

MENNONITE LIFE

MARCH 1994



In this Issue

This issue of *Mennonite Life* focuses on the changing historical role of women in health care in Mennonite communities. In recent months the topic of health care has been prominent on the American national agenda. We appear to be at the brink of a major transition akin to great changes of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is a good time to review some critical dimensions of that history.

The field of Anabaptist/Mennonite women's history is gaining interest and momentum. A conference is planned for June 1995 at Millersville University in Pennsylvania—"The Quiet in the Land? Women of Anabaptist Traditions in Historical Perspective." Among the eighteen topic areas suggested in the call for papers to that conference is "Women, Health, and Healing." For more information, contact Diane Zimmerman Umble, PO Box 1002, Millersville University, Millersville, PA 17551.

Science and spirituality were bound together in new patterns of health care. Rachel Waltner Goossen captures this complex linkage in the title, "Piety and Professionalism," for her study of the Bethel Deaconesses of Newton, Kansas. Goossen recently completed a Ph.D. degree at Kansas University with a dissertation on Mennonite women and Civilian Public Service in World War II.

Gladys Hostetler, an early Mennonite nursing student, kept a diary which offers some unique glimpses into her personal life as well as into the workings of the nurses training school at La Junta, Colorado. Velma Beyler Weaver, editor of the diary in this issue, graduated from the La Junta School of Nursing in 1937. Formerly of Kansas City, she now lives in Bluffton, Ohio.

Janice Unruh Davidson, chair of the nursing department and associate professor of nursing at Bethel College, interviewed descendants of persons in the 1870s migration from South Russia to the United States, for the historical portraits of Mennonite health in this issue. Davidson earned a Masters of Nursing at Wichita State University in 1984 and a Ph.D. at Texas Woman's University in 1988.

This issue includes a number of excellent photographs which are worthy of close analysis. The photograph files of Mennonite Library and Archives have additional valuable documentation of Mennonite deaconesses and their work

James C. Juhnke

Photo Credits

Front cover, pp. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, Kansas; pp. 13, 15, 17, 18, Velma Beyler Weaver; pp. 14 (LaJunta Mennonite School of Nursing Photograph Collection), 16 (Lydia Oyer Photograph Collection), Archives of the Mennonite Church, Goshen, Indiana; pp. 20, 27, LaVurne Unruh; p. 21, Peggy Goertzen; p. 26, back cover, Janice Unruh Davidson; p. 22, Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies, Tabor College, Hillsboro, Kansas; p. 24, Justina Klaassen; p. 25, Hillsboro Historical Society and Museum.

MENNONITE LIFE

March 1994 Vol. 49 No. 1

Editor

James C. Juhnke

Managing Editor and Book Review Editor

John D. Thiesen

Editorial Assistant

Barbara Thiesen

Front Cover

Sister Catherine Voth (left) and unidentified deaconess in the Bethel Deaconess Home, before 1926. Note Sister Catherine is reading the Newton newspaper, the *Evening Kansan-Republican*. Note also the portrait of Bernhard Warkentin at upper right.

Back Cover

John H. "Dakota" Unruh steam-powered threshing rig. Running the steam engine is Jacob J. Unruh. Standing in front is a little boy (Herb Unruh) and next to him (right) is Helena Dirks Unruh, then Mary Unruh and Helen Unruh. Operating the separator is John Unruh, Jr. Second from the right is John Unruh, Sr. On the straw stack is Henry Unruh.

Piety and Professionalism: The Bethel Deaconesses of the Great Plains

Rachel Waltner Goossen

4

The Gladys Hostetler Diary

edited by Velma Beyler Weaver

12

Portraits of Mennonite Health: Selected Stories from Historical Nursing Research

Janice Unruh Davidson

19

Book Reviews

28

MENNONITE LIFE (ISSN 0025-9365) is an illustrated quarterly magazine published in March, June, September, and December by Bethel College, 300 East 27th, North Newton, Kansas 67117-9989. Second Class postage paid at North Newton, Kansas 67117. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to MENNONITE LIFE, Bethel College, 300 East 27th, North Newton, Kansas 67117-9989.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES: U.S. one year, \$15.00; two years, \$22.00. Foreign one year, \$18.00; two years \$25.00 (U.S. funds).

Indexed with abstracts in *Religion Index One: Periodicals*, American Theological Library Association, Chicago, Illinois; *Historical Abstracts and America: History and Life*, ABC-CLIO, Santa Barbara, California; and available online through BRS (Bibliographic Retrieval Services), Latham, New York, and DIALOG, Palo Alto, California.

Piety and Professionalism: The Bethel Deaconesses of the Great Plains

by Rachel Waltner Goossen

From 1908 to 1958, sixty-six Mennonite women joined the deaconess order in the south-central Kansas community of Newton. Most served as nurses or in related health care occupations at the deaconess “motherhouse,” Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital. The motherhouse was a nucleus of deaconess activity; at its height it had a branch hospital in Mountain Lake, Minnesota, and less formal relationships with deaconess institutions as far away as Cincinnati, Ohio. Deaconesses also operated hospitals in several other midwestern communities with heavy concentrations of German-speaking Mennonites. The earliest of these was Bethesda Hospital, which opened in 1899 in Goessel, Kansas, twelve miles north of Newton.

The women who joined the deaconess order committed themselves to Christian service and to a communal way of life, leaving family and home to join other women who worked not for pay or prestige but to model Christian compassion. Unlike Roman Catholic nuns, whom the deaconesses resembled in some ways, Mennonite women who became “sisters” did not explicitly promise a life of chastity and poverty. But their vow implied a lifelong commitment. Women who took the vow surrendered personal autonomy to the mother deaconess and to the male overseers of the hospital with which they were affiliated. When a woman joined the Mennonite sisterhood, she entered a surrogate family that would provide for her needs, material and emotional, until death. In Newton, the Bethel Deaconess sisterhood began to dwindle in

number round 1930, although women continued to join the order as late as 1954. Still today in Newton, a “Sisters’ Fund” exists for the maintenance of the single remaining deaconess, Esther Schmidt.

Historian Susan M. Reverby, in her landmark study of the nursing profession in the United States, laments the paucity of scholarship on American religious orders that specialized in nursing.¹ This essay explores the subject in the context of one denomination, the General Conference Mennonite Church, and focuses particularly on the aspirations of early Mennonite deaconesses who lived and worked at the Newton hospital from the time of its founding in 1908. During the first third of the twentieth century, a rising tide of professionalism transformed nursing and other aspects of medical practice. To what extent did the opportunities for a career in nursing or related health care work explain the deaconess movement’s attraction for idealistic Mennonite women? How might issues of gender and professionalization have contributed to the deaconess movement’s decline? How expansive or constrictive were opportunities for deaconesses in the context of patriarchal church structures?

In recent years, scholars have argued that the nineteenth century German Lutheran deaconess movement opened new doors for women and fostered a “spirit of female mutuality.”² Like their Lutheran predecessors, the Mennonite deaconesses drew upon a tradition of Christian service that glorified sacrificial giving of oneself. Correspondence

and other evidence of the activities of early twentieth-century American Mennonite deaconesses indicates that they had a great deal in common with the German Lutheran sisters. Yet they took cues from American Protestant contemporary movements as well.

Throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, American women exerted vast amounts of energy to address the problems of the urban poor, sick, and outcast.³ Mennonite women, like their counterparts in other Protestant denominations, viewed social reform as a proper channel for exerting moral influence. During the prewar years, some Mennonite periodicals carried articles on famous women like Clara Barton and Jane Addams.⁴ What secular social activists conceived of as reform, Mennonite and other conservative church groups viewed as home missions. To be sure, home missions implied work among the urban poor, but deaconesses in rural Mennonite strongholds like Newton, Kansas, expected to make Christian witness closer to home.

The Mennonite women who became deaconesses were traditionalists, squarely in agreement with the conservative leanings of a religious denomination that paid little heed to calls for the equality of women. Yet in joining the sisterhood, deaconesses were not necessarily fulfilling parental or congregational expectations; deaconesses were the exception, not the rule, among Mennonite women. During the earliest years of the twentieth century, when the deaconess movement was gaining strength, most Mennonite women mar-

ried, had children, and cared for their families rather than pursuing work opportunities outside the home.⁵

But women who entered the sisterhood staked out new territory. For the remainder of their adult lives, they would work as nurses or in some other capacity, in publicly-recognized roles that would widen circles of acquaintanceship and, potentially, stimulate new ideas about the role of women in the church and in society.

Thus, while the deaconesses appear to have shared traditional notions of womanhood with other Mennonites of their time, they also acted in ways that pushed at socially-accepted parameters of feminine behavior. Consciously or unconsciously, they modeled new styles of leadership and asserted that women could perform valuable services in congregational and community settings without functioning as wives or mothers. This they did in the context of supportive, same-sex living arrangements and shared decision-making.⁶

Deaconess Work in Historical Perspective

Sister Frieda Kaufman (1883-1944), the German-born Mennonite woman who served as “sister-in-charge” at Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital from 1908 to 1943, wrote at length on the historical and religious foundations of the deaconess movement. Kaufman defined a deaconess as “a disciple of the Lord, who out of thankful love for the experienced grace of God in Christ gives her life in service to the sick and needy as her vocation in connection with her church.”⁷ In the New Testament, the word *diakonos*, a Greek term for “servant,” referred to leaders of the early Christian church, such as the martyr Stephen.⁸ But Kaufman, in lectures to students and addresses to church audiences, attributed the concept’s origins to prophetesses and other women of Biblical times. Kaufman cited from the Old Testament the examples of Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, and Hulda, and also servanthood role models from the New Testament, namely Mary and Mary Magdalene.⁹

In tracing the history of the deacon-

ess movement, Kaufman and other Mennonite writers of her time gave little attention to Anabaptist deaconesses during the age of the Reformation. In sixteenth-century Holland, Mennonite church leaders had appointed women to serve as deaconesses among the sick and the poor. Several of these women, such as Elizabeth Dirks, became martyrs for their faith. Government authorities imprisoned and drowned Dirks in 1549 as a part of a wave of persecution of the Anabaptists, who promoted adult baptism and the radical separation of church and state.¹⁰

But while Kaufman demonstrated little awareness of the congregationally-based roots of deaconess work within her own church tradition, she was quick to point out that the Mennonite sisterhood in Newton owed much to the model provided by nineteenth-century German Lutherans. Beginning in 1836, a pastor at Kaiserswerth, Germany, Theodore Fliedner, established an asylum for women who had served time in prison. He also recruited unmarried women to work in hospitals. These deaconesses trained to become full-time church workers responsible to a deaconess sisterhood rather than to a congregation. Fliedner served as rector and administrator; his wife Friedericke, as superintendent, oversaw the day-to-day operations of the institution.¹¹

In his writings, Theodore Fliedner acknowledged the existence of Mennonite deaconesses three centuries earlier in Amsterdam, but he particularly admired the Roman Catholic order known as the Sisters of Mercy. Fliedner’s institution-building proved successful; by 1864 the Lutherans had established thirty-two motherhouses across Europe, centers of activity for more than sixteen hundred deaconesses.¹² By the 1880s, the movement had spread to the United States, where German-American deaconesses worked in hospitals, asylums, and in house-to-house visiting among poor families in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, and Baltimore.¹³ Fliedner’s intellectual debt to Catholicism helps to explain why Lutherans, General Conference Mennonites, and other denominations required that dea-



Sister Frieda Kaufman in 1938.

conesses remain single. Although in apostolic times women servants of the church had been both married and single, late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century promoters of the deaconess movement attached great importance to singleness. Emil Wacker, a Lutheran rector in Germany and a protégé of Theodore Fliedner, explained in 1893: “A married woman, whose duties lie in her home, cannot [also] hold a regular office in the church. . . . [I]f a woman is to serve the Lord, constantly and uninterrupted, her single life must under all circumstances be taken for granted.”¹⁴ Wacker added, however, that if a deaconess wished to give up her work in order to marry, she should be able to leave the motherhouse freely, for the leaders of the movement intended no “enslavement of conscience.”¹⁵

Although the Mennonite deaconesses in Kansas expected to remain single, a few church leaders argued against the practice as popish. Cornelius C. Wedel, a Mennonite minister in Goessel, Kansas, believed that the marriage ban for sisters was wrong. “For a Christian,” he declared, “there is only one vow to be taken, and that is the vow of baptism.”¹⁶ But Wedel’s position remained a minority one.

Frieda Kaufman viewed the Mennonites’ deaconess work as an outgrowth

of the German Lutheran model. Citing the Kaiserswerth tradition, Mennonite women who took the vow wore deaconess garb as a measure of simplicity and economy, avoiding what they viewed as unnecessary preoccupation with fashion.¹⁷ They also adopted the title “Sister” as a way of leveling differences in socioeconomic status.¹⁸

While the deaconesses’ communal living arrangements and distinctive dress set them apart from those they served, they demonstrated a commitment to work among the neediest persons of the community. A religious tradition of mutual aid prompted the Bethel Deaconess Hospital’s board to solicit funds to cover the costs of indigent persons. In 1911, the Newton deaconesses prepared a pamphlet for the community, noting that Bethel Deaconess Hospital was open to patients of any social rank or religious affiliation, and that destitute patients would receive free medical care.¹⁹

Frieda Kaufman, “Sister-in-Charge”

More than any other individual, the German-born Mennonite immigrant Frieda Kaufman served as spokesperson for the Mennonite deaconess cause. As a small child in her native village of Haagen in Baden, Germany, Kaufman had known both Lutheran deaconesses and Catholic nuns.²⁰ In 1892, at the age of nine, she had emigrated with her parents and two older

sisters to Halstead, Kansas. A decade later, in 1902, after attending Bethel College in Newton for two years, Kaufman entered the Interdenominational Deaconess Home and Hospital in Cincinnati, Ohio, for nurse’s training. Kaufman was a studious, committed young woman, who blended traditional Mennonite piety with a sense of purpose. In many ways she was like other mobile young women of her generation, who, as the historian Rosalind Rosenberg has observed, “worked hard while in college and strove after graduation to find ways of repaying society for the privilege that had been granted them.”²¹

At the turn of the century, young women who aspired to lead lives outside the home found that careers in nursing, medicine, and social work were more accessible than were careers in business and politics.²² In addition, the professions seemed to have natural ties to education and to service, areas in which Americans already recognized women as capable contributors. Not surprisingly, then, many women seized the career paths that were available to them, and along the way, idealized the service professions.²³ For her part, Kaufman expressed the conviction that serving as a deaconess was a “calling.”²⁴

In 1908, Frieda Kaufman, at the age of twenty-five, joined with two other trained Mennonite deaconesses, Catherine Voth and Ida Epp, in estab-

lishing the Newton sisterhood and operating the newly opened, twenty-five bed Bethel Deaconess Hospital.²⁵ Throughout her adult life, Frieda Kaufman personified the Mennonite deaconess movement. In a long-sleeved dress and an apron, her dark hair drawn into a bun and trimmed with a white cap, Kaufman made a matronly figure. She served capably as superintendent of the Bethel Deaconess Hospital in Newton from 1908 to 1929 and again from 1932 to 1938. She also oversaw the development of a deaconess home and hospital in Mountain Lake, Minnesota, which opened in 1911 and functioned as a branch of the Newton motherhouse until 1930, when it gained independent status.

Kaufman’s administrative talents and practical skills enabled her to play a central role in numerous construction projects, including in 1913 a five-story annex to the Newton hospital and in 1926 the new Bethel Home for the Aged. Kaufman took a personal interest in the design of buildings. Late in life, she reflected that had she known exactly what training she would need for her work as a deaconess, she would have chosen courses in plumbing and steam fitting, and added: “I should have learned to read blueprints and memorized the terms which a carpenter uses in construction.”²⁶ She also enjoyed landscaping and creating new furniture designs for the buildings’ interiors. Several of her designs appeared in the July 1932 issue of the *American Journal of Nursing*.²⁷

Training Nurses and Serving the Community

In its first three years, the sisterhood in Newton grew from three to fourteen members. By 1918 twenty-five sisters had joined, and by 1928 the number had increased to thirty.²⁸ During these early decades, the average age of women joining the sisterhood was twenty-five. Some had been to college; others had little more than a grade school education.²⁹ Not all of these women served as nurses. Some worked as lab and x-ray technicians, as nursing instructors, as administrators and clerks, and as cooks, seamstresses, and housekeepers.



Left to right: Sister Mary Rose Jantzen, Sister Elfrieda Sprunger, Sister ? Ruth?, Sister Anuta Dirks, Sister Maria Dora Richert, after investment, October 14, 1915.



In front of the Sisters' Home in Newton, March 1911. Left to right, 1st row: Sister Frieda Kaufman, Sister Catherine Voth, Sister Ida Epp, Sister Hillegonda van der Smissen; 2nd row: Margaret Franz (Mrs. J. E. Langenwalter), Susie Quiring (Mrs. J. R. Duerksen of Arizona), Bertha Schmidt; 3rd row: Sister Lydia Goertz, Sister Susanna Berg, Sister Elise Wiebe, Sister Elisabeth Harms, Sister Katharine Eitzen, Sister Maria Froese, Sister Anna Janz.

Soon after its founding, the Bethel Deaconess Hospital began training women to be nurses. In the first decade of the twentieth century, few state regulations applied to small, church-affiliated health care institutions. Most, though not all, of the nursing students at Bethel Deaconess Hospital were of Mennonite background. The students worked in two twelve-hour shifts at the hospital and took part in nearly all aspects of patient care, from bringing meals to administering medications. Frieda Kaufman served as “deaconess mother” to the students, but her colleague, Sister Catherine Voth, directed the school. Other trained nurses taught courses in the history of deaconess work, and staff doctors lectured on topics related to general medicine, obstet-

rics, and surgery. By 1930, seventy-four women had completed Bethel Deaconess Hospital’s three-year training program.

Significantly, a women’s auxiliary, which formed in 1910 with twenty-six members, offered a major source of support for the deaconess sisterhood and nurses’ training school in Newton. The auxiliary retained steady membership through the 1930s, just as American women generally were participating widely in voluntary organizations.³⁰ The Newton-based group owed much to the generous support of Wilhelmina Warkentin, who served as its first president. The widow of Bernhard Warkentin, one of Kansas’ leading entrepreneurs in the milling industry, Wilhelmina Warkentin was a well-

known philanthropist, and in 1910, as a friend and neighbor of Frieda Kaufman and the Bethel sisters, she provided funds for deaconess living quarters. Two decades later, Warkentin willed to the sisters her spacious Victorian home.

From the beginning, the Bethel Deaconess Hospital’s Women’s Auxiliary included supporters from surrounding communities. Members solicited funds for building programs and took a special interest in the welfare of women and children of the community. Before 1908, most babies born in Newton and in the surrounding rural areas had been born at home.³¹ But with the opening of the hospital in Newton, maternity and infant care became a large part of the deaconesses’ work. In 1910, the



Sister Frieda Kaufman and two unidentified deaconesses in the "Rosenhaus" or "Rose House" located where the Sister's Home was later built on the Newton hospital grounds.

Women's Auxiliary successfully lobbied the hospital's board of directors to build an addition for obstetrics patients. Six years later, the Auxiliary provided funds for Sister Gertrude Penner to attend courses in Chicago in public health. When she returned to Newton, Penner worked in the community, visiting families in their homes. In 1919, the city began budgeting limited amounts of money for public health nursing, and the Women's Auxiliary remained active as a sponsor until 1928, when the Red Cross assumed responsibility for the city's public health program.³²

Professionalization

Despite the best efforts of auxiliary members who hoped to sustain the deaconess effort, the movement dwindled.

In Newton the deaconess motherhouse failed to gain numerically after 1930. A gradual, societal shift toward professionalization bears part of the responsibility for the decline in the number of women who took the deaconess vow. In recent years, feminist historians have criticized the rise of professionalization, which reflected efforts by male professionals to establish and maintain high levels of pay and status.³³ In the early twentieth century, male-dominated fields such as law and medicine required ever higher standards of education and training. Fields dominated by women, such as nursing, teaching, and social work, followed this trend as well. Deaconess-affiliated organizations came under pressure to insure more education for deaconesses so that they would be able to retain their

jobs.³⁴ But as pay and status increased for some professionals, women working in sex-segregated fields reaped only marginal benefits. Pay and status remained low for many women.

Deaconesses, of course, had never aimed for pay or for status, but measures of autonomy that they had achieved in the early 1900s and 1910s diminished. Among church women, deaconess work lost prestige as highly trained professionals moved into positions of authority and visibility, while the less-specialized deaconesses found their services receding in importance.³⁵ With professionalism on the rise, the times seemed better suited for paring down deaconess work than for expanding it. Increasingly, young women entered training to become professional nurses, and viewed deaconess work a relic of the past. During the 1930s, '40s, and '50s,

women opted out of deaconess work, choosing salaried positions instead. This pattern of institutional decline for Mennonite deaconess work paralleled events in other Protestant denominations as well.³⁶

The diminishing number of women who joined the sisterhood proved a lifelong problem for Frieda Kaufman. At one point she wrote, "It is very hard for me to see one after another of the sisters drop out of the ranks of the work which is . . . so dear to my heart and life."³⁷ As she grew older, Kaufman voiced an increasingly conventional view of women's roles in the church and in society. In 1941, just three years before her death, Kaufman told a group of young women who had chosen career paths other than nursing,

A satisfied and happy woman is one whose work develops the mother spirit in her heart. This desire can find full expression in the life of a wife and mother. But a woman can also mother the children of another, she can mother the sick and aged, the poor and helpless.³⁸

Kaufman also cautioned young women to avoid powerful messages from popular culture, urging that piety triumph over hedonism: "One type of American woman influences all the world—the Hollywood type! The young girl of the smallest hamlet of our country tries to imitate her . . . Some mighty strong and fine influences must be arrayed against her. What a challenge to you and to us all!"³⁹

In less effusive moments, Kaufman acknowledged that women called to Christian service had no alternative but to "meet the requirements of the authorities and of science."⁴⁰ She urged other women, however, deaconesses and non-deaconesses alike, to envision sacrificial service as their goal. Historian James Juhnke offers the nuanced interpretation that while Kaufman believed that professionalization undermined the commitment of the deaconess vows, "[s]he could not attack professional nursing directly without mak-

ing enemies."⁴¹

Kaufman, in her position as administrator of the Bethel Deaconess Hospital, deferred to men who served on the hospital's board of directors. Too, the Mennonite deaconess nurses relied on the expertise of local male doctors, who, like other professionals of their generation, harbored traditional attitudes toward women. In the Newton hospital as elsewhere, the presence of female nurses made possible the accomplishments of men who pursued research and other highly valued activities.⁴²

Kaufman's rejection of feminist ideals of gender equality parallels the experiences of many women of her generation who also spurned feminism but whole-heartedly embraced professionalization. Many American women of the 1920s and '30s rejected feminist ideals, since they reasoned that feminist demands might damage the apparently "neutral" goals of profession-



Deaconesses on vacation in Colorado, July 1918. Left to right: Sister Elfrieda Sprunger, Sister Rose Jantzen, Sister Dora Richert, Sister Anuta Dirks. These four were ordained as deaconesses June 2, 1918.



In the Sisters' Home in Newton, ca. 1950. Left to right: Sister Rachel Kleinsasser; Sister Lois Schmidt, Sister Amalia Lehman, Sister Mary Elizabeth Becker; Sister Marie Schmidt, Sister K. Delores Friesen, Sister Margaret Friesen(?).

alization.⁴³ But already by the 1930s, professionally employed women were a declining segment of American women workers. Furthermore, professionally employed women were also declining in proportion to professional workers as a whole.⁴⁴ In the long run, professionalization proved to be of little benefit to the deaconesses, whose movement slowly withered and who faced a loss of identity despite their attempts to retain some measure of feminine (not feminist) ideals.

The Deaconess Movement in Retrospect

The Mennonite church tradition encouraged women to exercise their talents, yet ensured that a patriarchal pattern of authority be maintained, not only in the home, but also in the church, in academia, and in the business world.⁴⁵ During the opening decades of the twentieth century, however, deacon-

esses like Frieda Kaufman broke the mold, serving in positions of leadership and responsibility. They provided role models for young women that did not point to the inevitability of marriage and child rearing, and they made contributions in secular as well as religious contexts.

How ought we assess the experiences of Mennonite women who joined the sisterhood at the Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital? Historians of women in religious contexts struggle with interpretive questions, for, as Virginia Lieson Brereton acknowledges, “[c]onditioned by the feminist movement, we are of course predisposed to see the ways in which churchwomen have been outsiders.”⁴⁶

By their own account, the Mennonite deaconesses of the Great Plains pursued a wide range of interests while consciously accepting restraints based on gender and on religious tradition. In the

mid 1940s, after Frieda Kaufman’s death, the institution had one hundred beds, two deaconess homes, a nursing school and dorm, and about twenty-eight resident deaconesses. Clearly, the women who had established this “family” forty years earlier had opened new doors for career-minded churchwomen.

Speaking to an interviewer in 1976, Sister Lena Mae Smith, Frieda Kaufman’s successor as “sister-in-charge” at the Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital, commented, “Now everybody in our society is so independent. A woman has to look out for herself. Women are not doing things in groups as we used to.”⁴⁷ Smith’s plaintive assertion suggests that even if male church leaders viewed womanliness as a barrier to gaining access to power the deaconesses themselves cherished and celebrated their shared gender as a source of strength.

ENDNOTES

I wish to thank William M. Tuttle, Jr. (The University of Kansas), James Juhnke (Bethel College), David A. Haurly (Kansas State Historical Society), and Regina Morantz-Sanchez (UCLA) for valuable comments on earlier versions of this essay. Ardic S. Goering first kindled my interest in Mennonite deaconess history.

¹Susan M. Reverby, *Ordered to Care: The Dilemma of American Nursing, 1850-1945* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 5.

²Catherine M. Prelinger and Rosemary S. Keller, "The Function of Female Bonding: The Restored Diaconessate of the Nineteenth Century," in *Women in New Worlds*, Vol. 2, eds. Rosemary S. Keller, Louise L. Queen, and Hilah F. Thomas (Nashville: Abingdon, 1982), 319.

³Joan Jacobs Brumberg and Nancy Tomes, "Women in the Professions: A Research Agenda for American Historians," *Reviews in American History* 10 (June 1982): 287.

⁴Sharon Klingelsmüd, "Women in the Mennonite Church, 1900-1930," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 54 (July 1980): 175.

⁵James C. Juhnke, *Vision, Doctrine, War: Mennonite Identity and Organization in America, 1890-1930* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1989), 289.

⁶Lois Barrett, "Looking at the Deaconess Movement Again," *The Mennonite*, 20 April 1976, 278.

⁷Frieda Kaufman typescript, c. 1937, Box 3, folder 30, Frieda Kaufman Collection, Mennonite Library and Archives, North Newton, KS. Cited hereafter as Kaufman Collection, MLA.

⁸John Paul Kirsch, "Deaconesses in the United States since 1918" (Ph.D. diss., New York University, 1961), 28.

⁹Kaufman typescript, c. 1937, Kaufman Collection, MLA.

¹⁰"The Deaconess and Her Ministry," *Mennonite Life* 3 (January 1948): 30-31.

¹¹After Friederickie died, Theodore Fliedner's second wife, Caroline, filled the position of superintendent. Prelinger and Keller, "The Function of Female Bonding," 323-24.

¹²Kirsch, "Deaconesses in the United States," 33-35.

¹³In the late 1840s an American Lutheran pastor named William Passavant initiated deaconess work in Pittsburgh, but few women joined the sisterhood, and it folded in 1853. Prelinger and Keller, "The Function of Female Bonding," 325. See also Kirsch, "Deaconesses in the United States," 36, and Lois Barrett, *The Vision and the Reality: The Story of Home Missions in the General Conference Mennonite Church* (Newton, KS: Faith and Life Press, 1983), 174.

¹⁴Emil Wacker, *The Deaconess Calling: Its Past and Its Present*, trans. E. A. Endlich (Philadelphia: Mary J. Drexel Home, 1893), 17.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 97.

¹⁶Cornelius C. Wedel to David Goerz, c. 1910, cited in Kristine K. Flaming, "The Mennonite Bethesda Hospital Society, Inc.: The Early Years (1899-1928)," 14, Bethel College term paper, 1987, MLA.

¹⁷Frieda Kaufman, *Inasmuch Then as I am a Deaconess, I Will Glorify My Ministry* (Newton,

KS: Deaconess Committee of the Western District Conference, 1947), 7.

¹⁸Wacker, *The Deaconess Calling*, 85.

¹⁹Katie Funk Wiebe, *Our Lamps Were Lit* (Newton, KS: Bethel Deaconess Hospital School of Nursing Alumnae Association, 1978), 3.

²⁰"Sister Frieda Kaufman," *Missionary News and Notes* 19 (September 1944): 1.

²¹Rosalind Rosenberg, *Beyond Separate Spheres: The Intellectual Roots of Modern Feminism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 23.

²²Reverby, *Ordered to Care*, 77.

²³Nancy F. Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987), 216.

²⁴Funeral program of Frieda Kaufman, Box 1, folder 3, Kaufman Collection, MLA.

²⁵*The Mennonite Encyclopedia*, vol. 2 (Scottsdale, PA: Mennonite Publishing Company, 1956), s.v. "Deaconess," by Lena Mae Smith.

²⁶Frieda Kaufman speech, "The Challenge of Life," c. 1941, Box 3, folder 28, Kaufman Collection, MLA.

²⁷Barrett, *The Vision and the Reality*, 177; Ruth Unrau, "Builder of a Healing Community: Frieda Marie Kaufman, 1883-1944," chapter in *Encircled: Stories of Mennonite Women* (Newton, KS: Faith and Life Press, 1986), 78-79.

²⁸Kirsch, "Deaconesses in the United States," 339.

²⁹Wiebe, *Our Lamps Were Lit*, 6.

³⁰Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*, 224; Anna Entz, "Early Days of Hospital Auxiliary Recalled," *Mennonite Weekly Review*, 14 March 1985, 11.

³¹As early as 1900, the board of the Bethesda Hospital in Goessel had discussed the need for training midwives in the community. Bethesda Hospital Society Board of Director's minutes, 3 September 1900, trans. Daniel S. Thiesen, Bethesda Home, Goessel, KS.

³²*Silver Anniversary Memorial* (Newton, KS: Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital, 1933), 6; Barrett, *The Vision and the Reality*, 177.

³³Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*, 216-217.

³⁴Kirsch, "Deaconesses in the United States," 447.

³⁵*Ibid.*, 162.

³⁶*Ibid.*, 9; Lena Mae Smith, typescript of speech, 30 April 1950, Box 1, folder 12, Bethel Deaconesses Collection, MLA.

³⁷Frieda Kaufman to former classmates, c. 1913, Box 2, folder 13, Kaufman Collection, MLA.

³⁸Frieda Kaufman speech, "The Challenge of Life," c. 1941, Box 3, folder 28, Kaufman Collection, MLA. See also Frieda Kaufman, *Inasmuch Then as I am a Deaconess*, 10.

³⁹Kaufman, "The Challenge of Life," Kaufman Collection, MLA.

⁴⁰Frieda Kaufman, "Der gegenwaertige Stand der Diakonissensache unter den Mennoniten" (n.p.: n.p., c. 1930), 15, trans. James C. Juhnke, quoted in Juhnke, *Vision, Doctrine, War*, 186.

⁴¹James C. Juhnke to Julia Quiring, 29 March 1985, in Juhnke's possession, North Newton, KS.

⁴²Brumberg and Tomes, "Women in the Professions," 288.

⁴³Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*, 231; Reverby, *Ordered to Care*, 158.

⁴⁴Cott, *The Grounding of Modern Feminism*, 221.

⁴⁵Klingelsmüd, "Women in the Mennonite Church," 180.

⁴⁶Virginia Lieson Brereton, "United and Slighted: Women as Subordinated Insiders," in *Between the Times: The Travail of the Protestant Establishment in America, 1900-1960*, ed. William R. Hutchison (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 145.

⁴⁷Lena Mae Smith quoted in Barrett, *The Vision and the Reality*, 178.

The Gladys Hostetler Diary

edited by Velma Beyler Weaver

I faintly remember, as a three-year-old, going to meet the train that brought the body of my aunt Gladys home from the LaJunta Mennonite Nursing School¹ to Harper, Kansas for burial. Gladys H. Hostetler was a younger sister of my mother, Elsie Hostetler Beyler.

Only five months earlier, at the age of twenty-three, Aunt Gladys's progressive spirit and zeal to 'reach out' had led her, somewhat against her father's wishes, to the still new nursing school in Colorado. The school opened in 1914. It was reported in LaJunta that Gladys died from typhoid fever on May 4, 1918. The first class graduated from LaJunta Mennonite Nursing School just a few short weeks after her death.² My mother Elsie died about two years later, soon after my fifth birthday. I graduated from the same school in 1937. It closed in 1958. For a long time, it seemed as though all ties were lost with the early life of Aunt Gladys.

In recent years, two documents have brought her to life again. The first document is a letter that Gladys wrote to her sister-in-law, Leah (Beyler) Hostetler.³ Leah was married to Oliver, a younger brother of Gladys.⁴ Written in late February, seven weeks after the beginning of her nurses training, the letter provides a fascinating and rather wide-ranging look into the life and the mind of a progressive, career-oriented young woman when that was still not the common outlook for Mennonite young people.

Recently a younger sister of Gladys showed me a diary that Gladys had kept for parts of four years from 1914 to 1918. The diary contained a number of

entries from the time Gladys entered the nursing school on January 1, 1918, through March 19, 1918, her last entry. Diary excerpts which deal with the LaJunta school of nursing and the life of a student nurse are included below.⁵ Reading about her experiences kindled both family memories and also memories of my own experiences as a student in the same school. Through these diary entries, I want to share these glimpses of the life of a student nurse in those pioneer days.

The diary excerpts and letter which follow belong to several contexts. They open a window to life of student nurses in the very early years of the LaJunta Mennonite Nursing School. Modern nurses training has certainly changed since those days when newly arrived students were immediately assigned to patient care—on the job training even for procedures such as catheterization. Poignant is this 23-year old's working through on her own the issues that now receive expression in the hospice movement. Her description of the hospital layout will certainly make us appreciate modern hospital design.

Beyond the several medical issues, these materials also allow us a brief glimpse into the mind of a vibrant and energetic young woman, whose life, had she lived, would certainly have contributed to the feminist push among Mennonites. That is perhaps seen in her decision to study nursing. Henry Hostetler expected all his children to work at home until age 21. Gladys was the oldest daughter still at home with all the younger brothers and sisters, and a lot of the housework was put on her.

While he probably did not oppose education in itself, Henry would have preferred for Gladys to remain at home to help with the family and the farm. Further, parts of the diary not quoted in this article show Gladys to be an assertive young woman with an active mind, who involved herself in a variety of activities. She commented on sermons, was a leader in Sunday evening church meetings, participated in the community literary society, and canvassed the community to get votes for a piano in the public school. Conversations with my Aunt Ida (Hostetler) Sommerfield and my cousin Thelma (Hostetler) Kaufman, who heard her mother (Della Balmer married to Ura Hostetler⁶) speak of Gladys, as well as other entries in the diary, show that while Gladys had boyfriends and corresponded with them, she wanted to do more with life than just get married, have children, and care for house and garden. That attitude and enthusiasm for learning is certainly visible when she reports on her activities as a nursing student, and as she chafes at having "to keep our mouths shut when the doctors say things," regardless of "what we [nurses] think it is or should be done."

Letter to Leah (Beyler) Hostetler

LaJunta Colo.
Mennonite Sanitarium
Feb.22-1918
[Envelope postmarked March 22]

Dear Leah,

If I didn't have some one to write to tonight I believe I'd 'go under.'

I never felt so lost and lonesome in all my life. Nobody died but we had worse than a double funeral. Noah and Malinda Liechty⁷ [brother and sister] went home. To tell you what that means to me is best told by telling you that Miss Liechty and I were *one*. I believe I get worse as I get older for the blow sure struck hard.

Noah has taken worse and just the last two days has been too sick to go to toilet any more. They decided if he was to go home at all they'd better go while the going was good. They are going all the way to Ohio.

Being on night duty, it's easy for me not to find out about things. And purposely they kept it from me until last. Of course I cried nearly all day instead of sleep and am nearly sick.

I tried to go down to supper but had to excuse myself soon after. Miss Liechty refused to come down since she knew about going (several days).

It was the saddest scene I was ever to. Doubly sad, for Noah [Malinda Liechty's brother] is going home to die, and Miss Liechty is lost from the working staff. Tonight before prayer meeting we had our last services with Noah. Quite a nice crowd gathered in his ward and sang "God Will Take Care Of You," after which Allen⁸ read and prayed, when they didn't know what else to do since everybody just cried, but they sang part of "God Will Take Care of You," *again*. Prayer meeting was just as bad. Miss Liechty was leader but Allen took it then.

After that the ambulance came and away they went. Noah never shed a tear but smiled at each of us and nodded his head.

I haven't gotten the nerve to ask anyone if perhaps Miss Liechty may come back again, some day.⁹

Together, some called us [Malinda

and Gladys] the "Heavenly Twins." We ate, talked, walked and slept together. Since I'm on nights she'd come up during her hours off and crawl into bed with me—and such times as we had together.

There is one girl in a hundred! She is a Mennonite and fights for principle. She has been engaged to a good Christian boy (a perfect man—and the only one—to her) for over five years but just this summer annulled the engagement because of principle. He is an Apostolic (like those Dutch Amish, like Dominicks) and she a Mennonite. He wouldn't think of giving up and neither would she, tho that is the only thing they ever even differed on. One day she got an awful nice letter from him and I shall never forget how excited she was.

They were as friendly as ever—but she has given up getting married altogether now, just for the church.¹⁰ Isn't that pluck? She sure is a good church worker. She was at the head here of everything we dare put her in.

Nearly all the kitchen girls, Allen and Ruth went along in to see them off to night.

We had our last talk tonight, she and I. Did I ever tell you how we planned for a real Mennonite Hospital and Training School in the East somewhere? We even had some of the building plans laid out. Miss Rohrer¹¹ was to be one of our Specials. Mr. Tito (our Italian) was to be one of our first patients. Tonight she said we'd give that up for awhile, but when she comes back here I'll be Head Nurse and be No. 1 here at this place. Ha!

We must have girls, and girls *at once*, if it's Levina or any one else. Only Lydia Oyer,¹² Ruth C. and myself is all that is left and we have more patients now than we've had any time. I think there are 25 now, and a variety too. The girls (one on each floor) were too busy to clean up today and had to get help from patients to fix beds, sweep floors, clean toilets etc. Last night I never sat down, and didn't even have time to eat. There should have been two girls on, but there are only 1/2 enough day girls now.

Miss Oyer and Ruth had gone to Holbrook so when Miss Oyer came back I had her help me until 12 and after



Gladys Hostetler in front of the LaJunta Sanitarium.

that I had to call Miss Rohrer about half a dozen times.

Besides my regular T.B.s I had three operatives *and* one gall stone lady on which hot applications are kept up, and one lady (Austrian) who has a vaginal fistula. I have to change her every several hours. Then a pneumonia case, a little boy 13 years old.

That last case sure is work but am glad for cases like that. We put camphorated oil on chest and side every several hours, apply hot water to side all the time, give medicines, every two hrs, take temp. pulse and resp. every four hrs, nourishment every 3 hours, alcohol bathrub every six hours. I believe that's all except watch his perspiring, etc.

I have learned about pneumonia that it isn't the congested lungs that cause death but the heart. It has to work too hard to pump blood thru these congested lungs and gets tired. If a nurse can be trained to see just how far the heart can stand it, then give a stimulant like morphine (or other drugs like it) to tide them over that point, all right.

The lady with the fistula just flows urine all the time. She wets everything we can put in her bed. We used up just sacks of rags already. We may operate any time as that's the only remedy. Another lady had a curettment operation. (Do you know what that is?) If you



Menmonite Sanitarium in LaJunta, Colorado.

don't—it's the removal of a dead fetus. (Hers was a four month.) Dr. pulled its head off while getting it out. That was too much for Ruth C. She stood it well before but nearly fainted then and got out of room. Ha. Miss Miller is doing fine now, tho I doubt if she'll ever be strong. I don't want you to tell this to others but she had ovary, tube and tumor removed besides appendix. I don't know if she even knows. Her appendix looked all right. It was the other that had caused all her trouble.

There were three doctors here to help Mrs. Hershy. Oliver knows her. She was Nora Wenger. "My," she says to me, "When you was a little girl I'd never have dreamed that you'd be my nurse some day." She weighs only 195. They removed her appendix, gall bladder with about 20 or 30 little stones in it. She was so big and strong that she sure went thru well. If people would see these operations they sure wouldn't like them. We handle people just like—I was going to say dead hogs but that sounds awful, doesn't it?

The Doctors put on their gowns and gloves and cover their heads and faces with sterile gauze then go after it. First they make an incision then dig and stir around until they have nearly everything outside. Stuff it back in with their fingers and sew it up. Augh! They lift them off the table with head hanging and anyway. Lay instruments on their

face and just all sorts of horrible things but what's the diff., they don't feel or know it.

Then as soon as they wake, you don't have to touch them for they are so sore—but no wonder the way they stir around in them. Miss Liechty called it "like stirring mush." I can't see why these girls haven't had more experience. Miss Oyer is our Senior now, and she has never even catheterized. Last night we were to catheterize Mrs. Hershy and she began a round so slow that I got tired and scrubbed up myself, gave her the light to hold and done it myself. (I had helped Mrs. Kulp or wouldn't have known how.¹³) Pretty soon I'll be ahead of them all, if they don't get busy soon.

Besides the Head Nurse I'm the only one that has touched that pneumonia case so far. I gave that lady with curettment operation her douches (both external and internal) too. The others seem to be well satisfied to let me do everything they haven't even tried, but they fail to see that they'll lack practice some day.

I sure hate to wait on any one that I've known before. It's with an "Is that all right now" spirit. See the difference. Any new lady that comes in, it don't embarrass me in the least to walk in, pull off their covers and apply greers soap and shave for operation, but I'd take a licking before I'd have done it to

Mrs. Hershy.

This is the terriblest built hospital I ever saw. Did you know that every bed pan that comes from the Ladies Ward downstairs must be carried through the reception rooms. I used to be so embarrassed when all the men were in (and it's never empty, always someone in it), and maybe during church we'd have to parade thru. After trays each meal, we have what we girls call a stop jar and bed pan parade, for we have to go thru with both hands full several times. It doesn't bother me any more tho for I'm used to it now.

I don't know what our Italian man will do in the day time now since Miss Liechty is gone, for he was our two's Special (just between us two). He would never let anyone else touch him in the day but her and me by night. He don't like the other girls at all and they get sore about us girls doing so much for him. We got "told on" several times and Head Nurse took us aside and lectured us about "babying" him and spoiling him. They all claim he grumbles so much but he never has grumbled at either one of us and they say that's the reason. The Head Nurse says he works us girls and tells him too but he just laughs and says they are just nurses but us two girls are his friends. Ha! They try so hard to teach us girls to be firmer and harder-hearted but I'm afraid they struck the wrong natures.

For instance—we even have a water passing time. If anyone wants a drink in between, I'll just get them one, where the others tell them when the next *time* comes they get them one. Isn't that heartless. It is no wonder that the patients like us girls better, for we never had the heart to refuse them anything that they really needed and it only took work to get it for them. These things sure are interesting and after I get over the spell of Miss Liechty leaving I'll like it fine again.

That trip of last Sunday sounds interesting. Even if they are rather oldfashioned and ignorant don't you think they are good-hearted and accommodating?

Levina wrote Miss Miller that Joe's had a boy and she was working there. I wondered then if Amanda didn't go at

all. One thing we nurses are taught here by our new head nurse is that a nurse is never, under any circumstances to diagnose a case or give orders. That is the Doctors business. No matter what we think it is or should be done, we have to keep our mouths shut when the doctors say things.

She sure teaches us how to "take" with people. She has a way about her that patients think she is telling them all and still she don't tell anything. She just talks and don't say anything. Ha! Levina had the wrong kind of Head Nurse to start with. She was as two-faced as she could be. To her face Levina thought she was great, but I never heard anyone talk as ugly and mean about her as she did. The girls here say she had Levina for her "scrubber" and she always got put on for the dirty jobs.

Miss Miller got a bunch of carnations from Levina today. They are nice only were badly mashed and won't come out as pretty as her others.

If Balmers would try harder to outlive others by deeds instead of running them down by mouth, perhaps they get more accomplished. I wouldn't be surprised if Levina came back now for we *must* have help. But it will be a shame if she does for all the rest will do is to make fun of her. The girls here among themselves may expressions like "They could bite her in the neck,"—or they wonder if she has her right sense yet, or maybe never had it. Isn't that awful?

One of the patients wrote her a nice polite letter one day. I was in when she wrote it and she was asking others what to write since she didn't want to tell her any lies and still have it sound all right. (That's the way she worded it.) Promptly a letter came back to Miss Miller saying how she had a letter from that patient and she had said how she wished she'd come back.

This is another "positive" letter as I'm not very busy tonight. If you wish you can take it along to church or someway give it to *mama*, but don't let anyone else see it.

Mark what I say, Levina would *never* get through probation at Axtells. Things are sure different there than they

are run here for awhile. Things are different here too, now. We no longer have a head nurse that slams doors and jerks things around.

I sure had to laugh at your account of S.S. class and giving each a piece of candy. Was it "all day suckers"? Ha! There is more than one trick to the trade, isn't there?

I haven't studied enough obstetrics (pronounced ob stet rics) yet to know much about it. We have had all about the fetus, placenta, umbilical cord, etc.—but nothing on the care yet.

Have given a gallon or more milk of magnesia since I'm here. We give it to our T.B.'s (not all but several) for a general "tone up." Also it's a mild laxative and being an alkaline, it neutralizes acidity in stomach.

Mama, what does the doctor do for Grandpa when his bowels don't move. We give enemas, high and low, here. A high enema is a tube injected clear up into the intestines. My, I'd like to have a dollar for every enema I've given since here, then I'd not be writing home for money anymore. You asked one time what we do with people that don't eat. I didn't care to tell in a letter they *all* read, but in T.B. of course there is no use in prolonging life and misery and not much done. But in a case like Grandpa's I could soon fix him out for I'd give him a nutrition enema. Just fix up a mixture that every nurse has to learn a dozen or more recipes for, and inject it up into the intestines and its

equal to a meal.

I don't know if I want to take this night work another mo. right away or not. I'll have to have another one before fall anyway and am so used to it that I can sleep well in the day now. Maybe it will be too hot later on.

It rained today. Something new for Colo. Was sure glad to hear today. Wonder if you'd know me in my uniform with my professional walk and talk. Every stranger that comes always picks me out to be either the Head Nurse or Senior. Ha! The others say it's because I always act so professional. Ha!

Must close, I see. Good thing I can't see you and call for I'd never get through, and could only leave now in case of sickness.

Gladys

Diary Entries from 1918, at LaJunta Mennonite Nursing School

January 1. Tues. A bright outlook for the New Year. Arrived at the Mennonite Sanitarium at noon. Climate made me sick and feel awful strange but things look so nice I believe I shall like it.

January 2. Wed. The girls introduced me to my work today. Everything is so strange and odd and I feel as if I can never have confidence enough to go ahead with things. So much responsibility.

January 3. Thurs. Miss Liechty¹⁴ started today and the poor nurses had



Gladys Hosteller and Malinda Liechty on the steps of the sanitarium.



"Mr. Sherman teaching S.S. class in Ladies Ward."

to show it all over to her. Prayer meeting tonight and everybody was about like I felt - Dry. Have such a cozy room.¹⁵

Jan. 4. Friday Miss Liechty is the limit, I could laugh at her much talking and still not be satisfied. Shall never forget how 'great' I felt when I found out all the nurses privileges and I could meet them.

Jan. 5. Gave my first bath. Have begun to work confidently and fast. Wish I could feel real well for a change. Arms and feet ache until I can hardly stand it.

Jan. 6. Sunday. My first Sunday in LaJunta. Went to swell church at LaJunta with Erbs.¹⁶ Taken in by letter. Had to come back in carriage with Jacob, Good and Hauberger.

Relieved on second awhile and read "Red Pepper Burns" half thru—Lots of fun—Feeling fine.

Jan. 7. Monday. Am thankful that I'm no kitchen or laundry girl. Workers clothes were washed this morn.

Had a letter from Leah¹⁷ and she admonished me not to do anything that would make her ashamed of me.

Jan. 8. Tues. Had afternoon off as a surprise. Got first letter from home. Say

grandpa can't live over six weeks anymore. Ironed and slept. Wrote a letter after supper. Classes are hard but crave the knowledge.

Jan 9. Wed. Today was Liechty's time off. The snow storm was too funny for any use, lights going out on top of it. Seemed awful cold. Am thankful for a warm room.¹⁸

Jan. 10. Thurs. Cleaned out snow and dirt. Too cold to do much else but carry hot water bottles. Tease Miller so much about Landis. Hunted up hot water bottles for our beds too.

Jan. 11. Fri. Too cold to give baths, but were busy in Ladies ward anyway. All the Ladies have nursing as an ideal. Dyer is awful sick and her father is here to see her. Got first hours upstairs. Finished "Red Pepper Burns" and liked it quite well.

Jan. 12. Sat. Had to give all the baths this morning. Gave only two myself but didn't hardly get through. Noah¹⁹ was down all day. Took a delight in much work, of course.

Jan. 13. Sun. Was on floor, busy until S.S. Landis taught it this morning. Got hour off till preaching. Made excuses and got out of vesper program. It's a shame how we laughed at D-- but

who could help it. Allen gives Stella credit for her spunk.

Feb. 1. Miss Coopridner came back and she and Miss Oyer²⁰ both got full days off as they were changing night duty. Bath morning, worked like a "nigger" all day to get thru. Was too tired to rest well. Sure couldn't stand nursing at this rate.

Feb. 2. Sat. Sure was happy when I found our work outlined and I given the Men's ward. Just know Miss Oyer won't get along. Had to help her get started this morn already. Washed the windows of the reception room for once.

Feb. 3. Sun. Another full day. Never even took hours off. Someway I enjoyed it so much. Read awhile and even napped on duty. New patient brot in. Miss Oyer helped a little in evening. Was tired so went to bed early.

Feb. 4. Blundered all around. Got up an hour too early by mistake. Was given Miss Oyer's ward to take care of too. She wanted me to give enemas too. So mad at being imposed that I bawled. Got P.M. off. Good! Was told to ask about bowel movements when taking temp. Girls all massaged on my back in operating room. Lots of fun. Feel fine.

Feb. 27. Wed. A terrific snow storm this morn. Sherman has bad spell, so of course its all off with us again. Really do feel fine. Had P.M. off and was so tired I slept all afternoon. Went to farmhouse with Ruth after supper and I made big tracks in snow. Class in Di-etetics this eve. Sure is hard for me. Didn't get much done but anyway I got a good rest.

Feb. 28, Thurs. Wish so much I could get myself to record every day. Made Miss Oyer wash lunch glasses this noon. She had P.M. off. Didn't have much to do so talked to Buck and Gallagher. Was called up from supper table to get vinegar for Miss White's salmon. Wouldn't that jar you? Gallagher spilled milk over himself and floor at lunch. Prayer meeting led by Dan Horst. Am so satisfied now.

March 1. All day off. Didn't know for sure that I go on night duty until Miss Rohrer,²¹ followed by all the rest came trooping up to tell me after I was in bed. Doctor had class, we didn't have our lesson so he lectured on Obstetrics. Got so sleepy on my first night I could hardly bear it. Didn't have one bell.

March 2. Sat. Done rather a poor job at an attempted sleep today. Light bothers me more than the noise. Am purely isolated now. Got so sleepy that I cleaned up for Sunday for the girls to keep awake. Went to bed before breakfast.

March 3. Sunday Slept until after church. Allen²² preached. Who was there but Crist Kaufman. Crist and Martin came early in evening, then played the Victrola until church. Didn't seem right to have to stay up and every one else go off to bed. It sure is hard for me to get used to this stuff.

March 4. Mon. Slept a little better today. Ruth and I went out for a walk. Met Mr. Boswell. Picked dry flowers on the way. Wanted to go along to field to see tractor but knew Miss Rohrer didn't like it because Gallagher went. She sure keeps one eye on us and him. He's the limit. Stole egg from Mexicans. Ironed.

March 5. Tues. Moved Mrs. White upstairs. Her hubby and sister were here all night. They both slept however. Baby Mrs. White too much I know. When I

sleep well days it isn't so bad nights. Have lots of time to study and sew. Making coverings for mama.

March 6. Wed. Sure haven't any complaint to make about bells now. Daniel in private room and Mrs. White keep up a steady call during night. Don't see why they let that insane woman in tho she seems nice.

March 7. Thurs. Windy almost every day. Nice to sleep if it wasn't for the dust. Refuse to be called for class during the day — so there! Thot for awhile Mrs. White would choke. Petted her all night long.

March 8. So windy I can't hear bells. Daniel says "Ain't you got no sense?" when he had to come to hall to ring. Mrs. Davis rang two times and couldn't reach after cover for herself. Mrs. White died at 2:30, my first experience. First lesson in laying out dead. Sure makes me shaky. Couldn't hardly wait until morn. Felt so bad to tell Sherman.

March 9. Sat. Sure was nervous tonight. Wind as usual. Every noise jarred me. Liechty and Coopridier fixed lunch and fixed pickle man. Jacob sick. Lela was too.

March 10. Sunday. Passed pickle man all around this morning. Such fun. Started furnace fire myself. Strange Sunday to go to bed. Got up for services by Leatherman. Too Dutchity.

Irish and Burr stayed up to help me sweep. Ha!

March 11. Mond. Machine broke so no washing today. Feel fine this week. Am dreaming again. Funny how such things affect one. Ha! Got letter from home.

March 12. Tues. Turned windy toward evening. Sure get tired chewing dust all the time. Played croquet with Daniel. Wonder what mama thinks when she gets caps. Now for some for myself.

March 13. Wed. Will never cry for work anymore. New patient to clean and get ready for operation. Miss Miller to get ready also. Cleaned operating room. Hands full all night. They sure are good to me. Invited up to birthday supper at farm house. First meal away from San - Enjoyed it too. Fizzle cake. Tried to milk but got kicked over by last cow.

March 14. Thurs. So tired I went to bed in spite of all. Would so much liked to have seen the operations. Quite a time, I'm told. Mrs. Kulp is here taking care of Miss Miller. Not so busy tonight. Good time with Mrs. Kulp up too. Ate lunch together. Seen catheterization for first time. Could myself now I know.

March 15. Fri. These operations sure make life interesting. Cut out my cov-



Henry Hostetler family, ca. 1914. Back, left to right: Leo (b. 1905), Chancy (1901-1961), Amra (b. 1899), Titus (1897-1982), Ura (1893-1981), Elsie (1891-1920), Pius (b. 1907), Oliver (1889-1980). Front, left to right: Ida (1903-1989), Stella (1912-1971) (next to father), Florence (1910-1973), Henry (1869-1952), Salome Slabach Hostetler (1869-1954), Gladys (1894-1918). One daughter was born after this photo was taken, Juanita (b. 1916).

ENDNOTES



Ida (left) and Gladys Hostetler in 1914.

erings. Such a pile and mess. Took collection for croquet set. Irish is pretty good to me by not letting others call me during day, Ha! Played croquet with Mr. Woodford. Like night work better now.

March 16. Have new Austrian patient. She sure wets her bed about right. Used draw sheets because I didn't know what else to do. Miss Miller sure is suffering some. And Jacob is blue. Made me some hot soup and egg and toast

this time. Felt much better by morning. Seemed too bad to go to bed when everyone else was getting up so bright and sunny.

March 17. Sun. Slept so sound all day. Got to supper late but wiped dishes to make up for it.

Thus ended the diary of Gladys H. Hostetler.

¹For a history of the LaJunta Mennonite School of Nursing, see Maude Swartzendruber, *The Lamp in the West* (N.p.: LaJunta Mennonite School of Nursing Alumnae Association, 1975).

²Swartzendruber, 14, 27, 321.

³The original letter is in the possession of family members, with several copies in existence.

⁴Gladys actually had a double in-law relationship with Leah. Not only was Leah married to Gladys' oldest brother Oliver. Gladys' older sister Elsie (my mother) was married to Leah's brother Crist Beyler.

⁵The original diary is currently in the possession of Thelma (Hostetler) Kaufman of Harper, Kansas. I have a complete copy.

⁶Since Della's husband Ura was the brother closest in age to Gladys, it is to be expected that Della would have talked a lot about Gladys to Thelma.

⁷Malinda Liechty later returned to LaJunta Mennonite Nursing School and graduated in 1921. She spent two different stints as Director of the Nursing School, 1927-30 and 1932-33. Swartzendruber, 23-24, 321, 346.

⁸Allen H. Erb, Superintendent of LaJunta Hospital and Sanitarium, 1916-1951/52. Swartzendruber, 18-19, 27 gives two dates for Erb's administration. Allen was married to Stella Coopridger Erb.

⁹Miss Liechty did in fact return to LaJunta. See note 7.

¹⁰Much later in life, Malinda Liechty married Allen Erb (see note 8) after the death of his wife Stella Coopridger. Swartzendruber, 313.

¹¹Emma Rohrer, a member of the first graduating class of 1918. Miss Rohrer later served the Mennonite School of Nursing for about 15 years. Swartzendruber, 22, 321, 359.

¹²Lydia Oyer graduated with the class of 1921. At different times, she later served as instructor in the nursing school and as head nurse in the sanitarium. Swartzendruber, 24, 358.

¹³See diary entry below for March 14.

¹⁴See note 7.

¹⁵Maude Swartzendruber's history of LaJunta Mennonite School of Nursing depicts such a "cozy room" as less than ideal. "Living quarters for the workers (and student nurses) occupied the top (third) storey of the sanitarium built in 1908. . . . These quarters were anything but ideal, even for sleeping. There was insufficient light and space." Swartzendruber, 244-245.

¹⁶See note 8.

¹⁷Leah (Hostetler) Beyler, the addressee of Gladys' letter printed above.

¹⁸See note 15.

¹⁹See note 7.

²⁰See note 12.

²¹See note 11.

²²Allen Erb. See note 8.

Portraits of Mennonite Health: Selected Stories from Historical Nursing Research

by Janice Unruh Davidson

A renaissance of caring is occurring in professional nursing theory today. The “guru of caring” is Dr. Jean Watson, who has ignited a new paradigm of caring through such works as *Nursing: The Philosophy and Science of Caring* (1979); *Nursing: Human Science and Human Care, A Theory of Nursing* (1985), and *Toward a Caring Curriculum: A New Pedagogy for Nursing* (1989). When the Bethel Deaconess Hospital nursing program first began at the turn of the twentieth century, its curriculum was, like most nursing programs of that day, largely medical-apprentice oriented. An early curriculum included medical, surgical and obstetrical content in addition to liberal arts, sciences and Biblical studies. Today there exist only four Mennonite directed programs of nursing in the United States: (1) Bethel College, (2) Eastern Mennonite College, (3) Goshen College, and (4) Hesston College. Moreover, the curriculum has changed to reflect the discipline’s status as a profession, most frequently nursing-theory driven as Watson’s 1989 text suggests. While Jean Watson proclaims a “Science of Caring” in the nursing community, I am reminded of a “Service of Caring” in a Mennonite community that pre-dates my service as a Mennonite nurse to a Mennonite program of nursing. I think back beyond the service of the Bethel deaconesses who began the nursing program I now serve—beyond the year 1900, when Sister Frieda Kaufman presented herself to the business manager of Bethel College, Rev. David Goerz, as the first candidate for deaconess work and the col-

lege Board of Directors initiated steps to develop the Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital Society for nursing education and service.¹

Background of the Study

For most of my adulthood, I have often thought of my ancestors, “the immigrants,” born in Russia, but willing to leave their homeland for a new world due to their commitment to Christ and His teaching. I have finally reached that magical age of “thirty something”—the age at which my great-grandparents David P. and Sara Janzen Schroeder were when their community of Alexanderwohl in Molotschna, South Russia, decided to migrate to the United States. When the passes were handed out that year, in 1874, at the Alexanderwohl church to the groups that would board steamers for the U.S., my great-grandparents had made a decision to stay behind and perform a “service of caring” for Susana Reimer (Mrs. Peter) Schroeder, who was aging and suffering from rheumatism.

After nearly all of the Alexanderwohl community had migrated to America and started the Alexanderwohl church north of Goessel, the remaining group organized itself into a church and elected my great-grandfather to be their preacher and elder. According to family accounts, it was at this time that teachings of the Lutheran evangelist, Pfarrer Eduard Wuest, reached the community and resulted in revival. This revival extended from Gnadenheim through Alexanderwohl to the village of Rueckenau where my great-grandfather now ministered and convicted

many Mennonites of their need to renew their faith in the Lord.

It seems that the willingness of my great-grandparents to stay behind and care for a loved one has come full-circle to me. Now, thirty-something, I think about the strange significance of those two years between 1874 and 1876 and how my great-grandparents’ “service of caring” in staying behind with David’s mother until she died, directed my life ultimately away from the Bethel community I now serve, but through my service of caring as a nurse, has returned me to those roots. For this reason, I am most interested in those elements of personhood that one serves when caring for another—the biopsychosociospiritual “being” for whom the Bethel nursing program now seeks to care. Toward this end, I have researched the personhood of those people who were born in Russia, but made the decision in the 1870s to migrate to the prairie states of the U.S. and ultimately died in a new land at the turn of the twentieth century.

Methodology of the Study

For the purposes of this study, Teresa Christy’s methodology for historical nursing research was utilized.² The historical study approach was that of interviewing tertiary sources, direct descendants of specific individuals identified, and then comparing the information obtained with primary sources such as diaries, newspaper accounts, and other writings to ascertain reliability of the results.³

The 25 subjects identified for the study were born between 1823 and 1855



David P. Schroeder and Sara Janzen Schroeder

in Russia. The mean age at migration to the U.S. was 37.5 during the 1870s and the age at death in the U.S. ranged from 66 to 101. The following portraits of these pioneers typify the biopsychosociospiritual elements of these Mennonite immigrants that the deaconesses first sought to serve at the turn of the twentieth century. Each section will be presented with introductory information followed by the selected subject's portrait and story obtained through related interviews and documented by primary evidence.

Portrait of Spiritual Health: The David P. and Sara Janzen Schroeder Story

The David P. and Sara Janzen Schroeder story illustrates the spiritual commitment noted among all of the Mennonite subjects of this time period. The David P. and Sara Janzen Schroeder story was obtained through an interview of Rev. A.E. Janzen in 1984 by the author, translated writings of Tina Schroeder (Mrs. Jacob J. Unruh) and confirmed for reliability through related research by Joel Suderman (1990).

On July 11, 1876 the Schroeder family arrived in the U.S. aboard the steamer *S.S. Kenilworth*. The Schroeder family, according to immigration records, consisted of David (31), Sara (32), Susana (9), Peter (4), David (2),

Helena (1), and Sara (0).⁴ The Schroeders and others traveled to an area near Lehigh. After inspecting a few areas of land, they purchased 200 acres one mile north of what has come to be called Menno Road and K-15.⁵ Others who had migrated with the Schroeders bought the balance of the 640 acres and all built their homesteads with orchards planted through the middle of the section, forming a village which they named "Gnadenheim" (Grace Home)—the birthplace of David Schroeder in Russia. It was at this homestead that the following children were born to David and Sara; Heinrich, Johann, Jacob, and Katharina (Tina) for a total of nine children.

This group of settlers soon became acquainted with the Gnadenau (Grace Meadow) Krimmer Mennonite Brethren (KMB) settlement, nine miles east, which had originated in 1874.⁶ Soon the Gnadenheim group, under the leadership of Schroeder, took membership in the Gnadenau KMB church because they preached conversion and baptism by immersion. Since Schroeder had been elected to the ministry in Russia, he was also appointed to minister at Gnadenau with Jacob A. Wiebe.

As the Gnadenheim and Springfield areas grew, worship services for these communities were observed in the homes since nine miles in horse and buggy days made travel to Gnadenau

problematic. Eventually the communities organized a local congregation and elected David P. Schroeder as minister and elder.

Through the reading of the Word of God and by virtue of the edifying meetings conducted in the Springfield Church, built in 1894, Schroeder had come to a dynamic living faith, of which he gave testimony at every opportunity. He could not remain silent of the great things God had done for his soul. He often said, "Runoren muss es in dem Herzen" (There must be a noise within the heart that bubbles over). Schroeder's sermons were brief, earnest, and full of quotations from the Bible. He knew many Scripture passages and songs by memory. He would quote freely from the Bible in his messages and in his visitation schedule. He wrote edifying articles for the *Zionsbote* and *Rundschau* newspapers which gave evidence and testimony of Godly devotion and spiritual walk. Schroeder maintained that whoever had become a witness for Jesus, must have had a regenerating experience in his own heart. At prayer meetings, church services, revivals, and mission festivals, he would often start general singing, with such songs as "Kommt Brueder steht nicht stille," "Hallelujah, Schoener Morgan," and "Kommt Brueder, kommt, wir eilen fort."

Schroeder's family consisted of nine children, five sons and four daughters, who all were converted and joined the church during the life of both parents. When the sons grew up, David bought a wind-mill from Eduard Ebel at Hillsboro and moved it to his farm. The mill was operated by the family day and night until a violent storm wrecked the mill. The mill was converted into a granary and never rebuilt.

After 27 years of farming, David and Sara turned the farm over to son Henry and moved to Lehigh. In Lehigh, David and Sara Schroeder lived another 12 years. They had one horse and buggy which enabled them to attend services at the Springfield church and do visitation during the weekdays. The last sermon David P. Schroeder preached in the Springfield KMB Church was on the text "Be strong in the Lord, my son,

in the power of His strength," admonishing especially the young brethren to remain true and faithful in all trials of life. Toward the last of his life, he suffered from rheumatism as his mother had, and finally a stroke which brought his unexpected death August 31, 1917 at the age of 73.

The memorial service was held on September 4, 1917 in the Springfield KMB church.⁷ Four elders preached on the text from II Samuel 1:26, "I am distressed for thee, my brother Jonathan; very pleasant hast thou been unto me. Thy love to me was wonderful, passing the love of women." The elders who preached were Peter A. Wiebe from the Springfield church, John Friesen from the Gnadenau Church, John Nickel from the Lehigh Church, and John Esau from the Zoar Church.

According to family accounts, the parting with her beloved husband was especially grievous for Sara. She wept loudly when the lid of the coffin was closed and David was carried out of their home. They had been greatly attached to one another, had been of the same mind and heart, and could humbly verify that they never had a quarrel between themselves. This they credited to the Holy Spirit to whose leadership they had gladly submitted. While the casket was being lowered into the grave, the Springfield choir sang. Two years later Sara joined David in heaven. To their children, David and Sara wrote:

We wish you much success and blessing and peace and love in your wedded life, and in the beginning of your homemaking.

Begin everything with Jesus: Arise early in the morning so that, with the Word of God, and in united prayer, you may have your morning devotions, seeking the Lord's blessing and protection upon both your body and soul. Even in the beginning, be content with little, be submissive to God, and be thankful. "Seek first the Kingdom of God and all these things shall be added unto you."

Also, when the evening comes, practice evening devotions together in prayer and thanksgiving for all His blessings. Then, go to sleep with the Lord Jesus.

Do everything without murmuring in the Name of the Lord, and be thankful, so that, should death suddenly make its appearance, you may then enter into Eternal Life with and in the Lord Jesus. To this end, may the Lord prosper you through His grace. Amen.

Accept these words in love and remembrance from your sincere and loving parents, Sara and



Maria Wiens Wall

David Schroeder, Gnadenheim; Lehigh, Kansas.⁸

Portrait of Biological Health: The Maria Wiens Wall Story

The Maria Wiens Wall story was selected for inclusion because Mrs. Wall lived to the age of 101, which was most unique for American society at the turn of the twentieth century. Maria Wiens Wall lived longer than the other Mennonite subjects studied, yet her story typifies the high level of wellness that was found among the Mennonite people of that day, most of whom on the aver-

age lived a remarkable ten years longer than their non-Mennonite peers.⁹ The Maria Wiens Wall story was obtained through an interview with Anna D. Wall in 1984 by the author and confirmed for reliability through related research by Peggy Goertzen (1980).

Maria Wiens Wall was born to Johann and Justina Goosen Wiens on January 20, 1837 in the village of Altonau, in Molotschna, South Russia. Maria attended school until age 15 and then was kept at home, learning to cook, can, sew, knit, and spin silk from silkworms. Her childhood home sheltered the fam-



Heinrich Leppke and Justina Derksen Leppke

ily and livestock and was made from brick with a white sand floor and tile roof. As a child, Maria traveled with her mother in the sleigh to sell straw hats that they would weave during winter evenings and once they were attacked by a hungry wolf who fought with the horses until it was scared back into the forest. Her mother, Justina, died soon after and her father remarried.

In 1857, Maria married Peter C. Wall, also from Altonau. He was a teacher, by trade, and together, they were converted to faith in Christ in August of 1866. In 1878, just four years after having purchased a large farm of 165 acres, Peter and Maria decided to migrate to the U.S., where they bought a farm near Moundridge, Kansas.

They had already lost a baby girl,

Justina, but had seven other children—Peter, Johann, Anna, Maria, Kornelius, Justina (II) and Margaretha. In Kansas, daughter Margaretha died at 4 years of age, but another child named Margaretha (II), was born.

It wasn't long before Peter was called forth to become a teacher of the Word at the Ebenezer church. It was while Peter was traveling to a church conference that Margaretha (II) died at the age of one year, 9 months.

Maria was always very clean and proper. Her windowpanes sparkled, her window sills were filled with flowers. Her house and furnishings were painted and orderly. Maria was well known for her trees and plants which also gleamed in the sunlight. She did not smoke or drink or raise her voice in anger.

Besides cleanliness and orderliness, Maria was thrifty. She would sell eggs to build the family savings and always mended clothing over and over to extend its use. Her skills learned in childhood were put to use even in her late 90's as she continued to cook, can, sew, and knit in her children's homes. She believed that one must not be idle and equated exercise with hard work.

With regard to nutrition, Maria was remembered as small and short. She made traditional Mennonite foods such as chicken and noodles, plumma moos, ham and zwieback. The family would eat clabber milk and bread, and if there was no butter, she would serve rye bread with lard and salt spread on it. She believed that a good diet of healthy food was necessary for work.

Her eyesight was good throughout her life and she was always conscientious of her appearance, wearing her hair braided in a flat knot with a little round black bonnet, ruffled with a tie underneath. She never prayed without a head covering—even if it was only the corner of a long apron that she always wore.

Spiritually, Maria would read her Bible through every three months and she would pray to Jesus personally, sharing such news as "Lord Jesus, I did not sleep well this night," and "Lord Jesus, I have no interest in this world." She would go to bed early each night around 9:00 p.m. and arise early each morning to pray and read Scripture.

In 1906, Peter and Maria retired to Buhler, Kansas where Peter died in 1911 of pneumonia. Following Peter's death, Maria lived seven more years in their home and then lived with various children until the last years of her life, which she spent with her eldest son's family in the presence of her granddaughter, Anna, who planned her grandmother Maria's 100th birthday. Maria Wiens Wall died June 15, 1938 at the age of just over 101. Her husband Peter's body was exhumed from the Ebenezer cemetery and both were buried at the Buhler cemetery.

A Portrait of Social Health: The Heinrich and Justina Derksen Leppke Story

The Heinrich and Justina Derksen Leppke story illustrates the work ethic of the Mennonite subjects interviewed to the extent that the Leppke family, despite low socioeconomic status, was able to bring about healthy resolution of obstacles to social well-being. The Heinrich and Justina Derksen Leppke story was obtained through an interview of Solomon Leppke Loewen in 1984 by the author and confirmed for reliability through related genealogies available through Solomon Leppke Loewen and Joel Suderman (1994).

Justina (Christina) Derksen was born November 16, 1828 to Isaac and Justina (Katherina) Reimer Derksen in the village of Einlage, in Chortitza, South Russia. All that is known about Justina's childhood is that she had a brother named Salomon and that the family was poor. Because of their low socio-economic status, Justina worked very hard as a child.

Justina married Heinrich Leppke on November 3, 1852 and they settled as laborers into the village Nieder Chortitz, South Russia, where Heinrich had been born and raised in great poverty, having lost his father before his birth on July 29, 1827. Together, Justina and Heinrich farmed for eight years. They had four children during this time: Katherine (1853), Isaac (1855), Justina (1857), and Johann (1860).

The Leppkes then moved with 24 other families to the village of Gerhardsthal. There they had Abraham in 1862 and Elizabeth in 1864. Justina and Heinrich were baptized on September 20, 1866 and became members of the newly organized Mennonite Brethren Church. Four days later they had daughter Anna, followed by Peter in 1868 and Helena in 1870 who died the same year the last child, Jacob H., was born.

They were very poor during their years in Russia. Justina frequently had to serve the family dark bread and watermelon syrup for extended periods of time. Heinrich was illiterate, unable to write his own name.

In 1873 enough money was obtained

from harvest that the Leppkes made the decision to sell the farm and pack in preparation for migrating to the U.S. However, no other Mennonite Brethren wanted to go, so the trip was delayed until 1875. Justina again packed the large trunks with clothing, small household articles and kitchen utensils. She baked loaves of bread and toasted zwieback and also packed smoked and cured hams for the trip. On July 1, 1875, the Leppke family arrived in the U.S. aboard the steamer *S.S. Bolivia*. The Leppke family, according to immigration records were the only Mennonite passengers of the 267 passengers aboard.

Upon arrival in the U.S., the family consisted of Heinrich (48), Justina (46), Katherine (22) and her husband, Cornelius Nikkel (27), Isaac (20), Justina (18), Johann (16), Abraham (14), Elizabeth (10), Anna (8), Peter (6), and Jacob H. (4). They settled southeast of the Gnadenau community and became charter members of the Ebenfeld Mennonite Brethren Church. In 1880, Justina lost her second daughter, Elizabeth, who was nearly sixteen years old.

Heinrich died July 31, 1900 after which Justina lived with various children, spending her last years with her daughter, Justina and Jacob Loewen and numerous grandchildren. She became hard of hearing in those last eight years and so the grandchildren would speak into a crudely constructed horn in order that she could hear them. She died on February 12, 1908 and was buried next to her husband, Heinrich, in the Ebenfeld cemetery.

Because Heinrich and Justina made the decision to leave Russia, their social health as well as that of their descendants greatly improved. For example, according to research by Solomon Leppke Loewen, in 1919 the town Gerhardstal, which Heinrich Leppke co-founded, was attacked by Nestor Machno and Mennonite women and men were raped and killed. Those surviving left the village to find refuge in other Mennonite villages. However, in neighboring villages and specifically where Heinrich and Justina were married, the village of Nieder Chortitz,

“twenty-one members were murdered by the Machnowsy in 1919, 24 died of starvation during the famine (and drought) in 1921-22, 35 perished in Stalin's purge during 1933-34 and 83 persons were exiled during the period of 1929-41.... The village was completely destroyed (by the end of World War II).”¹⁰

Despite the low socio-economic status of Heinrich and Justina, they kept their family together and contributed much stability to their descendants. Their eight married children all settled initially on farms in the Ebenfeld community living, at least for awhile, within six miles of the original homestead.

A Portrait of Psychological Health: The Jacob A. and Justina Friesen Wiebe Story

The Jacob A. and Justina Friesen Wiebe story portrays the immense sorrows that these families encountered with death, epidemics, losses of homeland, challenges to religious freedom, persecution, and the manner in which, like Job, many of these Mennonite people continued to persevere. The Jacob A. and Justina Friesen Wiebe story was obtained through interviews with Martha Unruh Block in 1983, John Block in 1984 and Tina Regehr Unruh in 1985 by the author and confirmed for reliability through related genealogies available through the Tabor College Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies (1994).

Jacob A. Wiebe was born August 6, 1836 to Jacob and Anna Wiens Groening Wiebe in Margenau, South Russia. It is reported that he met his wife to be, Justina, in his role as driver for her father, the “Oberschulze” (Mayor) of Halbstadt. Justina was born December 5, 1833 to Johann and Katharina Jantzen Friesen. At the age of sixteen, Justina lost her mother following the delivery of her parents' 12th child.

On April 11, 1857, Justina married Jacob A. Wiebe in Halbstadt, South Russia. The couple bought a small farm with an oil press in Ohrloff. Here, their first child Anna was born on March 26, 1858, but died on March 14, 1859. Later that year, another daughter,

Katharina, was born on September 20, 1859. In 1861, the Wiebes moved to the Crimea, a new Mennonite settlement, and founded the village of Annenfeld (Anna's field). Here they experienced droughts, epidemics, and deadly spider plagues. On March 8, 1862, their first son, Johann, was born and on February 22, 1863, he died. On June 12, 1864, Jacob was born and died on October 12, 1864.

Because of the stresses they endured, they turned to God's word. In 1864 Jacob and Justina joined the Kleine Gemeinde, the most conservative Men-

nonite group, of which Jacob soon became minister and elder. In 1865, shortly after daughter Justina was born on June 25 and died the following day, mother Justina fell deathly ill. Justina developed problems breathing after a week and believed herself to be dying. It is reported that she cried for help from Jacob—that she wasn't yet saved and he began praying for her salvation. When she regained consciousness, she reported an out of body experience in which Satan struggled for her soul but the Lord Jesus Christ rescued her so that she sang a song of God. She asked Jacob

to read the Lord's word to her until the next day when she finally fell into a peaceful sleep. After this experience, it is reported that Jacob and Justina read *Martyrs Mirror* and desired to be re-baptized by immersion, which their church forbade.

On May 4, 1867 Abraham was born but he also died before his first birthday. Justina (II) was born September 7, 1868 and died July 18, 1869.

Because Jacob and Justina wished to carry out reforms they considered fundamental to Christian living, they withdrew from the Kleine Gemeinde on September 21, 1869 and organized the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren Church which observed baptism as practiced by the Apostolic churches as recorded in *Martyrs Mirror* whereby the candidate knelt in the water and was dipped forward symbolizing the burial of Christ and the rising out of the water (grave) with one's new life in Christ. The Lord began to bless Jacob and Justina. Jacob (II) was born July 4, 1870 and Johann (II) on February 28, 1872. Moreover, they began to succeed in their farming efforts and the community of Annenfeld had grown into a thriving village with beautiful acacia (black locust) trees.

Their joy again turned to sorrow as another child, Anna (II) was born November 17, 1873 and died January 16, 1874. This same year, on May 9, 35 families among the Krimmer Mennonite Brethren Church left the community of Annenfeld with one last look at the acacia trees in full bloom and traveled to America with "depressed feelings." Their commitment to nonresistance prompted the move. En route another boy, Peter, was born to Jacob and Justina.

On August 16, 1874, the group of 35 families arrived in Marion County where they founded the Gnadenau (Grace Meadow) settlement.¹¹ In 1875, Jacob and Justina lost Peter before his first birthday, but Peter (II) was born March 4, 1877. Together they had brought 12 precious children into this world, seven sons and five daughters. However, Jacob and Justina had lost eight in infancy. Anna was buried at Ohrloff, Russia; three sons, Johann, Jacob and Abraham buried at



Jacob A. Wiebe and Justina Friesen Wiebe

Annenfeld, as well as three daughters, Justina, Justina (II), and Anna (II) buried at Annenfeld; and little Peter, born en route to America, was dead the next year and buried at Gnadenau.

Despite the chronic sorrow and stress this family endured, Jacob and Justina continued to look to the Lord for their strength and coping. They adopted Maria Flaming, born June 13, 1875 and died August 13, 1875 and Maria Hart on April 14, 1876 whose father had drowned and mother couldn't care for the family. Additionally, they opened their home to seven foster children whom they treated as their own, even giving them dowries at the occasion of marriage just as their children received.

To their last days Jacob and Justina reached others by serving meals, sharing food, helping heal sickness, and ministering to the Spirit. By 1907, Justina was completely deaf but continued to seek the Lord for her strength. On November 29, 1916 Justina died and on June 23, 1921 Jacob A. Wiebe joined Justina in heaven leaving their earthly form at Gnadenau.

Portrait of Service to the Community: The Sara Block Eitzen Story

Although a traditional definition of the individual in nursing theory today is the "biopsychosociospiritual" being, nursing theory also looks at groups of people such as the family and community. Therefore, portraits of Mennonite health without noting the importance of the family and community to this population would be remiss. Therefore, the Sara Block Eitzen story provides an example of the commitment Mennonite people have to their larger community. The Sara Block Eitzen story was obtained through interviews of Esther Ebel in 1984 by the author and confirmed for reliability through related genealogies available through the Tabor College Center for Mennonite Brethren Studies (1994).

Sara Block was born February 2, 1840 at Rudnerweide, South Russia to David and Sara Block. She had planned to develop a medical career and had therefore at a young age apprenticed with a physician. However, she had committed her life to the Lord through a re-



Abraham Eitzen and Sara Block Eitzen

vival in the Molotschna led by Pfarrer Eduard Wuest and therefore was open to God's direction for her. Not long after this experience she met Abraham Eitzen whose wife Susanna Isaac had died leaving him with four young children.

Abraham Eitzen had been born in Lindenau, South Russia on August 18, 1830 to Cornelius and Anna Loewen Eitzen. He and his wife Susanna had four children; Katherine in 1857, John in 1859, Abraham A. in 1861 and Daniel A. in 1863. During this time they also became members of the Mennonite Brethren Church. However, on September 9, 1864, Susanna died, reportedly of "nervenfieber" (typhoid).

In the fall of 1866, when Abraham met Sara Block, she thought her life plan was to become a medical missionary. However, when Abraham proposed marriage she decided to lay out a fleece to allow God to guide her decision. It was therefore, through a casting of a lot, that Sara Block married Abraham Eitzen on November 20, 1866 and became mother to four. Soon a son, David, was born to Sara, but he died in infancy. Then the Lord blessed Sara with a daughter, also named Sara, born in 1871.

In 1874, Sara's parents, David and Sara Block had migrated from the

Krimmer Mennonite settlement of Annenfeld, in the Crimea, to Gnadenau, Kansas. Therefore, in 1876, Abraham and Sara decided to also migrate and soon settled not far from Gnadenau and southwest of Hillsboro. They soon joined others in founding the Ebenfeld Mennonite Brethren Church. Then, in 1880, Abraham and Sara were blessed with Anna and, in 1882, another daughter, Mary, was born.

It wasn't long before Sara was called upon to assist in a delivery and soon Sara began to use her knowledge as a midwife. She would be awakened at all hours to attend to the delivery of babies during all seasons. She would nurse her patient back to health regardless of the circumstances, eventually birthing over 1800 babies according to family records. The family home, called "Pleasant Hill" because of its three-story size which was built into a hill and planted with flowers, hedges, and orchards, was soon opened to two foster sons, Peter K. Hiebert and Thomas Fisher, whose mothers had died when they were infants.

In Abraham's latter years, Sara nursed him until his death on December 1, 1906 of pneumonia. But Sara's dedication to serving God by serving the community was not yet over. In 1912 she cared for her lost stepson,



Johann H. Unruh family. Front row, left to right: Johann H. Unruh, Tina (1895-1909), Helen (b. 1888), Martha (b. 1900), Herb (b. 1902), Helena Dirks Unruh; middle row: Abe (b. 1898), Pete (b. 1893), Mary (b. 1890), Dan (b. 1896); back row: Jacob J. (1886-1978), John (b. 1883), Henry (b. 1881). Not shown: Anna (1885-1886).

John, who she promised Abraham long ago would return someday to the home. John returned home in ill health in December of 1912 and Sara nursed him over the next 5 months until his death in April of 1913. He was buried with his father in the Ebenfeld cemetery.

It is told that after a lifetime of serving the community, Sara's one wish was that she would never see the day when Mennonite men would be drafted into war. On September 5, 1917, while visiting her daughter in McPherson, she arose early and slipped on the steps, resulting in her death on the very day the first Mennonite young man was called up for U.S. military duty during World War I.

Portrait of Music in the Family: The Johann H. and Helena Dirks Unruh Family Story

The concluding portrait reveals a common finding of the influence of music in many Mennonite homes of this period. All 25 of the subjects interviewed reported music to be a mechanism that brought together these Mennonite families in self-expression, entertainment, and worship. The Johann

H. and Helena Dirks Unruh family story was obtained through interviews by the author with Martha Unruh Block in 1983, Tina Block Unruh in 1984, translated writings of Tina Schroeder (Mrs. Jacob J. Unruh) in 1984, and confirmed for reliability through taped interviews between Lydia Geis and Dan Unruh, and from records of the Alexanderwohl Church with the translating assistance of Velda Richert Duerksen (1994).

Johann H. Unruh was born to Heinrich H. and Anna Penner Unruh on February 14, 1858 in Schardau, Russia. He traveled with his family on the *S.S. Cimbria* which arrived August 27, 1874. The family came to Yankton, Dakota Territory.¹² Johann's family settled approximately 30 miles north of Yankton, between Freeman and Marion at Parker. However, it was at Yankton that he met Helena Dirks, the daughter of Henry Dirks and Maria Unger. The Heinrich H. Unruh family worshipped at the Salem Zion Mennonite Church of which Christian Kauffman was minister and elder. It is here where one notes the role that music played in this family as Heinrich H. Unruh was song leader for this congregation.

Johann and Helena were married April 11, 1880. They were soon blessed with 12 children: Henry J. born January 24, 1881, John C. born February 17, 1883, Anna born January 18, 1885, Jacob J. born October 17, 1885, Helen born August 15, 1888, Mary born December 21, 1890, Peter J. born January 13, 1893, Tena born January 6, 1895, Dan born October 8, 1896, Martha born May 22, 1900, and Herb born June 3, 1902. By this point the family home had obviously become very crowded and therefore they decided to move to Kansas in search of more farmland in 1902. One daughter, Anna, had died on December 19, 1886 and was buried with Anna Penner Unruh at the Salem-Zion Mennonite Church cemetery.

The family settled on 320 acres of farmland just south of Lehigh. Here they soon earned the nickname "Dakota-Unruh" family because of their previous home in Dakota.

The family soon came to be known for its musical talents. Johann had been a song leader in the Marion (Dakota) Mennonite Brethren Church and so he was readily appointed as one in Kansas. Henry played the autoharp, Jacob played the mandolin, Herb played the trumpet, and Dan played trombone. Martha and Abe were also vocally inclined.

Soon the telephone came to Marion County and "10-shorts" would mean that the line was open from Goessel to Lehigh. It served as an alarm system, news "hot-line," and the first form of outside family entertainment in the home (prior to the advent of phonograph and radio). The Unruh family came to be called upon with the "10-shorts" signal to perform for those wishing to have music played into their home.

The family would always sing a short song prior to the blessing as they gathered for each meal. The family owned a steam engine-powered threshing rig and binder and would frequently work throughout the area where they would sing and play instruments as well. Dan started a band in Lehigh while Herb started a band in Hillsboro. Eventually Abe went on to study opera in Chicago and Martha studied music at Tabor



John H. "Dakota" Unruh farm near Lehigh. Disc pulled by steam tractor. Unruh seated at left.

College.

On November 27, 1909, daughter Tena died and not long afterward Johann became sick. However, he continued to serve the Springfield and Lehigh churches as song director where son Jacob soon met up with Tena Schroeder, the daughter of Elder David P. and Sara Janzen Schroeder. This is the story of how my ancestors served the Alexanderwohl community in Russia, moved halfway around the world and returned me to serving other descendants of the Mennonite faith. I have often heard the story of how Great-grandpa Johann H. Unruh would direct the choir and general singing and then Great-grandpa David P. Schroeder would get up and preach. I can almost hear the closing hymn "Nun ist sie Erschienen," sung in Low German as I imagine warm sunlight filtering

through the green trees and arched windows of the Springfield Church at the turn of the twentieth century.

The sun has now risen in heavenly glory,
and shines through the darkness of night.
Now rejoice and sing praises, yea shout the glad story
for in Christ the Redeemer is healing and light.
To God be the glory and good will to men.
Through Christ our Redeemer shall peace come again.

ENDNOTES

¹Bethel Deaconess Home and Hospital Society, *A Short Summary of the History of the Institution* (Newton, KS: Board of Directors, 1918), 2.

²Teresa Christy, "The Methodology of Historical Research: A Brief Introduction," *Nursing Research* 24 (May-June 1975): 189-192.

³Janice Umuh Davidson, "Historical Perspectives of Self-Care Agency among Elderly Mennonites at the Turn of the Twentieth Century" (Master's thesis, Wichita State University, 1984), 28-29.

⁴Clarence Hiebert, ed., *Brothers in Deed to*

Brothers in Need (Newton, KS: Faith and Life Press, 1974).

⁵Original home and granary-mill still stands and is owned by Peter A. Loewen (1994)

⁶C. Henry Smith, *Story of the Mennonites* (Newton, KS: Faith and Life Press, 1981), 427-428.

⁷The Springfield Church eventually closed and is now located 1 3/4 miles north on K-15 at the Baltzer Farm (1994).

⁸Found in the family possessions of Jacob J. and Tina Schroeder Unruh (1978).

⁹Janice Unruh Davidson, "Health Embodiment: The Relationship between Self-Care Agency and Health-Promoting Behaviors" (Ph.D. diss., Texas Woman's University, 1988), 11.

¹⁰Solomon Leppke Loewen, *History and Genealogy of the Jacob Loewen Family* (Hillsboro, KS: Multi Business Press, 1983), 22.

¹¹David V. Wiebe, *They Seek a Country* (Hillsboro, KS: Mennonite Brethren Publishing House, 1959), 56-59.

¹²John D. Unruh and John D. Unruh, Jr., "Daniel Unruh and the Mennonite Settlement in Dakota Territory," *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 49 (July 1975): 203-216.

Book Reviews

Cornelius J. Dyck, William E. Keeney, Alvin J. Beachy, *The Writings of Dirk Philips 1504-1568*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1992. Pp. 704. (\$44.95)

Alvin J. Beachy was in the Netherlands with his wife from the end of February to the middle of May 1980. He had been working on the English translation of the works of Dirk Philips since his retirement in 1978. In an interview he gave on that occasion and which was published in the *Doopsgezinde Bijdragen* 7 (1981), he explained the origins of his interest in this "friend and fellow worker of Menno Simons" (J. ten Doornkaat Koolman). Alvin, son of the famous bishop of the Beachy Amish, told the story as follows: Dirk Philips had been in every Amish preacher's library for a long time. The works of Dirk Philips, the *Martyrs Mirror* and the (German language) Luther Bible were indispensable. My father once offered me a large number of books, but when he took Dirk Philips's *Enchiridion* off the shelf he looked at it lovingly and said in Pennsylvania Dutch, "Des kanst du net hava." [You can't have this one.] For him, that book was as valuable as the Bible. He had had no theological education, but the knowledge he had came from Dirk Philips.

During his doctoral research Alvin J. Beachy discovered for himself that Dirk Philips was a clearer and more intelligible author than Menno Simons, an opinion already expressed by Dirk Philips's contemporaries, such as the Roman Catholic polemicist Georgius Cassander, and shared by later scholars of sixteenth century Dutch Anabaptism. Is this judgement correct and if it is, why, paradoxically enough, was this Dirk Philips with his clear formulations so much in the shadow of Menno Simons with his unsystematic theologizing? Or, as is more probable, has history placed him there?

Hermannus Schyn (1662-1727), leader of the confessional "Zonists" and thus a decided admirer of Menno's, al-

ready complained on page 137 of his *Historiae Mennonitarum Plenior Deductio* (1729) of the redundancy in Menno's writings which had started to become particularly noticeable in the course of the seventeenth century when increasingly more complete collections had been published in a binder. In contrast, he commended Dirk Philips as 'a learned man, who was in no way inferior to the Mennonites of those days' (p. 186). But Menno's popularity remained greater in spite of this praise. Dirk Philips's main work *Enchiridion* was no longer published in full in the Dutch language after 1626, and a collection and critical re-issue of all his writings did not appear until 1914. (*De geschriften van Dirk Philipsz. Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica*, X. 's-Gravenhage: Martinus Nijhoff, 1914.) But the enormous significance of this has passed unnoticed by twentieth century Dutch Mennonites.

After his death, Dirk Philips continued to be held in particular esteem by the Oude Vlamingen (Old Flemish) who retained the original Dutch Anabaptist characteristics (such as the washing of feet, silent prayer and the episcopal rules governing church life) the longest, but who as a small religious minority in the eighteenth century were doomed either to assimilation or extinction. In this way, the name of Dirk Philips came to be linked with a fundamental Anabaptist conservatism which seemed too extreme, even to the tradition-conscious confessionals in the eighteenth century like Schyn.

It was pointed out with pleasure in later centuries that Menno had been less rigorous than his fellow elder in his ideas on matters of church discipline. This opinion, however, testifies more to liberal bias than to historical-critical sense, particularly if we can rely on the judgment of Adam Pastoor for example, who points to Menno and not to Dirk as having played the harsh principal role in Pastoor's condemnation and ban.

Neither is the hypothetical contrast between Menno's kindness and Dirk's rigidity free of this same bias. In any case, Menno was clearly Dirk's superior where hurling verbal abuse at op-

ponents was concerned.

Dirk Philips's spiritual heritage was ultimately best preserved among the rural Mennonites in the Vistula region, where he himself had been an elder at one time. They honored his memory during their wanderings in search of a country where his ideas on an authentic Christian church could be realized in freedom. Now Dirk Philips returns home to the Netherlands as a 'Classic of the Radical Reformation' and asks his countrymen again, in English this time, for a hearing. An almost forgotten emigrant suddenly appears among them as an uninvited immigrant with the modest request to "Read me, though as having become a stranger."

The editors of the series "Classics of the Radical Reformation" wish to re-issue original Anabaptist texts for a wide audience in a reliable scholarly form in an English translation. Readability without compromising the original text is their motto. The three editors have been completely successful in their pursuit of readability, basing their work on the 1564 edition of the *Enchiridion*, the collected writings in volume X of the *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica*, and three appendices taken from J. ten Doornkaat Koolman, *Dirk Philips: vriend en medewerker van Menno Simons (1504-1568)* (Haarlem: H.D. Tjeenk Willink & Zoon, 1964). Alvin J. Beachy was unfortunately unable to complete the translation which he began in 1978, he died in 1986. William E. Keeney, a scholar of sixteenth century Dutch Anabaptism continued the work of translation and formulated the biographical sketch of Dirk Philips. C.J. Dyck acquitted himself of the enormous task of coordinating and annotating the translations submitted, writing introductory texts for them and preparing them for printing.

Extensive and carefully compiled indexes of biblical quotations, names, places and subjects enhance the accessibility and usefulness of this work. The numerous biblical references originally printed in the margin have been incorporated into the text at the places where they belong. The greatest praise for this painstaking labor! This method pro-

vides clear perception, for example, of how the author sometimes compiles entire paragraphs from Bible quotations alone. The geographical maps present a good impression of Dirk Philips's working area, although the map of the Spanish Netherlands in approximately 1530 has been modernized too much. In summary, no effort has been spared to make it a great pleasure to consult and read this book.

So has this high degree of readability been to the detriment of the original text? Hardly at all, although I do have some criticism on a few points. The word "g[h]emeynte" appears frequently and it is mainly the translation of this term which gives rise to a few question marks. In my opinion, it is incorrect to assume that in using the word "gemeynte" Dirk Philips is only alluding to a local gathering of believers and that "gemeynte" should therefore be translated to "congregation", virtually without distinction. I am afraid that this translation was inspired by assumptions which cannot be derived from either the text or the theology of Dirk Philips. They are more probably based on ideas from a later phase in the development of the Anabaptist movement, in which a more congregationalist form of church did indeed gradually start to take shape. However, most of the blame must be ascribed to the famous typology of church and sect in Troeltsch's *Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen* (1912), which is referred to on p. 237, n. 2. Dirk Philips's ecclesiology was, in my opinion, more episcopalian than congregationalist however, and he used biblical-theological categories not sociological ones.

It is true that Dirk Philips does use "ghemeynte" sometimes to refer to the local Anabaptist congregation(s), for example "an de Gemeynten in Vr.[iesland]" correctly translates as "to the congregations in Fr.[iesland]." (See p. 526; likewise pp. 383; 410). But in the first place, "gemeynte" is used to mean the church of Christ, "een heerlijke Gemeynte, die niet en heeft eenighe vleecke oft rimpel," correctly translated by "a glorious church without spot or wrinkle" (p. 155). Neither is it permissible for "de geestelijke Ark"

(literally the spiritual Ark) to be reduced to the local congregation alone, as is the case on p. 81.

It is equally incorrect to translate the title of the treatise "Van de Gemeynte Godts" by "The Congregation of God" (p. 350) instead of "The Church of God." What Dirk means by this term is the original, true apostolic church which is continued in the Anabaptist movement, distinguished from all churches and movements who do not keep to Christ's commandment only. This is the "rechte Christelijke Kercke ofte Ghemeynte" (translated by "the true Christian church or congregation"; p. 351) in which the reader must also sense, here and elsewhere, the description of the church in the Apostolicum as "communio sanctorum" (p. 13). Dirk Philips, however, as yet unhampered by Troeltsch's interpretation, blithely uses "Kercke" here as a synonym for "Ghemeynte."

In contrast, he reserves the concept "secte" for all (reformed) churches and movements which deviate from the apostolic norm (see p. 117; 366). Dirk has the pomp and circumstance of the Roman Catholic church buildings in mind with his "antichristischer Kercken" (churches opposed to Christ) on p. 317, and he means the Münsterites in particular by "oproerige Seecten" (rebellious sects). As a consequence, I believe it would be better to translate "gemeynte" to "church" as a rule, except where a local congregation is being referred to explicitly. In contrast to German or Dutch speakers with their distinction between Kirche/kerk and Gemeinde/gemeente, English speakers may really consider themselves fortunate to be able to use the undifferentiated word "church" (like the New Testament concept of *ekklesia*) for the local church, the regional church and the universal church.

Let us look at another example of how a particular translation (an erroneous one in this case) suggests a radical dualism between church and world, which has no foundation in the text itself. In the treatise "Bekentnisse van Godt" (Confessing God) which is part of his *Enchiridion*, Dirk Philips writes about the friendship with the world which

means enmity with God: "Ende dat is de oorsake, waerom dat wy niet gesint en zijn, der menschen insettingen die tegen Christum zijn, allen valschen Godsdienst, ende Afgoderie, alle Ceremonien ende Dienst der Roomscher Kercken, met de wereld te onderhouden etc." (*BRN*, X, p. 68). This sentence is incorrectly and incompletely translated as follows: "That is the reason we are not inclined to observe all human institutions of the world, all false worship and ceremonies of the Roman Church which are opposed to Christ, Matt. 15: [3]; I Cor. 10:14" (p. 71).

In Dirk's eyes, the "wereld" is the Christianity which continues to adhere to the false, non-biblical religion of the Roman Catholic Church. Dirk Philips and his followers do not intend to continue in the false religion together with this Roman Catholic "wereld." The translation suggests, however, that they are not inclined to respect "all human institutions of the world" (including the Roman Catholic religion). Yet Dirk never envisioned a revolutionary stance of this nature. He, like Menno incidentally, never denied the legitimacy of the government for example, providing the worldly leaders did not show themselves to be biased supporters of the traditional religion and did not become involved in the persecution of heretics.

The consistently sober annotation is mostly very enlightening, but suddenly overshoots the mark sometimes in unnecessary thoroughness. Some examples. On p. 237, n. 3 extensive consideration is given to the concept of "het evangelie aller creaturen" (the gospel of all creatures) which plays a role in German Anabaptism but not in the Dutch movement. On p. 254, n. 2, a connection is again made between ideas of Hans Hut and Dirk Philips, now relating to the sign of Tau as the apocalyptic seal of the chosen. Dirk does indeed quote the verses from the Bible relating to this in several places, but it is remarkable that he avoids the explicit use of the word Tau (unlike Menno!), probably because of fear of chiliastic-melchiorite and davidjoristic taints. It is not the convergence but rather the divergence of ideas on this point which

is interesting here, and points the way to a correct explanation of Dirk Philips's writings.

And so you see how easily this edition invites lively discussion of the biography and correct interpretation of the theology of one of the most prominent Anabaptist leaders. How I would have loved to start the discussion here, perhaps about the supposed superiority of Dirk to Menno where knowledge of the Vulgate Latin and the original languages of the Bible is concerned; or about the debt they both owed to Sebastian Franck's *Chronica*, including their knowledge of Luther derived from this; or the use of the Vulgate and Dutch Bible translations; about the current psychologizing description of Dirk's life and motives; or his undisclosed involvement with the revolutionary beginnings of the Anabaptist movement in the Low Countries; about the history of the printing of his works; or the assessment of the content of his "spiritualism," etc.

The reading of this "classic" will hopefully encourage many students and enthusiasts to further consideration of the Anabaptist tradition. All praise to the editors who have made it possible for us to have no worries now when we say "Des kanst du hava."

Sjouke Voolstra
Landsmeer, The Netherlands

Philip LeMasters, *The Import of Eschatology in John Howard Yoder's Critique of Constantinianism*. San Francisco: Mellen Research University Press, 1992. Pp. 245. (\$69.95).

Philip LeMasters, *Discipleship for all Believers: Christian Ethics and the Kingdom of God*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 1992. Pp. 172. (\$12.95 paperback).

Philip LeMasters' first two books provide an interesting contrast. The first, his doctoral dissertation, critiques the methodology of John Howard Yoder's ethical project. The second is LeMasters' effort to construct a similar ethics without those flaws. The first, though more academic, provides a

clear, comprehensive overview of Yoder's thought (the only book-length treatment to date). The second, while somewhat more popular, interacts with numerous scholars. Both balance a lucid main text with detailed scholarly footnotes.

LeMasters' dissertation highlights the importance of eschatology for Yoder. Because Jesus now reigns as cosmic Lord, the way of life he introduced is already the only genuine form of human existence, which will finally hold sway. Since this Lordship is still largely hidden, however, that present yet coming reality must become manifest chiefly through the Church. LeMasters' own project extends this emphasis, stressing that Jesus' resurrection provides the vision and arouses the hope, especially through the Spirit, of that future humanity already taking shape in the Church. In other words, while both writers base their ethics on Jesus' teachings and cross, these latter function not simply as given norms or past events, but as dynamic forms through which the resurrected Lord is reshaping the cosmos.

LeMasters' dissertation, however, identifies six flaws in Yoder's project. We can usefully compare his description of each with his own approaches in his second volume.

LeMasters faults Yoder, first, for employing a "biblical realism" which appeals to "what the text says" without adequately appreciating the complexities involved in reading it through a specific tradition—especially one which emphasizes communal interpretation. He spots tensions among efforts at straightforward readings, communal readings, and Yoder's use of critical biblical scholars, arguing that Yoder must, in the latter practice, "employ clear and rigorous criteria for the determination of precisely which exegetical findings are appropriate resources..." (#1, 54-55).

In LeMasters' own construction, however, I find him simply referring to what the text says. Though he selects passages carefully from diverse *genre*, he develops no criteria for these choices. Interestingly, LeMasters finds most biblical scholars (Schweizer,

Weiss, Bultmann, Wilder, Dodd) unhelpful, for they focus too exclusively on Jesus as moral teacher. Instead, he appeals to theologians (Moltmann, myself, Pannenberg, Kasper, Sobrino) to support the priority of the resurrection perspective.

LeMasters, second, critiques Yoder's use of "Constantinianism." For Yoder, this term denotes situations where the social order is regarded as bearer of God's activity, the Church's distinctiveness is lost, and its ethics redefined by the former. LeMasters protests that loose application of this term can obscure important differences between other social perspectives and the 4th-century phenomenon. While acknowledging that Yoder, by his own definition, can call Reinhold Niebuhr "Constantinian," LeMasters notes that Niebuhr also critiqued absolutist pretensions severely. Nonetheless, in his own construction LeMasters not only restates Yoder's definition of Constantinianism and Yoder's critique of Niebuhr from the dissertation; he also calls James Gustafson and Ernst Troeltsch (who both celebrate the emancipation of society from ecclesiastical influence) "Constantinian."

Third, LeMasters finds fuzzy Yoder's understanding of "Church," the all-important realm where eschatological reality is lived out and ethical decisions made. Yoder's descriptions of Church sound too ideal to be real, and where historical instances are mentioned (e.g., Anabaptism), criteria for meriting this label are unclear. In his own effort, LeMasters does seek to clarify the Church's nature through a reading of 1 Corinthians. He also stresses that, though the Church must strive to embody the highest ideals, it will always do so imperfectly.

LeMasters, fourth, finds inconsistency between Yoder's claims that 1) God's overall direction of history is hidden, so the Church should renounce efforts to guide it; and 2) the Church often has unique insight into what God is doing, and should become involved. Closely related is LeMasters' critique, fifth, of Yoder's "middle axioms" for guiding this involvement. Middle axioms are ways of using society's lan-

guage to recommend some approximation to the Church's Jesus-centered vision. For instance, the Church can urge proponents of a "just war" to reduce violence as their own theory demands. While any results will fall far short of the peace Christ calls for, they can curtail suffering in a way consistent with his present reign. LeMasters objects, however, that these axioms undercut Yoder's own unique basis for ethics to allow the Church to guide history, and be concerned about "effectiveness," in a way he says it should not.

It seems to me, however, that what Yoder regards as hidden, and what the Church should therefore refrain from managing, is history's *overall* direction. This seems compatible with insisting that, if Jesus is indeed presently reigning, particular movements, institutions, and persons will be affected by the reality manifested in his life and cross; and that the Church can discern, here and there, impulses which correspond to that pattern. It will want to further these, provided that this "effectiveness" does not compromise that pattern. Yet LeMasters rightly warns that "middle axioms" can indeed compromise that pattern. He complains that Yoder explains neither how such axioms should be devised nor how this danger could be avoided.

LeMasters acknowledges that Yoder would leave formulation of such axioms to the Church's discernment in particular contexts, insisting that they cannot be derived abstractly. For both writers, ethics is a practical discipline. It seeks to provide not universal guidelines for every conceivable setting, but aid for communal assessment of specific situations. LeMasters' own construction contains a chapter describing how this might be done, employing narrative categories, not middle axioms, thereby heeding his fifth criticism of Yoder. Moreover, by maintaining that Jesus' resurrection gives some indication of where history is heading, LeMasters attempts to avoid the fourth weakness he finds in Yoder.

Finally, Yoder affirms that non-theological knowledge and assessments must be utilized in this task, and that Christian analyses will usually corre-

spond with the most "objective" of these. LeMasters' sixth criticism finds this assumption naive in light of the social interests shaping any analysis. Yoder, he complains, does not really show how the Church can evaluate and incorporate secular knowledge. LeMasters' own volume sketches some interesting ways that Christians can be involved in health professions. Yet he simply asserts that Christians can also speak out on their larger economic and social dimensions without asking how they can assess the pertinent non-theological data.

In developing his own ethics, Philip LeMasters has apparently addressed only three of the six weaknesses he finds in Yoder. He seeks to describe what the Church is; how it might make ethical decisions otherwise than through "middle axioms"; and, by stressing the proleptic import of Jesus' resurrection, how it can have some knowledge of the future. This need not mean that his remaining three criticisms are unimportant. Indeed, for the ethical analysis of certain situations each one *could be*, and perhaps already *is*, significant. Maybe LeMasters' future work will deal with some of them. For now, however, it is noteworthy that LeMasters, whose dissertation concludes that Yoder's "project appears to totter on the brink of epistemological incoherence" (p. 197), has not addressed three major weaknesses that it identifies in his own constructive effort.

Perhaps this says something about the difference between ethical analysis, as LeMasters and Yoder say it should be conducted in a Church context, and the academic context of doctoral dissertations. The former cannot afford to speculate on every possible issue, but must focus on those emerging in a specific situation. It aims at guiding the Church's concrete life and mission, not on saying everything that might justifiably be said. But the latter often aims at theoretical comprehensiveness, at identifying everything connected with a project in an ideal sense. It is significant that LeMasters has not yet found it necessary to tackle the use of Scripture, the drawbacks of the "Constantinian" label, or the use of

non-theological knowledge in his own ethical work.

This is not to say that LeMasters' second volume is a bad book. By my criteria, it is quite a good book. I find its resurrection emphasis laudable, its narrative approach to Church decision-making suggestive, its criticisms of Troeltsch and Gustafson plausible. Only in light of LeMasters' own criteria does his project appear more questionable.

Thomas Finger
Harrisonburg, Virginia

