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Scott H. Bennett. *Army GI, Pacifist CO: The World War II Letters of Frank and Albert Dietrich.* New York: Fordham University Press, 2005. xiii + 385 pp. $34.95 (cloth), ISBN 978-0-8232-2378-7.

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Frank and Albert Dietrich were closely bonded identical twins from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, born in 1914. They both trained for careers in social work and, in 1942, were employed as child-welfare workers. They both were influenced by "YMCA pacifism," became New Deal Democrats, and shared a common interest in progressive internationalist peace ideals. In response to the military conscription in World War II they parted ways. Albert registered as a conscientious objector to military service and served in a number of Civilian Public Service camps. Frank accepted service in the Army Air Forces and served as a radio operator in the Philippines. Before, during, and after their wartime service, the brothers carried on an extensive correspondence in which they reported about their personal experiences and argued at length about their respective positions on the war.

This book is a selection from 170 of their letters, now located at the Swarthmore College Peace Collection. Scott Bennett, the author/editor, introduces the collection with a forty-eight page biographical introduction and summary of the context of World War II conscription and conscientious objection. The selection highlights the twins' exchanges on war and peace issues, as well as their contrasting experiences in the army and CPS camps. Bennett is attentive to issues of race, class, gender, and religion.

Some twelve thousand men served in CO camps, and many of these men had brothers in military service with whom they exchanged letters. In recent years the published literature on conscientious objectors in World War II has increased significantly, but this is the first volume of correspondence between GI and CO twins or brothers. The collection is especially valuable because Frank and Albert Dietrich loved and respected each other and were eager to explain and explore their contrasting positions regarding military service. Each was more educated and articulate than the people with whom they worked. The majority of the draftees in the three CPS camps where Albert worked were rural Mennonites. Frank had thought through the issues of war and peace more thoroughly than his fellow soldiers in the Philippines.

Frank and Albert developed their liberal political philosophy from a range of peace movement sources. At the University of Pittsburgh (1932-36), they both enrolled in ROTC for two years, but then withdrew under the influence of antiwar proponents and pacifists in the student YMCA. In 1933, Albert briefly joined the Young People's Socialist League, but later drew upon the radical pacifist organizations Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) and the War Resisters League (WRL). He was inspired to believe in the efficacy of nonviolent change by Gandhi's campaign for independence in India, and by Bayard Rustin's activist nonviolence to challenge Jim Crow racism. When the war broke out, Albert had a social work position in Beatrice, Nebraska, and was living with a Mennonite family and attending the Mennonite church. He did not embrace the nonresistant/separatist Mennonite theology, but the Mennonites provided him with a community of support and with critical assistance in his struggle to be classified as a conscientious objector even though he was not a member of a historical peace church. His brother, Frank, by then in the army, wrote a letter supporting his claim to General Lewis B. Hershey, Director of the Selective Service System.

Neither Frank nor Albert was fully satisfied with their wartime situations. While in the army, Frank held to his antiwar and antimilitarist convictions. He doubted if he could pull the trigger to kill an innocent Japanese boy. But he believed that the war was a necessary evil, and approved the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Scott Bennett, drawing upon Lee Kennett's study of American soldiers in World War II, suggests that Frank was a "civilian at heart" like most GIs. His letters to Albert, and to his wife, Christine, kept him focused on civilian concerns. He remained a liberal internationalist, yearning for a world of peace and justice.

Albert worked with other conscientious objectors on

Civilian Public Service Camps in South Dakota, Iowa, and Florida. He was among the camp intellectuals who critiqued the system of alternative service; but he did not join the radical pacifists who withdrew from the camps because they represented a compromise with the government. He joined other COs in training for humanitarian work overseas, a proposed program that Congress prohibited with the Starnes Amendment of 1944. Ironically, while Frank in the army was not injured during the war, Albert suffered a broken leg and later reconstructive surgery. He and his friends believed that his anti-pacifist doctor had deliberately misset the leg.

This book is interesting as a drama of family relationships during World War II. It is rich in fascinating details and documentation related to social history as well as public policy issues on the status and contributions of conscientious objectors. Scott Bennett's research is thorough and his judgments are moderate. The book is a balanced account of an army GI and a pacifist CO, in a wartime situation where those positions were hardly balanced in terms of power and influence. The issue that separated Frank and Albert Dietrich, whether nonviolent means can effectively oppose evil, remains relevant in the twenty-first century. This book shows that the power of love can bridge the gap between people who make opposing choices regarding military service. During the war the American public often insisted that CPS men were not good citizens. Bennett concludes that Frank and Albert Dietrich both "promoted American, indeed global, ideals during World War II" (p. 46).

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