmer which probably explains the careful typing and preservation of the notes.

20. Rimmer, That Lawsuit Against the Bible, pp. 9-10, 16, 87-88. For the offer of $10,000 for a biblical error, see "Moses and Modern Science," and undated tape from after 1947 (since Rimmer advertised Lot's Wife and the Science of Physics); a tape in my possession, given courtesy of Rev. Emmit Cleveland, First Bible Presbyterian Church, Nashville, Tennessee.

21. Harry Rimmer, Lot's Wife and the Science of Physics (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1947). Eerdmans published 5,000 copies of this work. Letter from Danford Gibbs (October 29, 1988). Despite the strange title, Lot's Wife is the most convincing of Rimmer's creationist works, since the various articles clearly present Rimmer's philosophy of science (ironically, his strongest area) and are buttressed with excellent illustrations.


23. "Confidential American Scientific Affiliation Review of Harry Rimmer's Voices From the Silent Centuries," December, 1948, J. Frank Cassel Papers (from copies in the
possession of Ronald Numbers; Papers now housed at Buswell Library, Wheaton College). The reports were submitted by R. Laird Harris and J. Laurence Kulp. See also Edwin Monsma to Cassel (January 13, 1948), Harley Barnes to Cassel (December 20, 1947), Cassel to William Tinkle (May 5, 1948), Marion Barnes to Cassel (February 29, 1949), all correspondence in the Cassel Papers; and J. Frank Cassel, interview with Ronald Numbers (September 11, 1988). For other criticisms of Rimmer, see William Tinkle to Cassel (April 22, 1948), Paul Parker to Cassel (May 15, 1948), and George Horner to Cassel (February 20, 1948). For a critical evaluation of the American Scientific Affiliation, see Morris, History of Modern Creationism, pp. 130-144, and Walter Lammerts, "The Creationist Movement in the United States: A Personal Account," Journal of Christian Reconstruction 1:1 (Summer, 1974): 55.

24. For reference to Rimmer in Creation-Deluge Society, see Robert Shinn, "The Modern Doctrine of Special Creation," The Bulletin of Deluge Geology 5:3 (August, 1945): 25-28, which has a long bibliography of Rimmer's works only Rimmer and Price are listed), and Varner Johns, "The Origins of the Races," The Bulletin of Creation, Deluge, and Related Sciences 4:1 (January, 1944), p. 10, which has a long quotation from Rimmer's Dead Men Tell Tales. Henry Morris says that a Seventh Day Adventist faction took over the Creation-Deluge Society in 1945, and it ceased to be a strong creationist organization; Morris, History of Modern Creationism, pp. 117-130.

25. Leander Keyser recommended Rimmer for a Religion and Science Association committee post to Theodore Graebner, who forwarded the suggestion to L. A. Higley at Wheaton. Higley tactfully declined saying that Rimmer was a friend and "an excellent man in his field. However, he has never had scientific, nor Biblical training such as would command the attention of the general public." (Within six months Wheaton College gave Rimmer an honorary degree in science.) See Keyser to Graebner (November 22, 1935), and Higley to Graebner (November 27, 1935); Graebner Papers, Concordia Historical Institute, 200 G, B 1, File 6. Rimmer gave an address at the 1936 Religion and Science Convention on the "Fallacies of Evolution." See Program of the RSA Convention, Byran Nelson Papers, Institute for Creation Research. George McCready Price to Nelson (July 8, 1935), Whitney to Nelson (June 33, 1928; March 18, 1936; and August 26, 1935); Highley to Whitney (April 18, 1936), Nelson Papers. Morris said Whitney was "unimpressed" with Rimmer and used "highly uncomplimentary" language about him in letters. Morris, History of Modern Creationism, p. 115.

26. B.C. Koenig to Graebner (March 15, 1940), and Graebner to Koenig (March 28, 1940), Graebner Papers,


29. Interview with Kathryn Braswell (June 25, 1988).


34. Harry Rimmer, The Crucible of Calvary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1938), p. 19. Eerdmans published 5,000 copies of the work in two printings (although another publisher probably initially printed it, since the 1945 Eerdmans edition was the "third edition."). Letter from Danford Gibbs (October 20, 1988).

35. Harry Rimmer, Voices From Calvary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1940). Eerdmans published 6,000 copies of this work in three printings, see letter from Danford Gibbs (October 20, 1988). Grand Rapids fundamentalist leader Mel Trotter frequently had Rimmer for conferences and felt that the "Voice of Faith" and "Voice of Israel" lectures (from the Voice of Calvary series) were Rimmer's best messages. See Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 161.


38. Harry Rimmer, The Magnificence of Jesus (Berne, Indiana: Berne Witness, 1943). For Rimmer's comment that this was his best work, see Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, p. 300. Eerdmans alone published 14,000 copies in seven printings. See letter from Danford Gibbs (October 20, 1988).


40. Harry Rimmer, The Golden Text For Today, 2v. (Chicago: Van Kampen Press, 1950-1951). The Bible Expositor and Illuminator was the quarterly publication of the Union Gospel Press of Cleveland, Ohio. For other references to this work and its influences, see Mignon
Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 287, 293-294, 356. Eerdmans also picked up this title, but only published 200 copies. Letter from Danford Gibbs (October 20, 1988). See also Harry Rimmer, That's a Good Question (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954) and interview with Lloyd Peabody (March 17, 1987). Peabody gave me some of photographs of Rimmer and some of his former pastor's books, but later asked to keep That's a Good Question, saying it was the one book he could not part with, and that he still used it for Sunday School presentations.


43. Harry Rimmer, Palestine, the Coming Storm Center (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1940). Citations from the reprint in Harry Rimmer, "Palestine, the Coming Storm Center," The Shadow of Coming Events (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1946) 1950), pp. 24-26, 29-30, 34, 39, 49, 61, 64.


45. Harry Rimmer, The Shadow of Coming Events, pp. 118, 168-169. Eerdmans published 12,000 copies of this work in three printings. Letter from Danford Gibbs (October 20, 1988). The book was also printed in Dutch, meaning that Rimmer's works were released in at least ten different languages. See Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 301-302, 322. Brandon Rimmer, interview with Ronald Numbers (May 15, 1984). Brandon Rimmer's claim might not be accurate. BIOLA had most of Rimmer's books in their library in 1988; see letter from Signe Wattenford, BIOLA
archivist (December 28, 1988). Rimmer remained friends with BIOLA men, such as William Evans. Brandon Rimmer's testimony is important, however, because he remembers intense opposition to his father's new eschatological teachings.


47. Ed Dobson and Ed Hinson, "Apocalypse Now?: What Fundamentalists Believe About the End of the World," *Policy Review* (Fall, 1986): 18. Rimmer was wrong about one aspect of the war, as he predicted that Germany would defeat Russia when their alliance deteriorated. Rimmer noted that this was his first and last attempt at prophecy, since it "makes me one hundred percent wrong, and I shall not spoil that record by guessing any more." Harry Rimmer, *Straight Ahead Lies Yesterday* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1943), p. 24.


53. Harry Rimmer, *The Golden Text for Today*, 1: 96-97, 151-152, 161, 313, 400, 407. He said that ecclesiastical leaders "exhaust themselves with schemes of world improvement and human betterment which prophecy and history alike teach us cannot succeed, and they reject the program of evangelism and missionary enterprise which alone can bring the end of which they dream and toward which they labor. But there is one sure promise of a rosy dawn on the world's dark horizon--Jesus is coming!" Ibid, pp. 406-401. See also Harry Rimmer, *Christianity and Modern Crises*, p. 135, where Rimmer argued that evangelism would introduce a "new world order," because the growing number of conversions would signal the return of Christ.

54. Harry Rimmer, *Straight Ahead Lies Yesterday*, pp. 19-20, 66-70; and Harry Rimmer, *The Purposes of Calvary*, p. 54, where he noted that France was "rotten with atheism and corrupt with communism." See the many references to civic righteousness in *The Golden Text for Today*, 1: 114, 119, 175, 178, 185, 228-229, 248-251, 355-359, 398, 402-405, and on alcohol: 101, 105-106, 123-125, 128, 175, 250, 284-285, 355, 386-388, 402, 421-422. Kathryn Braswell Rimmer suggested her father was especially critical of drinking because he saw the abuse of it while in logging and mining camps in the West. Interview with Kathryn Braswell (June 25, 1988).


56. Harry Rimmer, *Christianity and Modern Crises* (East Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania: Pinebook Book Club, 1944), pp. 52, 54, 58-59, 60-63, 93-94, 100. Rimmer was especially critical of the Jehovah Witnesses, but commended Mennonites and Quakers for their courageous work in military support services. See also Harry Rimmer, *Straight Ahead Lies Yesterday*, pp. 20-26, 28-30, 42-44, 49. Elsewhere Rimmer was more positive about the British empire, by saying that because of Nigerian nationalism, "death and bloodshed will stalk the land, pestilence and plague will run rampant, and their thin veneer of pseudo-culture will be gone in less than six months. The genius of the British, their ability and patience, are the only enlightening political prospect in that land." Harry Rimmer, *The Golden Text For Today*, 1: 97.


59. Harry Rimmer, Christianity and Modern Crises, pp. 53, 126-127; and Harry Rimmer, The Golden Text For Today, I: 35-36, 99, 315, 395. Though the condemnation of racism in Christianity and Modern Crises represented his beliefs, Rimmer also used it as a backhanded slap at labor unions, since he repeatedly noted the discriminatory labor practices in unions.


62. Harry Rimmer, Miracles at Morning Cheer, pp. 10-11, 20, 26, 28, 36, 39, 54, 92, 105, 111, 132-135, 139; Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, 288-290, 297; Harry Rimmer, Christianity and Modern Crises, p. 61. See also The Sunday School Times (April 25, 1942); and "Rev. Rimmer Serves Army Camp," Duluth Herald (June 1, 1942).


64. Interview with Paul Hendricks (March 20, 1987); Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 307, 313-317, 319, 348-349; and an undated newspaper clipping on the hospital in the Rimmer file, Biographical Index, Duluth Public Library. Gusanos Voladores (Guayaquil: Reed and Reed, 1947) was a 76 page booklet.

65. Harry Rimmer, Miracles at Morning Cheer, pp. 16-18; Mignon Rimmer, The Fire Inside, pp. 318-319, 322, 349;


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ALL THINGS MADE NEW:
THE EVOLVING FUNDAMENTALISM OF HARRY RIMMER,
1890-1952

Abstract of dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
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ABSTRACT

Harry Rimmer (1890-1952) was a national leader of American fundamentalism in the first half of the twentieth century. Associated with fundamentalism from its beginning, Rimmer remained committed to the "fundamentals" throughout his life, but eschewed the separatistic tendencies of some fundamentalists, encouraged conservative ecumenism, and was a harbinger of an emerging evangelicalism.

Rimmer began his career as an itinerant evangelist, serving in skid row missions, logging camps, Indian missions, military camps, YMCA youth meetings, and citywide revival crusades. His message and style were typical of fundamentalist evangelists during the era of Billy Sunday; Rimmer used colorful and dramatic techniques for the purpose of "soul winning" and promoting civic morality.

Rimmer changed the focus of his ministry during the twenties by increasingly emphasizing Bible and science themes. He launched a crusade against evolution by creating the Research Science Bureau, testifying in behalf of state anti-evolution laws, and appearing in conferences and highly publicized debates. Rimmer was a symbolic creationist, a scientific prophet, who paved the way for later creation-scientists, by doing first-hand research on scientific questions and opposing evolution for both religious and scientific reasons.
Rimmer participated in the fundamentalist-modernist controversy in the Presbyterian Church in the thirties. Though he continued to contribute to the creationist cause, the new focus of his work was apologetics and the defense of the Bible. His efforts to change the national church were unsuccessful, but he significantly altered the theological complexion of the Duluth Presbytery.

In the last years of his life Rimmer became an evangelical statesman. Returning to an eclectic, itinerant ministry, he continued his popular conference ministry and student evangelism, started servicemen's centers during World War II, and traveled extensively in behalf of world missions. Rimmer's ministry had a prophetic dimension, as he emphasized eschatological themes, current events, and civic righteousness. He also became an advocate of conservative unity, by proclaiming broadly evangelical doctrines, emphasizing cooperative ventures among evangelical Christians, and supporting organizations such as the National Association of Evangelicals.