

Each entry includes a brief bibliography to aid further research. Far more treasures await within this magisterial volume than this humble review can cover. The *Oxford handbook of Jonathan Edwards* will serve as the benchmark for Edwards studies for many years to come.

NEW MEXICO HIGHLANDS UNIVERSITY

LUKE RITTER

*Women, preachers, Methodists. Papers from two conferences held in 2019, the 350th anniversary of Susanna Wesley's birth.* Edited by John Lenton, Clive Murray Norris and Linda A. Ryan. Pp. xviii + 390 incl. 3 ills and 3 tables. Oxford: Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History, 2020. £13.99 (paper). 978 5 563399 8 9

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This volume consists of fourteen papers given at two conferences held in 2019 to mark the 350th anniversary of the birth of Susanna Wesley, mother of John Wesley. While its geographical coverage is restricted mainly to Britain, the volume covers an impressive chronological range, which stretches from Susanna's childhood during the late seventeenth century through to the present day. The first section focuses on Susanna's life, and the ways in which it impacted on the Methodist movement. William Gibson discusses Susanna's 'political marriage' to Samuel Wesley, incumbent of Epworth, Lincolnshire. Politically, both Samuel and Susanna were Tories. Unlike the Williamite Samuel, however, Susanna remained loyal to the exiled Jacobite Pretender. Thus, Susanna did not 'conform to the role of an obedient Tory wife', who deferred in all politico-theological matters to the husband (p. 47). As is shown by Linda Ryan, such assertiveness and independence stemmed from Susanna's childhood. Under the tuition of her Puritan father, Samuel Annesley, Susanna received an education that went beyond what was customary for women during the late seventeenth century. Thus, Susanna was determined to provide her own children with a strong education, in which she melded a Lockean emphasis on the individual with 'Puritan virtues', such as 'industry' and 'frugality' (p. 58). As Ryan argues convincingly, John Wesley's support for female education stemmed in no small part from the strong education his sisters received from Susanna. Ryan is, however, careful to add that John supported female education primarily because he believed it enhanced the piety of women, not because it advanced their intellect. As is shown by John Lenton, John Wesley's willingness to trust the 'extraordinary' callings of lay preachers stemmed from Susanna's intervention. Initially, John restricted this support to laymen. Yet, after witnessing the successful ministries of female preachers, such as Sarah Crosby, he recognised that the 'extraordinary call' to preach was not restricted to men.

The second section provides various case studies of female Methodist preachers. Eryn White explores Calvinist Methodist preachers in eighteenth-century Wales, thereby reminding us that the influence of early Methodist women was restricted neither to England nor Wesleyanism. For the most part, the content of their preaching – which would have been in Welsh – is lost. To illuminate their theological ideas, White turns to items of personal correspondence, in which these women described their conversion experiences to Evangelical leaders, such as Howel Harris. Moving forwards into the nineteenth century, Tim Macquibban discusses women preachers

among the early Primitive Methodists, a movement which emerged after a camp meeting at Mow Cop on the borders of Staffordshire and Cheshire in 1807. Throughout the 1810s, 20 per cent of Primitive Methodist preachers were women. One influential figure was Sarah Kirkland, an itinerant preacher, who 'attracted thousands' to a camp meeting in Nottingham (p. 158). During the latter half of the nineteenth century, however, the number of female Primitive Methodist preachers declined rapidly. Jill Barber explores the reasons for this decline, arguing that it was due, in part, to the movement's transition from 'mission to maintenance, from evangelism to chapel building' during the 1850s. When preaching in the open air, Primitive Methodist women were a 'unique spectacle', who drew large, curious crowds. Once preaching moved into chapels, however, the focus of Primitive Methodism shifted to the 'converted', causing women preachers to be viewed as 'surplus to requirements' (pp. 263–4). Growing opposition to women preachers also stemmed partly from the Primitive Methodists' desire for middle-class 'respectability'. Ironically, this trajectory made the Primitive Methodists more acceptable to the Wesleys, from whom they had originally severed on the grounds that the Wesleys had allegedly lost their revivalist impulse (p. 266). Nevertheless, it is clear from David Bundy's essay, which discusses Catherine Stephens Smith's role in the radical holiness movement, that it would be wrong to simply class Victorian Wesleyans as 'anti-revivalists'. Also, despite their growing 'respectability', Victorian Methodists were sometimes reminded of their revivalist roots by American Methodist preachers, such as Phoebe Palmer, whose 1859–63 visit to Britain is discussed by Tim Woolley. It was after listening to Palmer preach that Catherine Booth, a Methodist Reformer, felt compelled to preach in her husband William's church. Both William and Catherine, of course, went on to form the Salvation Army.

The final section moves to the 1970s, when the ordination of women was permitted in the Methodist Church of Great Britain. It consists of three reflections by Methodist ministers. One reflection is by Christina Le Moignan, one of the first women to be ordained in the Methodist Church, who discusses her experiences of ministry in various settings, including at circuit level and as a tutor at Queen's College, Birmingham. Judith Maizel-Long discusses her calling as an undergraduate at Durham during the 1970s, and recounts some of the resistance she encountered as a ministerial student, both from individuals within her own denomination and from an Anglican priest. Moving closer to the present day, Michaela Youngson observes that there are huge disparities in terms of the influence and authority of women in the 'global' Methodist Church. As someone who has ministered in Papua New Guinea, Youngson is able to provide a first-hand account of some of these cultural differences. Given the wide breadth of locations, periods and individuals discussed in these essays, it would be churlish to dwell on what this volume is missing. There is a noticeable chronological chasm separating the end of the Victorian period and the ordination of women during the 1970s. It would have been fascinating to have learned about the experiences of Methodist women during the First and Second World Wars. Did a shortage of men on the home front result in women occupying more positions of leadership in Methodist churches? This minor observation aside, the editors and authors are to be congratulated on this thought-provoking and insightful volume, which enhances our

understanding of the fundamental and varied role played by women in British Methodist movements. It is to be hoped that this book will be the first of many to be published by the Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History.

TRINITY COLLEGE,  
DUBLIN

SIMON LEWIS

*We remember Maynooth. A college across four centuries.* Edited by Salvador Ryan and John-Paul Sheridan. Pp. 512 incl. 81 colour ills. Dublin: Messenger Publications, 2020. £40. 978 1 78812 263 4

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This collection of essays, thoughtfully curated by Salvador Ryan and John-Paul Sheridan, offers a unique insight into the cultural and intellectual life of a long-lived and important centre of Irish intellectual and ecclesiastical life, Maynooth College. The volume's most important contribution seems to be one for the future: its reminiscences and memoirs of the college – such as Martin Pulbrook's memories of the accelerated growth of both the college and the Classics Department during the 1970s – present interesting insights into the culture of the college during a time when both society and Catholicism sought to find new ways of understanding and being in modernity. In the essays focused on the twentieth century, *We remember Maynooth* offers future Irish ecclesiastical and intellectual historians the oft-sought and little-found memories of what happened in academic and social circles in Maynooth off the page and out of the classroom, contributing greatly to the bigger picture of an intellectual life of its students and faculty. Thomas J. Norris's reflections on his own education at Maynooth, for example, along with other chapters on the educators at Maynooth and the broader intellectual culture fostered by the academics, such as in Michael Conway's chapter 'Father Peter Connolly: from dreaming spires to stern reality', fill out the picture of not just what was taught at the seminary and college, but what it was like to learn there and from whom. For those scholars seeking to understand Maynooth before the twentieth century, the book might be a bit disappointing in its scope as the bulk of its essays are focused primarily on the 1900s. However, college life within its broader social and intellectual currents at Maynooth intersect in this volume with some reflection on the general and international trends and changes in theology, society and politics during the twentieth century to make for an interesting and often personal read across its wide range of essays.

UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

ROSE LUMINIELLO

*Humble women, powerful nuns. A female struggle for autonomy in a men's Church.* By Kristien Suenens. Pp. 381 incl. 46 ills and 8 tables. Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2020. €55 (paper). 978 94 6270 227 1

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Kristien Suenens provides a comparative examination of four nineteenth-century Belgian female religious founders: Anna de Meedís (1823–1904), Fanny Kestre