



Peace and Persistence: Tracing the Brethren in Christ Peace Witness through Three Generations

M. J. Heisey

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In the first half of the 20th century, American society mobilized for the three great wars: World War I, World War II, and the Cold War. During this tumultuous period the Brethren in Christ joined other pacifists in opposing participation in these mobilizations. Like the Amish, Mennonites, and Church of the Brethren' other groups descended from the sixteenth-century European Anabaptists' the Brethren in Christ held nonresistant pacifism as a fundamental aspect of their identity. They carried out their peace witness, however, not as an isolated community but as one integrated economically, technologically, and culturally into American society. Their commitment to peace shaped their participation within the larger society as they attempted to foster peaceful interactions with neighbors, ultimately expanding from the local community to international settings. At the same time, disagreements within the community were common, sometimes contentious and integral to shaping its changing peace witness. Peace and Persistence presents a wealth of material about this small, little-known religious group. In addition to drawing from official church doctrine, statements, records, writings by church leaders, and published accounts of conscripted World War I and II conscientious objectors, this study also features a rich variety of authors in church-related publications, records of congregational life, archival sources, personal papers, diaries, and oral interviews. Author M. J. Heisey deals with the differences between men and women in terms of their peace commitments and focuses on many voices seldom heard from in peace studies; women, youth, and children. in considering the importance of gender, family, and daily life. Study of ordinary people in daily life enlarges our understanding of how community values persist, change, and sometimes die.

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