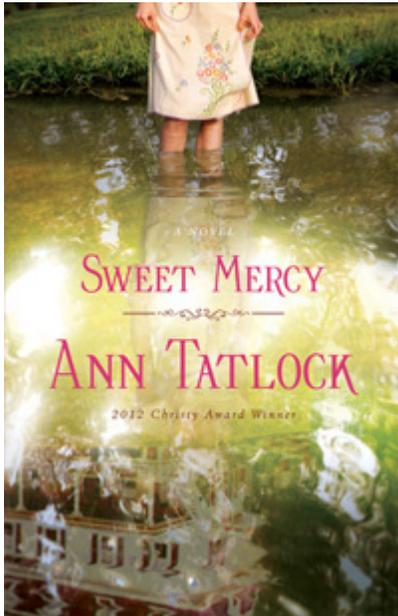


Book Reviews: Sweet Mercy

August 14, 2013

[Sweet Mercy](#) by Ann Tatlock (Bethany House)



Eve Marryat narrates the story of *Sweet Mercy* as she and grandson Sean retrieve keepsakes from the attic of Marryat Island Ballroom and Lodge before the wrecking ball begins its work. Had she understood what waited them in Mercy, Ohio, she explains, she might not have been so excited about escaping St. Paul, Minn., a city of lawless gangsters, when she was a high school student.

But life in 1931 offered few choices. Her father, laid off from Ford Motor Company, accepted his almost-estranged brother's offer to live in and help run the lodge. Eve and her mother would assist with a host of duties. However, the ideal summer vacation destination proves not so perfect.

In Mercy, the young girl experiences her first love and begins unlikely friendships with her albino step-cousin and a young unemployed man. Soon, Eve stumbles into reality when she discovers bootlegging at the service station across the road. She shares that knowledge with her father, and the two learn Uncle Cy and the lodge are not what they seem. How can she come to terms with "good" people breaking the law? And what will happen to her family if they're discovered?

In the historical novel, Christy Award-winning author Ann Tatlock offers a

realistic picture of life during the Depression and Prohibition. Her multifaceted characters learn lessons of God’s grace as they come to realize that sometimes doing the right thing means casting aside legalism in favor of mercy. And in the end, Tatlock wisely lets Eve tell “the rest of the story.”

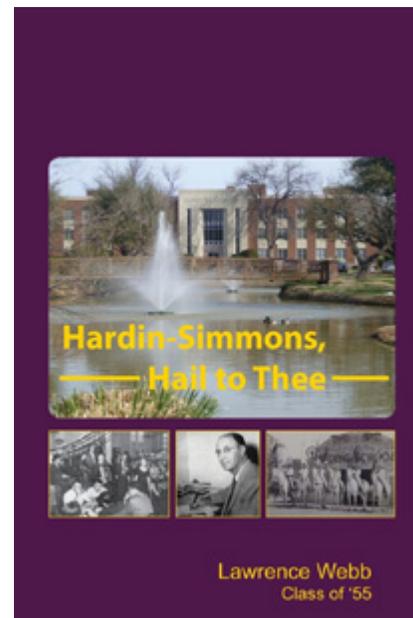
Kathy Robinson Hillman, first vice president

Baptist General Convention of Texas

Waco

[Hardin-Simmons, Hail to Thee](#) by Lawrence Webb (Connection Press)

Lawrence Webb has penned a paean to his alma mater, Hardin-Simmons University, a Baptist school on the plains of West Texas. Webb attended HSU 60 years ago, and his book provides a tidy collection of stories about events, lessons and people—mostly people—who expanded his worldview and strengthened his faith. It’s not so much a history of the school as a memoir of “an education enlightened by faith,” the university’s motto.



Hardin-Simmons, Hail to Thee “works” on at least two and a half levels. It particularly will be interesting to the students, faculty and staff who studied and worked at Hardin-Simmons in the early 1950s. It also will be a favorite of those who followed them, whose lives have intersected the school and the teachers who influenced it six decades ago.

But people who value faith-based liberal arts education also will appreciate

the book. They'll see their own campuses and recall their own experiences in the tales from this school in that time in Abilene.

Proceeds from the sale of the book support HSU's Logsdon School of Theology.

Marv Knox, editor & publisher

Baptist Standard Publishing

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