Kirk Mariner provides us with two books, not just one, in this volume. The first is a narrative history of the beginnings and development of Methodism on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. It is a microcosm of much that has been true of the Methodist Church as a whole. The Methodists were preceded by the Anglicans, the Puritans of New England, Quakers, Presbyterians, and Baptists in this area. However, following the American Revolution, these religious denominations were to give way to the Methodists. Freeborn Garrettson was probably the first Methodist preacher on the Eastern Shore, with Francis Asbury being there as early as 1783. The revivals of the Second Great Awakening came to the Eastern Shore at the beginning of the nineteenth century with considerable impact for the Methodists. Within fifteen years the Methodist churches would outnumber Baptist and Episcopalian churches combined.

During the ensuing years the Methodist Episcopal Church in this part of Virginia underwent the same problems that the church as a whole would encounter. The Reform Movement, seeking to gain greater democracy within the Methodist Episcopal Church called for election of presiding elders by the annual conference and representatives of lay members and local preachers at the conferences. When these proposals were not accepted, the first Methodist Protestant congregations were formed.

With the adoption of the Plan of Separation in 1844 brought about by the differences over the question of slavery, a period of considerable turmoil, which was to last through 1846 and 1847, began. The northern and southern branches of the church were then able to have a decade of peaceful coexistence. As the Civil War drew nearer, tension between the churches grew greater; with the outbreak of war, the struggle became more embittered. By 1866 the Methodist Episcopal Church had only three churches and two empty buildings. The legacy of this period was ill-will and distrust that has never been fully overcome. By the end of the 1860s the blacks had left and established their own churches. Methodism was to become weakened because it was divided into more streams than ever before.

When the railroad came to the Eastern Shore all denominations started new congregations until in 1900 there was a church for every 324 persons. The depression of the 1930s brought an end to more than
a century of growth among the churches of the Eastern Shore. Decline set in because the area was overchurched and many of the blacks were migrating to cities of the North. The Methodists were also being challenged by other religious groups — the Holiness Movement, Pentecostal churches, new religious movements such as the Jehovah’s Witnesses, and preacher-centered churches.

The second half of the volume consists of brief historical sketches of every congregation, Methodist or otherwise, since the Eastern Shore was settled by the English. Maps which identify the locations of present and past churches add much to the usefulness of this portion of the book.

Mariner has written his *Revival’s Children* in an interesting and very readable style. He has dealt honestly with the difficulties, the conflicts, the various activities, and the achievements of the various threads of Methodism. The book is to be commended to anyone who desires to know more of the problems that confronted the people called Methodists, as well as other denominations to a limited degree, in this part of Virginia.

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Good psycho-history must be based on adequate psychology. This assumption underlies Moore’s study, which attempts to demonstrate that Erik Erikson’s “psychoanalytic ego psychology” does provide an adequate methodology and an appropriate model for reintegrating psychological interpretation “into its rightful place in serious work in religious inquiry” (p.187). Sandwiched between the opening and concluding chapters that outline the rationale and implications of such an endeavor are four chapters that demonstrate the author’s approach, using John Wesley as a case study. The particular focus of the analysis is the way in which “patterns of authority relations” effected Wesley’s search for selfhood, the development of his theology, and his institutional relationships.

The author does not seem to realize, however, that good psycho-history must also be based on an adequate historical methodology. The data for any study of an eighteenth-century person (and particularly, it would seem, a psychological study) should be derived from a careful sifting of the material available — not everything that is said by or about a person is equally useful. One would not expect a psychologist
in a clinical situation (clinical and historical data are treated similarly in Erikson’s methodology, p.18) to analyze a person on the basis of second-hand accounts of that person’s ideas or traits — what Aunt Milly thinks is wrong with him or what the newspaper has reported his thoughts to be.

Modern historical inquiry, necessary to a good psycho-history, is grounded in the critical examination of primary sources (“critical” and “primary” are the crucial words). Moore’s work flounders badly from a historian’s point of view because of his blatant disregard for these essential elements of the historical enterprise. A few examples will illustrate the author’s tendency to rely on secondary sources, twice-told tales, and an uncritical reading of primary sources.

For Moore, the key to understanding Wesley’s development is the conflict of maternal and paternal authorities in his attempt to achieve mature “ego-identity.” Moore’s depiction of Samuel and Susanna, however, relies heavily for both its substance and its interpretation upon the reflections of uncritical secondary sources such as Elsie Harrison’s *Son to Susanna* and Maldwyn Edwards’ *Family Circle*, very readable popular biographical studies of the Wesleys, but certainly not adequate sources to use as the basis of a serious scholarly study. In that particular section of the book there is only one reference to a collection of primary sources — everything else is gleaned from secondary studies. Moore further weakens the base of his argument by adopting the interpretive stance of these authors (as well as the flamboyant linguistic style) as the basis for his analytical perspective. Thus, Samuel (following Harrison’s lead) is the “unpredictable,” “capricious,” and “heavy-handed” father who John “always [...] perceived as unjust, irrational, and as somewhat of a failure in his calling” (p.190). Moore also spares Susanna and her role as an authority figure the tedium of careful documentation.

Upon such uncertain bases, then, Moore often develops themes that become more certain and grandiose as the analysis unfolds. For instance, Moore uses the questionable story about John having a middle name (that of a deceased sibling) to support the idea that he was “early predisposed toward having an exaggerated sense of uniqueness and corresponding ‘destiny’” (p.59). In fact, no contemporary evidence that John Wesley bore a second Christian name exists, just as there is no evidence that any of the other Wesley children who followed a deceased sibling (and there were several) were given a special name and/or assumed a special destiny. Nevertheless, Moore builds one of his continuing themes on this foundation, and what starts out as Susanna’s intent “to be more especially careful of the soul of this child” (John, the “brand plucked from [sic] the burning”) becomes a shared sense of his having a special destiny (“some
special mission in religious leadership,” p.45), an “extra-ordinary
calling” (rejecting any role which “smacked of the ordinary,” p.63), an
“early-inculcated master plan for his life” (p.80), a “desire for
greatness” and “an unabashed assault on destiny” (p.120), a goal of
“spiritual superiority” (p.122), and finally the realization of “Susanna’s
— and his own — goal of a providential, most extraordinary role:
spiritual father to the world” (p.186). Within this framework, Moore
introduces some rather bizarre suggestions, such as his view that
Wesley’s Georgia mission was an intentional disaster: “The script now
called for... a self-righteously flamboyant failure (on principle, of
course) in the area of his ordinary and altogether unsatisfactory role as
a parish priest” (p.80).

The exaggerated rhetoric and occasional sprinkling of sarcasm
bothers the careful historian less, however, than the uncritical use of
source materials. In the third chapter Moore uses Wesley’s Journal as
virtually the sole basis of his interpretation without the slightest hint
that Wesley designed and edited that publication as a public apology
for and defense of himself and the Methodist movement. Autobiographical reflections often appear in a different garb in public
than they do in private. And the author’s uncritical approach results
in other missed opportunities for subtle insights as well. Much of the
material quoted by Moore in that section is actually from various
manuscript journals that Wesley chose not to publish, but were added
to Wesley’s publications by a later editor. That material is selected
from four or five separate accounts by Wesley, each directed to dif-
ferent audiences and naturally giving slightly different perspectives on
the events (his description of Sophy Hopkey to his mother is quite
different from that designed for his defense before a Georgia jury).
These editorial distinctions would seem to be of use to a psychologist
making a careful analysis of such circumstances.

One would also expect that in outlining Wesley’s development
from month to month, year to year, the author would give special care
to the matter of time sequence in the choice and use of source material
as he attempts to discover what Wesley thought or felt at any given
time. The chapter on Wesley’s theology frequently overlooks the matter
of dating source references, and some crucial points in the description
of Wesley’s developing self-understanding suffer from confusion in this
regard. In one instance, Moore quotes the Journal for January 1738
(published in 1740, by the way), blithely inserting in the text a footnote
from the fourth edition (“the faith of a son,” added in 1774), and then
describing Wesley’s view of himself at that time, 1738, on the basis of
an understanding that developed later in his life (p.95).

One word for the theologians: Moore has provided some food for
thought in his interpretation of Wesley’s thought as a “theology of
passivity” (synergism is understood as “reactive” passivity based on the “rationalization” of intensely active modes of behavior; Christian perfection is the exemplification of “pure passivity”). Just how well the psychological concepts fit the theological expressions, I leave the theologians to decide.

At times, then, the careful historian might think that Moore is analyzing a “straw man” and selecting the evidence to fit his theories. We should not simply accuse him of silliness, as some reviewers did Erikson, and our concern for what might appear at times to be his careless historical work should be tempered by the recognition that much more historical spade work remains before an attempt such as Moore’s can even hope to succeed. The situation should improve as additional volumes of the new Oxford Edition of Wesley’s Works continues to provide a critical basis (both in substance and form) upon which careful Wesley scholarship can proceed.

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The Council of Bishops was formed in 1939 at the time the three major branches of Methodism in the United States united. When the Council was created it was charged with the “general oversight and promotion of the temporal and spiritual interests of the church” (p. 11), however, in recent years it has become mainly a planning body for the church (p.280). Throughout its history the Council has generally met twice a year and it has been concerned with a variety of issues. Among them have been overseas relief during and after the Second World War, support for a just and lasting peace and an effective United Nations Organization, the establishment of a commission on race relations and the Council’s efforts to end segregation in the church. Other concerns have been the Council’s response to charges of the McCarthy era that reds had infiltrated the church and were influencing policies, the promotion of ecumenism, and the stimulation of talks and negotiations which resulted in the formation of the United Methodist Church in 1968.

The format of the book is to present in chronological order the meetings of the Council over a forty year period. The time and place of each meeting is listed, together with the names of those in attendance and the actions taken by each meeting. The treatment is sketchy and
no issue receives more than cursory mention. If there was ever an item of controversy or debate among Council members, if any resolution or suggestion which emanated from the Council ever elicited serious discussion or provoked differences among the members, it is not evident in this volume. Evidently they were one extremely harmonious group.

Perhaps the most interesting feature of this book is the numerous (more than 100) sketches of deceased bishops or former members of the Council. Most of these accounts are sympathetic to their subjects without being uncritical. A few elicit caustic comment, and one former member is portrayed as an “autocrat” who possessed “no close friends among the bishops.” The saintly McConnell is described as a man of immense knowledge, a master administrator, and as one who was intolerant of hypocrisy and artificiality. Generally these pen portraits reveal the ‘human side’ of the bishops, such as the concern of some of them as to whether they should address each other by their first name, which one was “easily irritated,” who played the piano at devotionals, who could take short hand, and which bishop had the finest library.

This volume was written by the former secretary of the Council and was prepared at the request of the Council as a part of the celebration of its fortieth anniversary. No documentation or bibliography accompanies the text, however, there is an index of names and a subject index. Members of the United Methodist Church and students of American Church History will value this book mainly as a reference tool and for the author’s sketches of his fellow bishops.

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Roy Hunter Short, who served for many years as Secretary of the Council of Bishops, provides an overview of the various branches of Methodism in Kentucky from 1844 to the present. Because of Kentucky’s location as a border state between North and South, the question of slavery created mounting tension. Although most Methodist churches adhered to the Methodist Episcopal Church South following the schism in 1844, Kentucky was not to be spared controversy and rivalry between anti-slavery and pro-slavery advocates among Methodists and, after 1861, between those with Union and confederate sympathies. The conflict did not cease with the days of Reconstruction when the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church South were each striving to build churches and institutions in
opposition to the other.

From the 1880s to the 1890s the Holiness Movement began to spread throughout Kentucky, and its advocates grew in numbers. For many years the Movement led to divisiveness among bishops, ministers, and congregations. The influence of the Holiness Movement has continued strong in Kentucky. At the present the earlier divisive tendency has been replaced with a spirit of tolerance for differences of opinion.

Short relates the problems and the achievements of the three major conferences in Kentucky from 1846 to union in 1939 — the Kentucky and Louisville Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church South and the Kentucky Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church — and of the United Methodist Church in more recent years. Methodism, however, was not limited to these groups in Kentucky. Black Methodists, German Methodists, the United Brethren, the Evangelical Association, and the Methodist Protestants were also present in limited numbers, and this book provides the reader with brief information on each.

The importance of Methodism in Kentucky is evidenced in many ways. Educational institutions were frequently established and supported, some for many years and others for a short time. Homes and hospitals, work in the rural areas, camp meetings, and missions to foreign countries were all part of the on-going problems of the Methodists. Social issues, such as temperance, desecration of the Sabbath, and civil rights, were not overlooked or neglected.

Much of the story that Bishop Short tells revolves around the individuals, clerical and lay, who had vital roles in the work of the church. He provides information on many of these people, often in detailed and very interesting vignettes. This is certainly one of the strong aspects of his book.

An excellent index will be of great use to the reader. The author also provides an annotated list of books for the person interested in learning more about Methodism in Kentucky. However, the person who wants to learn some of the basic facts about Kentucky Methodism should turn to *Methodism in Kentucky* first. Bishop Roy Short has carried out his hope of pointing out "some of the highlights of our Kentucky Methodist Heritage," recalling "some of the characters who were once a vital part of it," and seeking "to make them come alive for another generation of Kentucky Methodists."

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