BOOK REVIEWS


For more than two decades, feminist theologians and historians have struggled against mighty odds in a skeptical church and academy to recover the lost traditions of women's history. Mary Pellauer's book moves us beyond the process of excavating stories into the exhilarating enterprise of locating an intellectual tradition that supports the work of Christian feminists. Pellauer has closely scrutinized an astounding quantity of the published and unpublished writings of Stanton, Anthony, and Shaw, three luminaries in the nineteenth-century women's rights movement. Of particular interest to historians of Methodism is Shaw, the most famous among the first generation of ordained clergymen in the Methodist Protestant Church. Pellauer's lens on the three women is not biographical. Rather, in subjecting their writings to meticulous analysis, she has treated them as theologians, ethicists, and critics of the social order. Such a task is a formidable undertaking, given the occasional and non-systematic nature of much of this material.

Pellauer's success in discerning and describing, in so lucid a manner, the religious systems of three related but divergent figures is one of the great achievements of this book. In these tightly argued chapters, Pellauer has provided a more thorough and coherent interpretation of the nineteenth-century legacy of feminist theology than has heretofore been attempted. Pellauer, an ethicist, has explicitly chosen not to engage in intellectual biography, and has given little attention to identifying the sources and influences that so fascinate church historians. Scholars of Methodism, therefore, will likely notice some unremarked but distinctively Methodist images, nuances, and doctrinal emphases in the lengthy quotations from Shaw's writings. If so, then Pellauer's work is suggestive, for it encourages us to take Shaw seriously as a Methodist theologian and not simply as a pioneer in the struggle for women's ordination.

Pellauer describes the impetus for her reclamation of a feminist tradition in a thoughtful and compelling epilogue, in which she asserts that "this material is for use among contemporary theologians and ethicists." And herein lies my only hesitation about the book. The people who most urgently need to hear that Christian feminism is neither crazy nor rootless are ordinary people who sit in the pews and perplexed students who ponder in classrooms. The paragraphs of numbingly technical discussions imposed by the dissertation format will render the book incomprehensible to many such persons. That is a great sorrow, for Pellauer's work hauls a feminist
theological tradition out of the black hole of historical amnesia precisely
in order to give it back to people who are wrestling with great questions
about justice today. Such a retrieval is needed for ironic reasons that Shaw
herself would have appreciated: recently, a pastor on Cape Cod stated
forthrightly that, under his ministry, no woman would ever be permitted
to preach from his pulpit. "His" pulpit was once the pulpit of Anna
Howard Shaw.

DIANE H. LOBODY
Delaware, OH

S T Kimbrough, Jr., and Timothy E. Kimbrough, A Song for the Poor: Hymns by Charles Wesley. The General Board of Global Ministries, The
United Methodist Church, New York, 1993. vi, 50 pp., $3.50.

This is a timely use of Charles Wesley's hymns in an unconventional
setting. Fifteen little-known hymns are presented, together with singable
tunes, emphasizing Christ's care for the poor, as demonstrated by Charles
Wesley. In a carefully researched introduction Dr. Kimbrough, an expert
musical performer as well as student of Charles Wesley, urges that Chris­
tian care for the poor should not simply be spiritualized along the lines
of St. Matthew's Beatitudes, but afforded robust concern for their physical
welfare, as stressed by St. Luke the physician. He takes us through the
journal, the letters, and the hymns, and directs our attention to much un­
familiar evidence, including his own great contributions to Charles Wesley's
unpublished verse. He also uses the anonymous introduction to Charles
Wesley's 1816 Sermons, which were 'presented to the public by his widow',
although this lengthy document itself must surely have been written by
their daughter, another Sally.

An unusual accident furnishes the occasion for a normal demonstra­
tion of Charles Wesley's concern for the poor. On Saturday, August 10,
1745, Charles agreed to meet the small and persecuted society at Shepton
Mallet in a field, but sprained his ankle in jumping up a hillside. They
carried him to a hut, which 'was quickly filled with the poor people'. A
leading citizen offered a bath-chair and a comfortable house for the meet­
ing, but Charles went on to describe how he 'declined his offer on account
of my pain, which unfitted me for any company except that of my best
friends, the poor. With these I continued praying, singing, and rejoicing
for two hours. . . . When my strength was exhausted they laid me on their
bed, the best they had; but I could not sleep for pain.'

Many examples from his unpublished poems show that Wesley con­
stantly criticized those clergy corrupted by wealth:
Genteelity we now affect,
    Fond to adorn the outward man,
Nice in our dress, we court respect
    And female admiration gain:
As men of elegance and taste
    We slight, and overlook the poor,
But in the rich, with servile haste,
    Content to make our interest sure.

On the other hand he memorialized sacrificial charity:

    A father to the sick and poor,
    For them he husbanded his store,
    For them himself denied;
    The naked clothed, the hungry fed,
    Or parted with his daily bread
    That they might be supplied.

This book serves as a corrective to the general neglect in our hymns of direct challenges to care for the poor. It reflects the immense variety of Wesley’s verse, with nine different metres for fifteen hymns, and viable music for all, including one new tune composed by Rev. Timothy Kimbrough. It is unfortunate that a page of corrigenda was needed because of the exigencies of printing, to which two should be added on p. 11, where lines 1 and 2 should read ‘servile’ for ‘service’ and ‘Contend’ for ‘Content’.

Frank Baker
Durham, NC


What may at first seem to be a book of narrow usefulness opens out onto the panorama of Irish history, providing fascinating glimpses into the daily life of faith communities caught up in social conflict. Each expert article surveys the keeping of records within a particular denominational tradition, including one on Irish Methodism by Marion Kelly, Archivist for the Wesley Historical Society, Irish Branch. Other articles deal with the Church of Ireland, the Roman Catholic and Presbyterian Churches, and the smaller yet quite significant groups of Quakers, Baptists, Jews, and Huguenots.

The authors are careful to place their subjects within the broader context of Irish history, explaining how the particular ethos and circumstances of each group influenced its manner of record keeping. Several deal with
the interaction among the various bodies, and their relationship to the process of colonization, Anglicization and resistance which forms so much of Ireland's political and cultural history. Most articles include bibliographies and all provide very specific tips for researchers of family history, biography and local history. Excellent copies of sample records are included for each of the groups.

Questions addressed include: What records were kept and which are still extant? How carefully was information recorded and preserved, and by whom? Where are records now held, in what condition, and how are they accessed? For how long have records been kept and what has been their purpose over time? Through what changes in format or context have they passed? What records have been lost and under what circumstances? What cautions might be helpful to readers and researchers?

In recounting the story of Ireland's religious history through these documents, the writers frequently remind us of their volatile background, including the eighteenth-century penal code, struggles over disestablishment, the complex paper trail for “mixed marriages,” and the fire in Dublin's Public Record Office during the 1922 Civil War. Kelly alerts those looking at Methodist records to the confusion of denominational division and merger and the research implications of Irish Methodist polity.

The result is a collection of perspectives on Ireland's social and religious history that will greatly assist genealogists, but should be read by many others as well, including all who have a special interest in Methodism's Irish experience.

D. GREGORY VAN DUSSEN
Albion, New York

Edith L. Blumhofer, *Restoring the Faith: The Assemblies of God, Pentecostalism, and American Culture*. Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1993. 274 pp. $42.50 (cloth); $17.95 (paper)

The present volume is of special interest to students of Pentecostal history in particular and American religious history in general. In it, Pentecostal historian Edith Blumhofer traces the history of the Assemblies of God through at least four distinct stages.

The first stage, marked by an emphasis on millenarian restorationism, was a period in which early Pentecostals “intentionally ignored historical tradition, opting rather for biblical terminology and precedent.” Seeking to restore the primitive faith (including healing, tongues speech, etc.), early Pentecostals were convinced that cultural values were necessarily opposed to the true faith and led to worldliness. As a result, they set themselves
in opposition to the prevailing culture, and gauged rejection and persecution as measures of spiritual strength.

As it appeared that Christ’s return might be delayed, the Assemblies of God was forced to turn its attention to worldly affairs. This led to the second stage, in which restorationist rhetoric gradually gave way to assertions that Pentecostals were heralds of the “full” gospel—or, “Fundamentalism with a difference.”

After World War II, amid a general increase of interest in religion and the onset of the Charismatic renewal, some Assemblies of God adherents began to consider themselves participants in a “third force”—“a movement parallel to Catholicism and Protestantism but distinct from each.” In this stage, right doctrine was less important than shared religious experience. Spearheaded by the ecumenical efforts of David Du Plessis, this stage caused a great deal of division within the Assemblies (Du Plessis was forced to surrender his AG credentials in 1962), especially since Pentecostalism had habitually maintained that mainstream congregations were “dead,” “cold,” or “lukewarm” to the things of God.

The final stage is marked by “a growing predilection for popular culture.” From its beginning, “the Assemblies of God (like Pentecostalism generally) has always been an audience-conscious popular expression of Christianity.” This emphasis has led to something of an irony, in that while AG adherents (like other Pentecostals and evangelicals) often formally object to secular popular culture, “they have participated enthusiastically in the creation of a parallel popular culture that offers Christian variations on everything from rock bands and night clubs to soap operas, talk shows, sex manuals, and exercise videos.”

This final stage is particularly disturbing to Blumhofer (herself a member of the Assemblies of God), because it tends to present Pentecostalism as “a means to an essentially selfish, individualist end.” Consequently, while Pentecostalism’s early message was assumed to be true because the following was so small and pure, the current assumption seems to be that the message is true because it has had such wide appeal.

As with her other writings, Blumhofer’s present volume is thoroughly and thoughtfully researched. Because of this, Restoring the Faith has already been hailed as offering “a model for doing denominational history in new and illuminating ways.” However, due to the hagiographic nature of previous AG histories, Blumhofer’s “warts-and-all” approach has already offended some within the movement. This is unfortunate, for as Blumhofer rightly observes, “The Assemblies of God will be stronger when it finds the courage to raise theological questions for which it may not have ready answers. Without that, the Assemblies of God may well be facing a decade of decline rather than a Decade of Harvest.”

DALE SIMMONS
Mishawaka, Indiana

Two hundred years of history, with such names as Jesse Lee and Francis Asbury sprinkled liberally throughout the writing, makes for an enviable assignment for a historian to work with. With a remarkable cooperation from all the churches in Maine Methodism, —192 of them! — (p. 41: “We received information from all existing churches so that all were able to be included”), Patricia Thompson, with the assistance of Polly Gartley, has produced a book that gives a short historical description of all the active United Methodist churches in the Maine Annual Conference as well as serving as a valuable reference for all the historic sites and shrines in the conference.

Some of the descriptions are intriguing enough to make the reader want to know more. For these persons, references are given to other sources. It occurs to me that the histories of many of the churches would lend themselves to effective dramatic celebrations of charter days, centennial and sesquicentennial anniversaries. The book will no doubt be referred to frequently by historians and members of the Maine churches.

The book is printed in clear, readable type. A picture of each church is included with the write-up of that church. Some are photographs but most of the pictures are drawings, many of which are sketchily reproduced.

It seems to me that two hundred years of such rich history deserves a little more care in presentation. Obviously much work went into the gathering and compiling of information for this book. But a little more was needed. My recommendation is that all books of specialized history as this one, should be edited and proofread by persons who are not familiar with the subject matter. Persons who know little about the subject will be much more apt to pick up errors than will a person who is too familiar with the material. Typos are much too frequent in the book, particularly on dates which need to be as accurate as possible.

*Beatrice L. Shepard*

*Juneau, Alaska*
MINUTES
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

ANNUAL MEETING – 1993
HIGHLAND PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
DALLAS, TEXAS – APRIL 24, 1993

THE ANNUAL MEETING of the HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH (HSUMC) was held on Saturday, April 24, 1993 in the Tyndall Hall of Highland Park United Methodist Church (HPUMC), Dallas, Texas, convened at 3:30 p.m. with Robert W. Sledge, President, presiding.

THE AGENDA to be covered was shared by Sledge.

MOVED, SECONDED, APPROVED: THAT the MINUTES of the 1992 meeting held at Cherry Creek Inn, Denver, Colorado, August 15, 1992 be approved as printed.

THE TREASURER’S REPORT was presented by Faith Richardson. This showed a balance of $16,904.18 in the interest-bearing checking account and $7,317.54 in a four-year note of which $7,000 is restricted for life membership expenses.

TWO AUDIT REPORTS were presented. One covered the period ending December 31, 1992 made by Allen J. Batchelder; the second was for the period of January 1, 1993 to March 31, 1993 made by Ira M. Thompson, Jr. Both reported the books to be in satisfactory order.

THE PROPOSED BUDGET FOR 1994 was presented and explained.

MOVED, SECONDED, APPROVED: THAT the Budget for 1994 be approved as presented.

BUDGET

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANTICIPATED INCOME</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Memberships</td>
<td>$16,200.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gifts</td>
<td>250.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>350.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$16,800.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ANTICIPATED EXPENDITURES</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sections</td>
<td>$ 800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Meeting</td>
<td>2,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHODIST HISTORY (4 issues)</td>
<td>9,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HISTORIAN’S DIGEST (4 issues)</td>
<td>2,000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotion/administration</td>
<td>2,500.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$16,800.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

THE LOCAL CHURCH SECTION REPORT was given by Gary Ferrell. The Section plans to promote a change in THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE which would require a Local Church Historian in each local church. The Section officers were instructed to write the Deans of UMC Seminaries asking them to emphasize the
Minutes

importance of local church history and of record keeping in church administration courses. The Section's program had been a presentation on the history of the HPUMC by its Archivist, Jessamina Younger.

THE COMMISSIONS AND HISTORICAL SOCIETIES SECTION REPORT was given by Patricia Thompson. The Section emphasized the need for writing articles for HISTORIAN'S DIGEST. There needs to be deliberate action taken to assure competent people serving on the commissions. There needs to be wider dissemination of the articles in the Church History section of "Idea Mart" in INTERPRETER magazine. The section also discussed membership issues and program ideas. The Section's program was a panel discussion on the "State of Conference Archives—What Is and What Should Be."

THE EDUCATION AND RESEARCH SECTION REPORT was given by C. Jarrett Grey, Jr. The Section needs to establish a relationship with The Publishing House with regard to the publication of materials of historical value, especially for children and youth. There is need for coordination between the numerous agencies of the United Methodist Church (UMC) which do publishing. There is need for a publication which addresses a more general readership than METHODIST HISTORY or HISTORIAN'S DIGEST. The Section's program had been reports by Susan Eltscher, Grey and Richard Heitzenrater.

THE GENEALOGY SECTION REPORT was given by Fern Christensen. The Section recognized the need for Section By-laws. These have been prepared and will be mailed to Section members along with the Section Minutes. The Section elected officers: Christensen, President; Helen Long, Vice President; and Richard O'Neil, Secretary. The Section's program had been a case study of family history techniques by Mary Hawker Bakeman.

ATTENTION WAS CALLED to the window display in the church's library, prepared by the HPUMC Archivist.

THE GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE GENERAL COMMISSION ON ARCHIVES AND HISTORY (GCAH), Charles Yrigoyen, Jr. reported. He announced the retirement in June of 1993 of William Beal, GCAH Archivist and Records Administrator. Beal will be recognized at the annual meeting of the GCAH in September. Yrigoyen spoke of the necessity of constantly working on membership, that it is every member's responsibility. He encouraged support for the World Methodist Historical Society, announcing a meeting with the Benedictines in Rome and that in 1994 the North American Section will meet in conjunction with the HSUMC at Xavier Center, Convent Station, New Jersey. The theme for this meeting is "Methodism and Missions" with Richard Heitzenrater as the keynote speaker. He announced that Conference Commission Chairs or their representatives are invited to attend this year's GCAH meeting. In 1995 the HSUMC will meet at St. Simmons Island, Georgia, in conjunction with the GCAH sponsored Convocation, the GCAH's annual meeting and Southeast Jurisdiction sponsored events. He concluded his report by expressing his gratitude to the HSUMC officers and especially to President Sledge.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS REPORT was given by Charles Finney, Acting Secretary. Items covered, not otherwise included in these MINUTES include: The Board will hold a quadrennial planning meeting this fall. Members will be mailed a membership confirmation card. Sledge was elected Editor of HISTORIAN'S
DIGEST. Two additional, at large, Board members were elected, subject to their acceptance, in order that the Board might reflect demographic balance. He indicated that one elected was from an ethnic group not presently on the Board and the other would bring jurisdictional, gender and lay balance. Issues regarding the selection of Honorary Life Memberships were referred to the fall Board meeting. The Board is proposing an amendment to the By-laws which would make the HISTORIAN'S DIGEST Editor a member of the Board. This will be acted upon at the next annual meeting of the HSUMC.

A DISCUSSION ON WAYS to affect General Conference legislation, especially at the point of mandating local church historians, was discussed. A motion was attempted, then withdrawn, seeking a broadside of memorials to General Conference. Richardson, past Secretary of the General Conference, emphasized that duplicate memorials do little good; instead letters to delegates are of much more value.

MOVED, SECONDED, APPROVED: THAT the HSUMC President appoint a Committee on Legislation to work with the GCAH's Committee on Legislation (the GCAH Executive Committee) to work on strategies to achieve legislative goals, e.g., mandating local church historians, et. al.

A REPORT FROM THE HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE was given by James Morris, indicating that the need for nominations should be published and that this committee will report to the fall Board meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS WERE MADE REGARDING the evening activities at St. Paul UMC: Dinner, Bishop James Thomas’ Address and the Installation of HSUMC officers, and of the activities on Sunday morning at First UMC, Dallas: Worship and “Remembering,” a 25th anniversary celebration. These announcements were made by Bradley Sue Howell, local arrangements chair.

WORDS OF APPRECIATION WERE EXPRESSED for all who had had a part in the success of the meeting and the programs.

THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE HSUMC was adjourned at 4:45 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Charles Finney,
Acting Secretary
Communication & Change in American Religious History

Edited by
Leonard I. Sweet

"First-rate essays by first-rate historians on the centrality of 'communication' in shaping American religion from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. . . . A collection with continuously fascinating insights on the media's impact on the Word."
—JON BUTLER

"This book will be valuable for historians, missiologists, and students of popular culture. It demonstrates convincingly that the form in which religious views were propagated in the American context profoundly affected the nature and reception of the message."
—DANA L. ROBERT

"Fascinating and persuasive. . . . These essays are unusually well written and fit together far better than collections of essays normally do. The result is a timely, important book."
—JOHN B. BOLES

At your bookstore, or call 800-253-7521 FAX 616-459-6540
WM. B. EERDMANS PUBLISHING CO.
255 JEFFERSON AVE. S.E. / GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49503