

## BOOK REVIEWS

Carol V. R. George, *One Mississippi, Two Mississippi: Methodists, Murder, and the Struggle for Racial Justice in Neshoba County*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. xii + 298 pp. \$ 29.95.

Joseph T. Reiff, *Born of Conviction: White Methodists and Mississippi's Closed Society*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. xxi + 384 pp. \$ 35.00.

With these two very fine volumes, Oxford University Press (OUP) brings its array of Methodistica to over twenty. Including readers on Susanna, John, and Charles Wesley, OUP seems to have challenged (or displaced?) Abingdon Press (UMPH) as the purveyor of serious historical scholarship on our tradition's various religious endeavors. Hopefully, Methodists of all stripes will appreciate OUP's efforts and turn there regularly. (Disclaimer: OUP has published my latest book.)

George and Reiff's volumes should be required reading for United Methodists with serious leadership roles (lay, clergy, district, episcopal), especially in the SEJ and SCJ. Reiff focuses on the January, 1963, signing by twenty-eight Mississippi pastors of a call to their then all-white conference colleagues and members to live into the denomination's "Social Creed" commitment "that God is Father of all people and races." George takes us back to 1964 to the murders of Michael Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney; to the related burning of Mt. Zion of Longdale; and to dramatic, often horrific roles played by, in and around that MEC Black church.

While centered, as titles also indicate, on Mississippi, both probe Methodist racial discord, indeed virulent racism, nationally and over the denomination's full history. Both, as well, dwell on two epochal years in American race relations—1963 and 1964—and on Methodist dramatic parts therein. And they bring the sagas of pastors and community into the twenty-first century.

Elaborate endnotes and textual allusions show each author to have engaged a huge array of scholarship. Further, Reiff and George invested incredible effort and energy in oral history (interviews and recorded material). They accordingly draw very current—recent, timely, telling—insights, perspectives and judgments into their narratives and do so in quite adroit fashion. Both invite United Methodists into remembering and/or seeing afresh the tragic and pervasive denominational incorporation of racist/segregationist/color-coded practices, attitudes and principle into policy and structure. We revisit the church jurisdictioned and so segregated constitutionally and

nationally in 1939 into white and black. And we confront the incredibly powerful prejudicial attitudes and behavior that Methodists had sadly regularized. Graphics, centered in George's volume and spread in Reiff's, invite the reader into "living" within the color-divided church and into the well-staged campaigns to shatter it. (I should perhaps add at this point that I write with obvious biases, as one who in 1964 after first year in seminary served in a Black, Klan-threatened Presbyterian congregation in North Carolina; was that summer also ordained deacon into the still white North Carolina Conference; and the following year co-led the cross-racial national seminarian placement initiative, the Student Interracial Ministry.)

If the two books share in attending to Mississippi's racial dramas, they differ greatly as well. Most obviously and as noted already, George brings the Black MEC congregation, Mt. Zion, into view, treating it from its 1870s founding to her twenty-first century conversations with members, and portraying the denomination and nation through the Mt. Zion lens. In Parts One and Three, she focuses on Mt. Zion. Part Two covers Methodism and race generally and historically, the Freedom Summer, and its diverse race-related events. From archival research and interviews, she invites readers to experience the murders of Schwerner, Goodman and Chaney and the attendant literal and juridical cover-up as Mt. Zion's members recall such. So George provides a compelling model for denominational history, seeing through the local to national and from a pivotal event to the whole story.

From the part to the whole, Reiff takes us as well. However, he attends to the twenty-eight mostly young Mississippi pastors who signed the 1963 "Born of Conviction" statement. Covering their individual spiritual journeys (and often their spouses as well), he conveys us to the highly controversial signing, through congregational and conference responses, and to the decisions that led twenty to head out of Mississippi. A number of the latter went on to prominent denominational leadership roles, among them Maxie Dunnam and James Waits. Treating their various subsequent positions, including heading Asbury and Candler, Reiff provides similar biographical narratives for each of the signers. He groups those who quit Mississippi and those who stayed, treating some of the signers in those chapters. But he also spreads individual stories throughout book, thereby making the whole far more readable than if all the biographical treatment had been lodged together. To the biographies, though short, Reiff comes through incredible archival and oral history research as his endnotes indicate.

So as George views the whole through a congregation, Reiff sees the big picture through successive biographical frames. Through window or lens of a Black congregation, she views the denomination. He depicts the whole as a stage filled with white actors. George treats Mississippi Methodism without mentioning "Born of Conviction." Reiff gives some attention to the Schwerner, Goodman and Chaney murders but only passingly. For George, the *bête noire* was the political and Methodist segregationist power broker, lay leader John Satterfield. Reiff gives him just passing attention. Instead, he disparages the appointment politics, especially regarding "Born of Con-

viction” signers, of Mississippi Methodist D. S. John Willard Leggett, Jr.

Here we have two new models for denominational history. To invite emulation across American religious studies and to stimulate further history-writing experiments, as well as for their meticulous coverage of Mississippi politics, they should be read.

They differ in another perspectival way. George writes, as I judge it, as outsider, a non-Methodist exploring denominational complexities and anomalies in a fresh way. She has not made denominational studies or Methodism her “thing,” though her first book tiptoed in that direction (*Segregated Sabbaths: Richard Allen and the Rise of Independent Black Churches, 1760-1840* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1973). Reiff’s father, Lee, was not a signer of “Born of Conviction” but a colleague in the cause. Professor at Millsaps College, he receives but passing attention in the book. Son and author Joseph Reiff lived with and into the racial dramas which he retells. Currently at Emory & Henry, Reiff has Millsaps and Candler degrees and is ordained.

Their outsider/insider perspectives lead me to a suggestion. Readers not intimately familiar with nineteenth-century Methodist history and the array of its denominational expressions might best start with Reiff’s Introduction and first chapter. Some might find confusing the comparable section in George’s volume covering the extrusion of Blacks from the MECS, the creation of the CME and the migration of other former slaves into the MEC, AME and AMEZ. After that Reiff section, either volume can be incredibly instructive reading. Again, I would urge that both be read for the way in which—alongside one another—they exhibit just how different Methodist white and black worlds really were.

RUSSELL E. RICHEY

*William R. Cannon Distinguished Professor of Church History, Emeritus  
Emeritus Dean of Candler School of Theology  
Durham, North Carolina*

Thomas C. Oden, *John Wesley’s Teachings*. Volume 3. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2012. 304 pp. \$22.99.

The third volume of Thomas C. Oden’s four-volume series on *John Wesley’s Teachings* presents a systematic pastoral theology from the body of Wesley’s work as a preacher and a writer. Oden aims to introduce Wesley’s writings on the church, ministry and pastoral care beyond the usual United Methodist audience to evangelical, Orthodox, and Catholic readers. He accomplishes this objective using a consistent methodology; themes of pastoral care and theology are organized in eleven chapters and Wesley’s core teachings on those subjects are offered through the use of primary sources

such as homilies, journal entries, hymns, prayers and essays. Secondary works that expound on Wesley's writings are used to tease out additional clarification as needed. Oden intends for Wesley to serve as a pastoral guide with relevance for clergy and lay ministers who serve in local congregations.

A good example of Oden's usage of the Wesleyan material is his Chapter Seven, entitled "The Ministry of Baptism." The primary source materials are the classic Wesley sermons, "The New Birth," "Marks of the New Birth," "The Means of Grace," and "The Great Privilege to Those that are Born of God." Wesley's *A Treatise on Baptism, Serious Thoughts Concerning Godfathers and Godmothers* and *Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America*, along with various scriptural commentaries, are included to complete a view of Wesley as pastoral theologian, guide and counselor to clergy, laity, baptizand and parents and godparents of infants or small children. The chapter is subcategorized into seven sections: beginning with classical Christian teaching, baptismal liturgy, the new birth, the meaning of baptism, the benefits of baptism, baptism as a means of grace, and familial baptism. Oden introduces secondary sources to assist in sorting out Wesley's Anglican commitment to infant baptism from his evangelical commitment to the necessity of the new birth. A brief historiographical survey necessarily includes James Rigg's *The Churchmanship of John Wesley and the Relations of Wesleyan Methodism to the Church of England*; Vivien Green's, *The Young Mr. Wesley: A Study of John Wesley and Oxford*; Rupert Davis and Gordon Rupp's, *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*; Bernard Holland's *Baptism in Early Methodism*; his own *Doctrinal Standards in the Wesleyan Tradition*; and James White's editorial volume of *John Wesley's Prayer Book: The Sunday Service of the Methodists in North America*. The subject of baptism is examined, historically, theologically and pastorally. The tension between Wesley's views of the efficacious nature of the sacrament of infant baptism and the stress of the new birth as baptismal renewal is demonstrated in the primary and secondary source material for the chapter. Oden does not shy away from sharing his personal view on the subject. "Some argue that Wesley changed his mind, in that he earlier had a more Anglican stress on the efficacy of baptism, and later a more evangelical stress on the new birth as the renewal of baptism. This view proposes that there was a gradual development or even a substantive change in his doctrine. In my view, there was gradual development but not a substantive change" (190).

The pastoral obligation to teach and convey the importance of the sacrament of baptism is excellently conveyed by Oden's use of the Wesleyan material. The baptizand's obligation to accept God's grace by faith actively, through consistent use of the means of grace is also illuminated. Moreover, the congregation as body of Christ and godparents as witnesses of what is means to serve as models of Christian living in a covenanted community is clearly illustrated.

Oden's third volume will serve as a useful tool for clergy and laity alike among United Methodists as well as the other audiences that he wishes to inform. The appendices of Wesley's sermons correlated in the Jackson and

Bicentennial edition and additional offerings of bibliographic material at the end of each chapter should satisfy the inquisitive souls who desire more specialized discussion on Wesley's wide contributions to the timely and relevant work of pastoral care.

SHARON GRANT, PH.D. CANDIDATE  
*Perkins School of Theology*  
*Southern Methodist University*  
*Dallas, Texas*

Elizabeth Bingham Young and E. Ryerson Young, *Mission Life in Cree-Ojibwe Country: Memories of a Mother and Son*. Edited and with Introductions by Jennifer S. H. Brown. Alberta, Canada: Athabasca University Press, 2014. 316 pp. \$29.95 (Can.).

In January, 1868, twenty-four year old Elizabeth Bingham Young and her new husband, Egerton Ryerson Young, an ordained minister in the Wesleyan Church of Canada then serving a prestigious church in Hamilton, Ontario, were unexpectedly sent by the Methodist Missions Committee to the far North-West Territories of Canada as missionaries to the Cree Indians. Part I of this book is Elizabeth's untitled memoir (along with excerpts from a shorter memoir entitled "The Bride of 1868"), which describes her experiences as a missionary wife at Norway House, Rossville for five years, followed by two years the family spent establishing a mission further south at Berens River. During that time Elizabeth gave birth to one boy and three girls, one of whom died while on a journey back to Ontario without her husband.

Her first child, E. Ryerson Young, known as "Eddie," born in 1869 at Norway House, toward the end of his life also left reminiscences of growing up in the mission field and as a pastor's son. One of those was written in 1935 and the other was dictated not long before his death. Eddie's reminiscences constitute Part II of the book. Part III includes further notes, letters, and documents that have been gathered and preserved by their descendants which provide additional information and perspective to the Youngs' memoirs.

Although Egerton R. Young published numerous books relating his experiences as a missionary, this is the first time that the memoirs of Elizabeth Bingham Young and "Eddie" Ryerson Young have been transcribed and published. The memoirs of mother and son present a rarely-seen and fascinating view of the Methodist mission field as Elizabeth writes about her experiences, not as an appointed missionary, but as the wife of "the missionary." Left by herself at the main mission houses for weeks and sometimes even months at a time while "the missionary" was out in the field evangelizing various Indian tribes, Elizabeth writes of relationships she developed with the Cree-

Ojibwe men and women who lived nearer the mission house. She learned their language, generously shared whatever she had to improve the lives of impoverished locals, and provided medical care to the families—often stretching her own family’s scarce provisions to their very limits. She also played her little melodian, singing Methodist hymns in the Cree language.

Eddie’s memories, on the other hand, provide the perspective of a missionary child who was raised in large part by his Cree nurse Mary, became fluent in the language, became good friends with Sandy Harte (an injured Cree boy who was taken in by the Youngs), and who was loved by the Cree natives and allowed to associate with them to his heart’s content—for the most part, anyway. Unlike many missionary families whose primary purpose seemed to have been to encourage native peoples to give up many of their traditions as they became “Christianized,” these memoirs provide a portrait of a family who respected many of those traditions. Unfortunately, after returning from the mission field, Eddie suffered extensive teasing from his classmates for his use of native language and behaviors.

Meticulously researched and edited by Jennifer S. H. Brown, *Mission Life in Cree-Ojibwe Country* provides a unique window into the lives of one Methodist missionary family in the mid-1800s and is a valuable addition to missionary writings.

THE REV. PATRICIA THOMPSON  
*Ordained Elder and Chair of the New England CAH  
Morrisville, Vermont*

Wallace Thornton, Jr., *When the Fire Fell: Martin Wells Knapp’s Vision of Pentecost and the Beginnings of God’s Bible School*. Cincinnati: Emeth Press, 2014. 341 pp. \$31.25.

Disputes over polity and doctrine repeatedly fractured American Methodism, producing various movements and denominations anchored in particular interpretations of John Wesley’s ideas. In *When the Fire Fell*, Wallace Thornton explores the growth of one of these branches, the holiness movement. He makes the case that Martin Wells Knapp (1853-1901) and the college he founded, God’s Bible School (Cincinnati, Ohio), constituted the center of and driving force behind the renewal of the holiness movement around the turn of the twentieth century.

Chapters one through four analyze the ministry of Martin Wells Knapp, charting his experience of entire sanctification and the beginnings of the *Revivalist* newspaper and God’s Bible School. The school motto, “Back to the Bible—Back to Pentecost,” reflected his conviction that entire sanctification constituted a major biblical theme and that Pentecost should be repeated (6). Chapters five through nine investigate the work of the school following Knapp’s death. School leaders in the early twentieth century, at times

primarily women, continued the work while expanding missions overseas and in cities. GBS reached the “height of its influence . . . broadening its base to reach a wide spectrum of holiness and fundamentalist evangelicals” (281, 282). It influenced such holiness denominations as the Church of the Nazarene, the Wesleyan Methodist Connection, and the Church of Christ in Christian Union. There was even a small but important impact on the rise of Pentecostalism, from which GBS, echoing Knapp, would distance itself by rejecting glossolalia. While Knapp wanted to keep his movement interdenominational, it coalesced into a formal church in the 1910s, adopting the name Pilgrim Holiness Church in 1922.

This is not the first book on Knapp or God’s Bible School. However, it breaks ground by comprehensively analyzing Knapp’s contributions to the holiness movement within and without Methodism. It connects him, the son of devout Methodists who served as an MEC minister for more than a decade, to growing denominational battles over perfectionism, embourgeoisment, and gender roles. Thornton succinctly discusses the development of Wesleyan ideas of sanctification in America since Phoebe Palmer. The major exception to these roots was acceptance of premillennialism, which links Knapp and GBS with both earlier holiness leaders such as Palmer and to the later fundamentalist movement. Thus, the author also successfully positions his subject within the larger context of American Christianity.

Thornton relies heavily on the *Revivalist* and contemporary holiness papers, histories of God’s Bible School, and biographies of its leaders to construct this account of Knapp’s ministry. He also demonstrates outstanding command of the secondary literature on church history and theology. The treatment is admittedly sympathetic, but the analysis of Knapp’s views is generally rigorous. The possible exception arises when dealing with beliefs not clearly grounded in a literal interpretation of Scripture, usually central to the GBS hermeneutic. For example, Knapp wished to repeat Pentecost, but he and his associates rejected glossolalia, which Acts plainly portrays. The author does not explain this position well.

Thornton claims to explore the “developments leading up to and surrounding the beginnings of God’s Bible School,” but he goes well beyond the early years of the institution, which was founded in 1900 (xvii). The added length does not detract from the main points of the book; rather, it expands upon Knapp’s significance. By highlighting the ministry and legacy of Martin Wells Knapp, Wallace Thornton makes a notable contribution to holiness studies, especially within the context of American Methodist history.

JOSEPH SUPER, PH.D.  
*West Virginia University*  
*Morgantown, West Virginia*

Henry H. Knight III, *Anticipating Heaven Below: Optimism of Grace from Wesley to the Pentecostals*. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2014. 259 pp. \$30.00.

Hope lies at the heart of Henry H. Knight III's historical and theological exploration of the theological ties that unite the Wesleyan, Holiness, and Pentecostal traditions. For Knight, this optimistic hope is witnessed clearly in the act of anticipating heaven below. This titular phrase originates in several of Charles Wesley's hymns and, for Knight, connotes "to yearn for, seek, and expect for God's will to be done on earth, in the present, as it is in heaven" (12). By exploring the theology of early leaders of each of these movements, he contends that this theological hallmark both shaped the early visions of each of these movements and continues to unite them.

Knight develops this central argument by exploring the pitfalls and promises of the optimism of grace that pervades these three traditions. This optimism is rooted in the salvific tension between the realities that God is "already" redeeming humanity and creation but that this redemption is "not yet" fully realized as it will be in heaven. To further this argument, Knight closely attends to the works of John and Charles Wesley and considers how Holiness and Pentecostal preachers and theologians interpreted, developed, and deviated from Wesleyanism. Although manifested in differing manners and distinct contexts, Knight posits that the Wesleyan, Holiness, and Pentecostal movements share a persistent hope that ultimately leads them to anticipate heaven below.

Knight's argument develops in the three broad sections of this book. He begins by establishing the theological foundation of both John and Charles Wesley and their colleague John Fletcher. Informed by both primary and secondary sources, he explains how the "already" but "not yet" theological tension undergirds a robust theological system aimed at realizing God's kingdom on Earth for individuals, the church, and society. After establishing this foundation, he moves on to explore how this tension is balanced in understandings of Christian perfection and personal salvation in Wesleyan, Holiness, and Pentecostal movements. He illumines how the theology of leaders such as Phoebe Palmer, Charles Finney, William Durham, Charles Parham and William Seymour embraced the Wesleys' optimism of grace but nuanced it based on their understandings of its effects on the human condition. Finally, Knight concludes by considering how the impulse to realize heaven below extended beyond personal salvation to the church and broader society. He examines these three traditions with regard to their views of medicine, healing and the implications of the optimism of grace with regard to race, class, and denominationalism. *Anticipating Heaven Below's* threefold structure enables Knight to establish a strong foundation in Wesleyan theology and naturally progress to integrate and engage a cast of diverse characters who advocate for variety of theological interpretations of the optimism of grace.

Although Knight deems this to work to be a "theological reflection,"

*Anticipating Heaven Below* presents an engaging account of the connection between these movements in a way that highlights their historical context. His explication of the differences in the historical contexts of these movements and his deft ability to highlight both similarities and differences makes this a welcome historical resource. Ultimately, Knight presents a compelling account of how the Wesleyan, Holiness, and Pentecostal movements embraced and interpreted the expectant hope that God's love and power can transform hearts and lives, revitalize the church, and be an agent for healing and justice in a way that anticipates heaven below.

ANDREW KLUMPP, PH.D. CANDIDATE  
*Perkins School of Theology*  
*Southern Methodist University*  
*Dallas, Texas*

Barbara Dixon, *A Forgotten Heritage: The German Methodist Church*. Milford, OH: Little Miami Publishing, 2011. 399 pp. \$29.95.

*Engelhart Riemenschneider: Memoirs of a German Methodist Pioneer*. Translated by Edwin A. Riemenschneider and edited by Don Heinrich Tolzmann. Milford, OH: Little Miami Publishing, 2015. 322 pp. \$25.00.

Historical works about German Methodism in the United States are increasingly rare. The volume by Barbara Dixon is one of the latest contributions to that genre. Dixon's interest in German Methodism was generated by grandparents, great-grandparents, and other family members whose affiliation with the German Methodist Episcopal Church was key to their Christian discipleship. Her grandfather Theodore Rudin and great-grandfather John C. Wiedmann were clergy leaders in the German M. E. Church.

Dixon has used a number of sources upon which to build her narrative of German Methodist congregations in Indiana, Kentucky, Ohio, and Michigan. Personal diaries, histories of congregations which trace their roots to the German M. E. tradition, county and local historical societies, United Methodist Church archives, and other sources have provided the basic documentary evidence for her text.

One of the most impressive results of her research in local church history is tracing the German Methodist background of numerous congregations which continue United Methodist ministries in the geographical regions listed above. That being said, it would have been most helpful if the author had supplied more information on the actual birth and development of the German M. E. Church to assist the reader in understanding the context in which it had its origin, development, and final demise. The two-volume

*World Methodist Encyclopedia* and the three-volume *The History of American Methodism* are important sources for those who wish to explore the contextual nature of the German Methodist Episcopal experience.

The memoirs of Engelhardt Riemenschneider (1815-1899), German Methodist pastor, early circuit rider, was converted under the ministry of Wilhelm Nast (1807-1899), founder of German Methodism in the United States. Riemenschneider, born in Germany, migrated to America in 1838 and became a leader in establishing Methodism among the German-speaking in Ohio. He was not only a local church pastor, but a Methodist presiding elder (district superintendent). His family was important in the development of Baldwin Wallace College, Berea, Ohio.

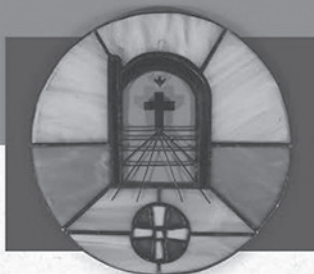
In 1851, Riemenschneider left the United States to become a Methodist missionary in Germany and Switzerland. After nearly two decades of effective Methodist ministry in Europe, he returned to the United States and spent the remainder of his ministry in Pennsylvania and Ohio retiring in 1877.

This volume is enhanced by a number of fine illustrations and a copy of an essay by John R. Sinnema, "German Methodism in Ohio." The memoirs of Engelhardt Riemenschneider give a first-hand account of the nature, task, and accomplishments of the ministry of a German-American Methodist pastor-superintendent- missionary in the United States and Europe in the nineteenth century.

CHARLES YRIGOYEN, JR.  
*Wesley Theological Seminary*  
*Washington, DC*

# TRANSFORMING the World from the kitchen?

THE STORY OF WOMEN WORKING TOGETHER IN BRITISH METHODISM



Come and see the exhibition from  
**19 March to 29 October 2016** at Epworth Old Rectory

**Opening times:**

March, April & October: 10:30am to 3:30pm Tuesday - Saturday & Bank Holiday Mondays  
May to September: 10:00am to 4:30pm Tuesday - Saturday & Bank Holiday Mondays

Group bookings to view the exhibition can be taken.  
To book, please contact us on 01427 872268 or via the website.

Epworth Old Rectory, 1 Rectory Street, Epworth,  
North Lincolnshire DN9 1HX

For more information about MWiB and the resources they  
offer please visit [www.mwib.org.uk](http://www.mwib.org.uk)

For more information on how to find us and admission prices  
visit [www.epwortholdrectory.org.uk](http://www.epwortholdrectory.org.uk)

Methodist Women in Britain in partnership  
with Epworth Old Rectory



**Methodist Women  
in Britain**



Epworth Old Rectory

For more information about Methodist Heritage  
visit [www.methodistheritage.org.uk](http://www.methodistheritage.org.uk)



**Methodist Heritage**

## ***Methodist History* Subscription Rates**

### **Paper Copy:**

#### Within the United States

One year subscription	\$25.00
Two year subscription	\$40.00
Student rate (one year)	\$15.00

#### In Canada

One year subscription	\$30.00 (U.S.)
Two year subscription	\$50.00 (U.S.)
Student rate (one year)	\$20.00 (U.S.)

#### All other countries

One year subscription	\$40.00 (U.S.)
Two year subscription	\$60.00 (U.S.)
Student rate (one year)	\$25.00 (U.S.)

*Please make payment in a check or money order made out to  
"General Commission on Archives and History."*

*Students, please enclose a photocopy of your student I.D. or  
other appropriate identification.*

### **General Commission on Archives and History**

**P.O. Box 127**

**Madison, NJ 07940**

**[www.gcah.org](http://www.gcah.org)**

**973-408-3189**

Electronic versions of back issues of *Methodist History* are now available for free when accessing them through our website: [www.gcah.org](http://www.gcah.org).