BOOK REVIEWS


Often when the history is told of a particular mission effort the story is told as a flow of events. The actors in that story come and go as the story moves from date to date. Such a record has its place, but we are often left wondering about the people we have met in that story. Where did they come from, what did they do before, during and after the events in the story, and where are they now? John W. Krummel and his colleagues at the cultural center of the Research Institute of Aoyama Gakuin University in Tokyo, Japan, have produced a monumental dictionary that is already winning recognition as an essential resource book about the people called Methodists who have lived the mission in Japan since its beginning in 1872.

This is a record of people not of any one mission board. The researchers have gathered 1533 entries from Adams to Zollicker about Methodist people who have served under more than thirty sending bodies of five countries during the 120 years covered. The editors need not apologize for the shortness of some entries. Just the fact that people are listed, their years of service noted and their sending body named is a great help to the researcher. All the rest, and there is a lot of it, is pure gravy for the reader. The typical entry includes information beginning with the parents of the individual, schooling, degrees, marriages, years of service and institution, church and district of service followed by a paragraph or more of narrative about the individual's service in Japan concluding with information about subsequent work outside of Japan and time of death and place of interment when known.

The final 38 pages of the dictionary are a picture gallery of 575 missionaries with their families and friends. It is refreshing to find pictures of missionaries taken when they were young and active, not just when they were retired. Another special feature of the dictionary is that names and the descriptive paragraphs are in Japanese as well as English, thus making the volume of great value to Japanese church historians, too.

For Krummel, this was the culmination of many years as teacher and researcher while serving as a United Methodist missionary at Aoyama Gakuin University. He served here from 1956 until July 1996, except for two years in the early sixties while earning advanced degrees at Boston University. He has served as necrologist for the Fellowship of Christian Missionaries in Japan since the mid-1970s and contributed historical articles regularly to both English and Japanese language publications. That he has been able to encapsulate so much of his research in this dictionary before retiring is something for which all those interested in the Christian movement in Japan will be giving thanks for years to come.

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With the appearance of the second edition of *Marching to Glory*, which extends his history of The Salvation Army in America up to 1992, Edward H. McKinley of Asbury College, Wilmore, Kentucky, has strengthened his well-earned reputation as the premier historian of this denomination.

Although the essential structure and much of the narrative flow of the first edition have been retained, Dr. McKinley has incorporated a significant range of rewritten or totally new materials into the second. I wish to include some of these expanded sections in focusing on four specific areas of the book.

The first area is Professor McKinley’s treatment of The Salvation Army’s Wesleyan doctrine of holiness (pp. 40–42) within the wider context of the Army’s intense activism (pp. 38–40, 42–44). In keeping with the fact that The Salvation Army, as part of the Wesleyan Holiness Movement, has traditionally taught that the total process of salvation includes *entire sanctification* as a crisis experience subsequent to conversion in which the consecrated believer is cleansed from indwelling sin and filled with the Holy Spirit, Dr. McKinley succinctly identifies several key elements in “the Army’s understanding of the doctrine of ‘holiness’” (p. 40). He does this particularly in light of the problem of “sinless perfection” which allegedly surfaced in early American Salvationism. This was an obviously skewed position, contributing to the resignation of some “pioneer officers,” that was ultimately countered by the “practical holiness” teaching of persons such as Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle.

McKinley’s main source for the issue of “sinless perfection” is E. Schuyler English’s biography of Harry Ironside, who left the Army as a young man and eventually embraced the Plymouth Brethren. Ironside later targeted The Salvation Army as the principal negative example of the critique of the Wesleyan doctrine of sanctification in his once well-known book, *Holiness, the True and the False*.

However, this volume and the biography that McKinley cites, reveal that Ironside never did understand the Army’s Wesleyan theology. This is reflected in his attributing to the Holiness tradition some skewed emphases it has always rejected. Such serious misperception raises questions about the credibility of English and Ironside as informed, objective, and accurate documentary guides for giving a true historical and theological picture of Army holiness teaching.

But why did Ironside and unidentified others interpret the Wesleyan emphasis on the *biblical idea* of the *cleansing* of the heart from inbred sin subsequent to conversion as rather being what McKinley calls the “*odd idea* that the love of God in one’s heart removes the capacity to commit sin” (p. 40,
emphases mine), a misguided transition that always twists Scriptural freedom from sin or Christian perfection into "sinless perfection"? A partial answer may be suggested by McKinley's historical description of the atmosphere of urgent activism in the early-day Army, which quite frequently fostered a disdain for theological reflection and the life of the mind. This inadvertently may have allowed points of entry for non-reflective theological aberrations to slip in unnoticed. And since this was an environment that provided no conceptual apparatus by which to deal with such intrusions, persons like Ironside who were seeking solutions to their honest confusion were forced into other religious contexts which at least attempted to provide some coherent answers on very different presuppositional grounds.

The departure of Ironside from the Army because of his misperception of Wesleyan emphases may suggest that the downplaying of theological reflection and the life of the mind in the name of "practicality" sooner or later will have intellectual "fallout" that negatively impacts reaching quite legitimate activist goals.

The second area involves the controversy about the origins of, and motivations for, William Booth's social vision that came to historic expression with the 1890 publication of his Darkest England and the Way Out (pp. 71–73). McKinley identifies the differing perspectives by referring to the doctoral dissertations and two articles in the Wesleyan Theological Journal (Spring 1990) by Professors Roger J. Green (Gordon College) and Norman H. Murdoch (University of Cincinnati), scholars with deep roots in The Salvation Army. Green proposes that Booth's broadened inclusion of social services in the ministry of The Salvation Army by 1889 was due to his maturing theological understanding of the scope of redemption; whereas Murdoch argues that it flowed out of Booth's efforts to rejuvenate the Army's failing revivalistic mission to the British underclasses. McKinley does not explicitly commit himself on this fascinating historical problem, although he may reflect greater sympathy with Green (see also p. 39), without speaking negatively of Murdoch's thesis and the interpretive lineage of which it is a part.

In my judgment, both Green and Murdoch may be right in complementary ways. Taken together, they demonstrate that whatever may be the extent of divine origin, theological development and praxis have a social history.

The third area reflects an encouraging movement toward changing an imbalance in Army historiography. Throughout its 130-plus years, the relation between headquarters and the congregation, "corps" in Army parlance, possibly has been closer than in most connecational denominations. Unfortunately, what has taken place at the various levels of headquarters has usually received more attention in Salvationist historical literature than has the corps. But Army histories are hardly unique in this regard! However, perhaps as a reflection of, or at least parallel to, the growing recognition by church historians of the place of the congregation in the historical interpretation of the Christian faith, Marching to Glory does devote at least 24 out of 350 pages of text to the earlier establishment, ministry, and struggles of Army
corps in the USA and to the opening of new corps within the framework of fairly recent official international commitment to church growth principles.

The fourth area is the wider context for increasing interest in the congregational dimensions of The Salvation Army. This context consists of the tensions between innovation and tradition that have been deeply felt within The Salvation Army between 1980 and 1992 (and beyond). On the basis of his historical analysis of these years which provide the framework of the new and final chapter of *Marching to Glory* (pp. 228–350), McKinley concludes that the Army is passing through an identity crisis in terms of historical self-understanding, missional direction, and structural expression. Despite the uncertainty and confusion this can create, McKinley suggests at least two vital consequences of the crisis: (1) The growing consensus among American Salvationists, both officers (clergy) and soldiers (laity), from top-level leadership to grassroots “fighting forces,” that identity is discovered and shaped by spiritual renewal and that it is corporately nurtured and personally appropriated within the context of vibrant congregational life. (2) Despite the call of some for a wide-sweeping reshaping of institutional structures, expressions of service, military vocabulary, and modes of visibility, there still remains an awareness that The Salvation Army cannot carry out its contemporary ministry apart from the recognition and appropriation of its theological and missional roots.

*Marching to Glory* has been written by a person who obviously has had a long love-affair with The Salvation Army, both as a scholar and as an Army soldier. But it is a relation of “tough love” that recognizes the weaknesses and inadequacies of the Salvationist Movement as well as its notable strengths. Like its first edition, the second edition of *Marching to Glory* makes a significant contribution to Wesleyan studies. A reading of its well-told story will dissipate many stereotypes about and provide the historical reasons for the distinctive mission, ministry, structure, and expression of what is a unique branch of the Wesleyan Holiness Movement.

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Camp Meeting was for well over a hundred years one of the crown jewels of American religious and social history. From its earliest forms to the later institutionalized patterns camp meeting had a major impact upon the lives of thousands. Therefore, it is encouraging to see more and more research and
publishing being done in reference to the camp meeting movement. Joyful in the Lord is an excellent example of such work.

This study is in two parts. The major part is the history of the Wesley Grove Camp Meeting which existed from 1872 until its abandonment in 1915. The account is rich in text, photos, and camp meeting advertisements. It is carefully researched and interestingly written. Wesley Grove Camp Meeting is a perfect illustration of a camp meeting’s rise, drawing thousands from Baltimore, Washington, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia, through a time of transition until its final demise under the inevitable pressures of secularism.

The second part of Joy in the Lord is the account of an event at a predecessor camp ground called Shipley Woods. Northern Anne Arundel County, Maryland, as the Civil War closed, still harbored strong southern and northern tensions growing out of political and racial antagonisms. At camp meeting in Shipley Woods on August 30, 1866 an ugly riot occurred. Fighting, gunfire, and panic spread throughout the camp involving blacks and whites. This event was widely publicized. But its interest goes beyond religious history and represents a view of the political and social tensions of the time.

Joyful in the Lord is recommended as a significant addition to our knowledge and understanding of camp meeting history as well as the history of our nation.

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Another volume in Eerdmans’ “Library of Religious Biography” series has appeared in this outstanding treatment of the life of one of the most important religious leaders in 19th century American religious life. Previous biographies of Billy Sunday, Roger Williams, George Whitefield, William Ewart Gladstone, Thomas Jefferson, and Aimee Semple McPherson set a high standard which the new Finney biography meets in full. It is a straightforward and eminently readable presentation of Finney’s life and contribution to evangelical thought and activity.

The author successfully engages the reader in following Finney’s pilgrimage from his earlier days, including his conversion in 1821, to his later years as President of Oberlin College. Perhaps the most important contribution Hambrick-Stowe makes is to place Finney (1792–1875) in the context of American
and transatlantic evangelicalism. We are shown how Finney not only contributed to evangelical religion, but drew strength and insight from it.

Although this book is not about a Methodist personality, it narrates the life and assesses the influence of someone who undoubtedly impressed the lives of many Methodist clergy and laity, and who was often labelled a Wesleyan in his theology. Finney’s use of the “anxious bench,” “protracted meetings,” commitment to social reform, and encouragement of women as participants and promoters of revivals affected Methodists. Especially interesting is the comparison between Finney’s views on Christian perfection and those of John Wesley. On a very minor point, it is doubtful that we can speak of Wesley as engaging in “transatlantic revivalism” (pp. 228).

Writing biography as an art. Charles Hambrick-Stowe’s portrait of Charles Finney is an excellent illustration of biographical art at its best.

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