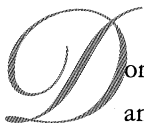


IN MEMORIAM

Donald F. Durnbaugh

onald Durnbaugh, long-time supporter of *Pennsylvania History* and the Pennsylvania Historical Association, died after a brief illness August 27, 2005. He was 77.

A native of Michigan, he was educated at Manchester College (B.A.) in Indiana, the University of Michigan (M.A.), and earned a doctorate in modern European history from the University of Pennsylvania. During his teaching and writing career Dr. Durnbaugh was affiliated with three institutions, two of which are in Pennsylvania. His first academic appointment was at Juniata College, in Huntingdon, 1958–1962. He was later appointed the J. Omar Good Distinguished Visiting Professor of Evangelical Christianity (1988–89), and beginning in 1993 served as volunteer Archivist at Juniata. For most of his teaching career, however, Professor Durnbaugh taught church history at Bethany Theological Seminary (Church of the Brethren), near Chicago, Illinois, 1962–1988. In 1989, after moving back to Pennsylvania, he and his wife Hedda were appointed Fellows in residence at the newly created Young Center

for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies at Elizabethtown College in Lancaster County. He was also the first scholar named to the Zeigler Chair in Religion and History at Elizabethtown, a position he held until 1993.

Those who sat in Professor Durnbaugh's classes remember him as quiet, even gentle teacher, but who also possessed a truly sharp sense of humor. He was a master at telling jokes and stories, and his puns were legendary. Few professors were better prepared for class. His academic standards were high and he was a gracious mentor to his students in every sense of the word.

Outside of the classroom Professor Durnbaugh was a scholar's scholar, the "dean of Brethren historians" as one colleague has phrased it, a leading authority on Anabaptism, Pietism, the historic peace churches (Brethren, Mennonites, Quakers), and American communal movements. His narrative history, *Fruit of the Vine: A History of the Brethren, 1708–1997*, is the standard in its field and will likely remain so for the foreseeable future. His work *The Believers Church: The History and Character of Radical Protestantism* (1968), has been a landmark study for the Free Church tradition, and it fostered a series of ecumenical study conferences under this theme. He also provided key leadership for planning of the first several conferences.

While Durnbaugh authored a number of other books and numerous articles, his most wide-reaching influence may be as editor of the multi-volume *Brethren Encyclopedia* (1983–1984). A labor of love, this project involved working with representatives from various Brethren groups and managing a team of writers and editors. Without Durnbaugh's patience, wisdom, attention to detail and accuracy, and his respect for all branches of the Brethren family, this major reference work would not have been completed. A fourth volume, for which he was co-editor, is expected off the press by the end of 2005. It is not too much to say that his scholarly work in Brethren history sparked a renewed awareness and appreciation for Brethren heritage and the wider Believers Church heritage.

His interest in the German background of the Brethren and related groups also resulted in the publication of several essays on Pennsylvania history. These ranged from Sauer Press of colonial Germantown to World War I Governor M. G. Brumbaugh, from the famed Ephrata Cloister to the little-known Blooming Grove colony in Lycoming County.

Professor Durnbaugh was more than a teacher and scholar. He was known among his friends and colleagues as a man of faith, someone dedicated to his family, an advocate for peace and justice, a supporter of ecumenical dialogue,

and a servant leader to all. In 1984 he was elected to the highest office in the Church of the Brethren, Moderator of the denomination's Annual Conference.

It is difficult to say goodbye to a friend, especially one who was a gracious colleague, deeply committed to the church and the academy. He gave himself willingly to so many projects, all of which enriched our understanding and appreciation of the deep diversity of the Christian faith, but especially within the heritage of Anabaptism and Pietism. His legacy will be active among us for generations to come, and those were privileged to know and work with him will always remember how much this quiet and peaceful man meant to our scholarly and religious communities.

DAVID B. ELLER

Director, Young Center for Anabaptist and Pietist Studies

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