Encountering the Great Physician: The Life and Ministry of Dr. Lilian B. Yeomans

By Desiree D. Rodgers

Lilian B. Yeomans (1861-1942), a successful Canadian medical doctor, became addicted to morphine and nearly died. Out of desperation, in 1898 she turned to God and experienced a remarkable healing. Her encounter with the living God lit a fire in her heart, transforming her from the inside out. Yeomans went on to become one of the most prominent female Pentecostals of her era.

An educated woman leader in a movement deemed by some to be anti-intellectual and a medical doctor who believed whole-heartedly in divine healing, Yeomans plowed through obstacles and cultivated the faith of thousands. Becoming first a lay preacher, then a prominent healing evangelist, author, and educator, Yeomans interacted with leading Pentecostals such as Andrew H. Argue, Carrie Judd Montgomery, and Aimee Semple McPherson. Her speaking and writing made her a household name among Pentecostals in the 1920s and 1930s, and her books became best sellers.

Though Yeomans’ testimony transcends time, her incredible life journey has been largely overlooked in recent decades. Her story highlights the human plight of one who worked tirelessly in the service of others, but neglected to care for her own physical and spiritual well-being. And were it not for the grace of God, that would have been the end of the story.

Early Life

On June 23, 1861, just a few months after the start of the American Civil War, a little girl was born in Madoc, Ontario, Canada, to Augustus A. and Amelia (LeSueur) Yeomans. Her father was of Puritan ancestry, and her mother was of respectable parentage. They were married just one year when nineteen-year-old Amelia gave birth to Lilian Barbara. Lilian’s father supported his young family as a surgeon for the United States Army during the Civil War. Little is known about Lilian’s childhood and early adolescence; however, in 1863, while the Civil War was still raging, a sister, Charlotte Amelia (Amy), was added to the family. Charlotte would become Lilian’s lifelong companion and coworker, first in the medical profession, and then in the soul profession.

Lilian was raised in a nominal Anglican family and recalled learning to keep the Ten Commandments from an early age. However, learning the Law did not make a Christian of Lilian, but merely made her more aware of her spiritual hunger. Her mother was dressing her for church in a frilly white dress one particular Sunday when she recognized herself to be a sinner. She later recalled this event in vivid detail: “the awful thought of my black heart inside of my white dress so overwhelmed me that I burst into a storm of weeping and cried, ‘I am lost! I am lost!’” Her mother, who did not yet have a personal relationship with Jesus, replied, “I only wish you hadn’t found it out when you had your best dress on.”

As a young adult, Lilian followed in her father’s footsteps, furthering her education through medical training at the Toronto Medical School. In 1880, after a year of study, her father, Augustus Yeomans, passed away. Plagued by an ailment for many years, his sudden death was medically attributed to an overdose of the chloral he took to relieve his symptoms. Lilian would later struggle with this same drug. By September 1880, Lilian’s mother Amelia had matriculated into the Department of Medicine at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor as a junior at the age of 38. Owing perhaps to the cultural pressures against women doctors in Canada at that time, or perhaps because she lacked the shelter of her father’s own medical career and influence, Lilian also transferred to the University of Michigan Ann Arbor in the fall of 1881.
As she studied, Lilian distanced herself from her Christian roots. Functionally an agnostic, she disliked her Christian classmates. She later noted that Christians are supposed to be “the salt of the earth,” and that her Christlike classmates “made me smart, for I was sinner and I knew it.”

Lilian graduated from the University of Michigan Department of Medicine in 1882.

Following graduation, Lilian pursued a medical career. On September 20, 1882, she received her license to practice medicine from the Manitoba College of Physicians and Surgeons. When her mother Amelia graduated and joined Lilian in Winnipeg the following year, it was a rapidly expanding city at the center of the Western Canadian economic boom. Lilian had been working as the city’s first female doctor, but the pair soon opened up a joint practice in Winnipeg. Serving in general medical practice, they specialized in midwifery and women’s and children’s health. By April 1886, Lilian was also working at a maternity hospital. Lilian’s sister, Amy Charlotte, graduated as a trained nurse from Cook County Hospital in 1885 and joined her mother and sister. All three ladies were active in a local choral society and Mrs. Yeomans was also involved in social and humanitarian work in the city’s poorer sections; an activity which probably also involved her daughters.

Lilian was engaged in very strenuous work, practicing medicine and surgery, and that it was only “occasionally … in the times of excessive strain from anxiety or overwork” that she resorted to drugs “to steady my nerves and enable me to sleep.”

Though she explained the origin of her vulnerability to the addiction, she did not excuse herself for “daring to trifle even for a moment with such a destructive agent.” In order to satisfy her craving for drugs, she began to steadily raise her dose. Her occasional usage quickly turned into a life controlling habit. How did a medical doctor who knew the dangers of narcotics find herself an addict? Lilian wrote, “I can only reply in the words of the old Latin prayer: ‘Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa’—‘Through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault.’” Although raised in the church, she had only recently made a confession of faith. Whether through ignorance or self-reliance, she did not take the stress of her situation to her Lord, but instead self-medicated.

As if in an attempt to warn others of the dangerous and subtle way in which addictions can creep into the life of a believer, Dr. Yeomans wrote, “I was following [God] afar off … it’s a dangerous thing to follow afar off.” So subtle was the transfer of power between the user and the used, Lilian recounts, “I thought I was toying with the drug but one day I made the startling discovery that the drug, or rather the demon power [in] back of the drug, was playing with me.”

Her abuse of prescription drugs grew so severe that she found herself regularly taking morphine in doses up to “fifty times the normal dose for an adult man.” This she combined with chloral hydrate which she described as “a most deadly drug used by criminals in the concoction of the so-called ‘knockout drops.’” Of this, she took up to twenty-four times the recommended dosage. That the dosage alone did not kill her was a miracle. The drugs became so necessary to her existence that giving

Lilian Yeomans, class picture from the University of Michigan Department of Medicine, 1882. © Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.
them up seemed out of the question.34
However, knowing they were destroying her, she desperately tried to quit.35 On numerous occasions she disposed of huge amounts of the deadly narcotics.36 “I believe I made at least fifty-seven desperate attempts to rid myself of the horrible incubus,” she would later write.37

Is Help Possible?
Recognizing that she needed help beyond her own capacity, Lilian cried out to God. She saw the healing power of God manifest in the Bible, yet for her to “accept it” seemed about as attainable as it would be for her “to walk on air.”38 No matter how much she prayed, God did not seem to deliver her. She later attributed this lack of deliverance to a lack of faith in the “simple statement of the Word of God.”39 “I shut the door and prevented the power of God from operating unhindered in my body,” she surmised.40
Consulting multiple physicians, she received opinions and suggestions, but none that could free her from the bondage to her addiction.41 Quitting on her own wasn’t working, so Lilian turned to various other cures and treatments, including the then-famous “Keely Gold Cure.”42 This treatment left her so broken mentally and physically that she had to enter a Sanatorium for Nervous Diseases, where for three weeks she was cared for by a specialist as well as her physician mother.43
Her relationship with God became more and more distant until she found herself dabbling in what she labeled “Christian Science, falsely so-called.”44 She even traveled to New York City to meet with leaders from that movement.45 Immersing herself in Mary Baker Eddy’s Science and Health, she determined that if Christian Science could set her free, she would follow it wholeheartedly.46
Reflecting on her experiment with Christian Science, Lilian wrote, “I was so determined to be HEALED that I tried to shut my eyes to its [Science and Health’s] blasphemous heresies and swallow it ‘holus-bolus.”47 Though the meetings and resources were not cheap, and neither was the New York housing, Lilian felt it was worth the investment.48 Meeting one-on-one with a highly esteemed spiritual coach, Lilian remembered her Christian Science practitioner as a woman with perfectly arranged hair, and a temperament which was “placid as a summer sea.”49 The practitioner assured her:

There was absolutely no trouble about my morphine
addiction, and the awful physical conditions, which had resulted therefrom; that it did not really exist, and would vanish like snow wreaths before the sun as soon as I freed my thought from its “self-imposed materiality and bondage” by absorbing enough of “Science and Health.”

During the course of her treatments, rather than getting better, Lilian found herself worse. When her right arm became paralyzed, Lilian immediately went to her practitioner for help and found her not the least bit worried by this turn of events:

How could she be disturbed when she knew that not only had I no paralysis of the arm, but no arm to be paralyzed? She never turned so much as a silver hair.... Whether or not I had an arm, there was one thing I didn’t have, and I was so sure of it that I didn’t need to resort to Christian Science to tell me that I didn’t have it, and that was money to stay on in New York.

Though she left New York for Winnipeg she hadn’t given up on Christian Science, but was determined to continue her studies of the literature on her own. Yet, God intervened in the form of an old friend, a long-time minister who visited her from abroad at this opportune moment. This unnamed friend gently tried to convince her that the only place for her Christian Science book was in the kitchen stove.

Encountering the Healer

“If there is anything I did not try I have yet to learn what it is,” wrote Dr. Yeomans of the completeness of her repeated attempts to free herself from addiction. An unsuccessful attempt the previous year to wean herself from the drug addiction by “gradual reduction” resulted in hospitalization, after which Lilian awoke to find the drugs being injected intravenously. It seemed that her body would not allow her to do without them; her heart and lungs would simply shut down when she did not receive her daily dose. Her reaction to the removal of the drugs was so severe that her own sister, a nurse, described her “like a skeleton ... with a devil inside.” Though she did not appreciate this caricature, she admitted it was accurate. Even her friends thought her condition a hopeless one and encouraged her not to attempt to give up the habit again.

Weak as she was, Lilian spent a great deal of time in bed. Not ready to face eternity in her present spiritual condition, she began to read her Bible again. She did not just read it, but devoured its contents, finding solace and strength in its pages and in the clear small voice of the leading of the Holy Spirit. She recalled saying, “Now I have tried everything that will-power and medical science and suggestion and all the rest can do, and there is absolutely no hope for me unless it lies between the covers of this Book.” As she read and pondered the word of God, she sensed the Holy Spirit speaking to her from Jeremiah 30: “I will break his yoke from off thy neck ... therefore fear thou not ... for I am with thee ... to save thee ... I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds ... and I will be your God.”

At first she thought this meant that she “must try again” to quit in her own strength, despite her weakened condition and previously failed attempts. On the contrary, the Lord began to show her that to free herself of the addiction—”to get the victory”—was not her job, but God’s. Taking God at His word, Lilian began to tell her friends and family that she was delivered from the narcotics addiction. Though they responded politely, it was clear that they thought she was out of her mind. Even her mother had given up hope of her being cured.

Zion Divine Healing Home

Deliverance came through a noted Australian faith healer, John Alexander Dowie, who had moved to America and established a city based on biblical principles. In the care of her sister Charlotte, the pair moved to Dowie’s healing home on Michigan Avenue in Chicago, Illinois, in early January 1898. Her mother did not join the pair on this trip, reportedly because she was engaged in lectures for the Women’s Christian Temperance Union in Canada. Lilian explained why she chose to go to Dowie’s healing home for treatment: “It was not that I had lost confidence in the efficacy of means, but because it seemed to me, God told me very clearly that He would not deliver...
me from this by means.”70 Seemingly, the Lord wanted her to have a personal encounter with the healing power of His gracious hand.

The treatment at the healing home certainly did not use means, at least not those of the medical variety.71 In fact, so strict were the standards by which it operated, that some questioned the safety of the home.72 Upon Dr. Yeomans’ arrival, all of her medications were confiscated, and she was left to face the ravages of the addiction without any transitional drugs.73

At times, Charlotte became frightened for her sister.74 The withdrawals made her unable to retain any sort of food and at one point Charlotte believed her sister would simply die.75 However, Charlotte also noticed that the grace of God was strong through those times, “It seemed to me as each symptom became unbearable to my patient, it was just smoothed over quietly; so that God let her have a certain amount, but just as she was able to stand it.”76

At one of these low points, an unnamed individual encouraged Lilian to get up and go to church.77 Believing the exertion would kill her, she began to make up her mind not to go, when the Holy Spirit spoke to her heart: “I sent him to tell you to go to the church. Arise.”78 With great effort, she stepped out in faith and walked to the church service accompanied by her sister, but noticed little change to her feeble condition.79 Upon her return from the service, however, she began to feel better.80 It was as if God used that simple act of faith as a catalyst for her healing. She later recalled, “From that time perfect victory through faith in the power of the name of Jesus was mine.”81

**Free At Last!**

Dr. Lilian B. Yeomans was age 36 on January 12, 1898, when she was freed from the demon drug addiction by the power of God.82 And my how she did eat!83 Seven meals a day!84 Interestingly enough, her personal testimony in the book, *Healing from Heaven*, makes no mention of the Zion Divine Healing Home. Rather, it places the healing from the point at which she first began to earnestly search the Scriptures on her own.85 Perhaps Dr. Yeomans (or her editors) chose not to include the Dowie reference in an attempt to distance her story from Dowie, who near the end of his life claimed to be Elijah the Restorer and fell into disrepute.86

Lilian certainly had a different approach to the medical profession than Dowie, who offered a scathing rebuke of doctors.87 In at least one article, Lilian celebrated the healing God brought through faith as well as kindly remembering the hard won achievements of physicians.88 Recalling her own medical practice as well as that of her parents, she boldly stated: “No one could esteem more highly the noble work for humanity that has been done by the medical profession than I do.”89

**Next Steps**

After she left Dowie’s healing home, Dr. Lilian Yeomans decided to give up the medical profession and make her life’s work praying for the sick and sharing the gospel.90 Lilian and her sister Charlotte became ordained with a Canadian Holiness association.91 Moving north of Winnipeg to do missionary work among the Cree peoples, Lilian was the only doctor within 500 miles.92 She began to be called upon to minister to physical needs as well as spiritual ones.93

Caring for the needs of Cree peoples as well as those of the Hudson Bay Company, she found herself in possession of the drugs she swore never to use again.94 “I had to have morphine in my possession day and night,” she recalled. When epidemics broke out among the Cree, the Canadian government demanded her services.95 The intense pressure of being the sole doctor caring for so many, with the all too familiar drugs in her possession, could have been quite a temptation for the former morphine addict. However, God had healed Lilian of the craving so completely that she remarked, “I handled it constantly, but never wanted it. I felt, and feel, no more desire for it.”96

During her work among the Cree, Lilian came to adopt a little girl of mixed Cree and Scotch blood named Tanis Anne Miller.97 Lilian did not write much about her adopted daughter, but records indicate that Tanis stayed connected with the Yeomans family until well into adulthood.98 By 1900 Lilian was already referring to herself as an “evangelist,” however it is likely that the responsibility of a daughter prompted the 45-year-
old to take Tanis and join her mother and sister in Calgary, Alberta, in 1906. Lilian obtained a Civil Service job and apparently stayed in Calgary for the next 17 years.

Though Lilian never married, according to historian Grant Wacker, this was not uncommon for influential female Pentecostal leaders of her time. However, she did not have to serve God devoid of emotional and familial support, for her mother and sister were both active in the work of the Lord. At times, her mother was called upon to write of the miracles which God wrought by faith in His gracious provision, and her sister frequently accompanied her to Pentecostal meetings.

**Spirit Baptism**

By 1907, though Lilian had completely given up the medical profession and was settled into her job in Calgary, she had not forgotten what the “Great Deliverer” had done for her. Consequently, she held meetings to proclaim to others her “marvelous healing from the last stages of morphine addiction.”

The morning of September 23 was a fairly typical one, and after her morning prayers she went to work. When the workday ended, however, she had an atypical encounter with an old friend, a Mrs. Lockhart of Winnipeg. Lockhart had recently received the baptism in the Holy Spirit during the first Pentecostal outpouring in Manitoba, under the ministry of Andrew H. Argue.

Lilian had heard of this recent outpouring, and her knowledge of the Bible coupled with the witness of her soul testified to the truth of her friend’s experience. The two prayed together before the evening service, but it was not until later that night, by Lilian’s bedside, that she received her prayer language. She described her experience with the Lord as “the most tremendous experience of my life up until that hour ... truly this is The Rest ... and this is The Refreshing!”

Lilian became a fixture in the early Pentecostal movement in Calgary. She, along with her mother and sister, joined a small group of Pentecostals who met in homes for meetings. This group included Allan A. Swift, who went on to become a pastor, missionary and the first principal of Eastern Bible Institute in Green Lane, Pennsylvania. Swift later described this as “the most tremendous experience of his life.”

Lilian later remembered God’s work in the life of one young man who had recently run away from his faith and home to the railroad camp: “I realized what a hiding place we have in Him, as the boy found peace and rest and joy, though he was so far from loved ones.” Unfortunately, much of Lilian’s ministry in the early Pentecostal movement was not documented and is now lost to history.

**From Canada to California**

The Yeomans family eventually emigrated to California. In San Francisco, Lilian and Charlotte were both engaged in full time ministry, leading divine healing meetings, praying for the sick, and preaching at Glad Tidings Tabernacle and elsewhere. By 1921 Lilian was also teaching at the Glad Tidings Bible Institute. The pair obtained credentials with the Assemblies of God in 1922 as ordained evangelists. Lilian did not limit her evangelism to San Francisco, but also ministered at the healing home of her friend, Carrie Judd Montgomery, the Home of Peace in Oakland, California. As early as 1912, she had begun writing for Carrie’s periodical, *Triumphs of Faith*. Lilian and her family then moved to San Diego, where she likely served at the Berean Bible Institute in 1925. The sojourn in San Diego was not long, for by 1926 she had moved to Manhattan Beach, located in southern Los Angeles County.

By 1927 she could be found teaching at Aimee Semple McPherson’s Angelus Temple and L.I.F.E. Bible School. For the next fourteen years she mentored pastoral and missionary candidates, teaching classes on church history and divine healing. Known for giving all the praise and glory to God, the L.I.F.E. yearbook committee affectionately labeled her picture with a great big “Hallelujah!” Her ministry connection to McPherson would prove to be both a rewarding teaching platform and a source of inspiration.
of tension between Lilian and her local Assemblies of God district.

Golden Years

Though settled in California, Lilian and Charlotte engaged in extensive evangelism outside of the Golden State. In the spring of 1927, the pair traveled through Minnesota, with local newspapers marking their arrival in Brainerd, Duluth, and Minneapolis. Writing a letter to Assemblies of God General Superintendent W. T. Gaston, whom she had hoped to meet on her trip in the summer of 1929, Lilian detailed recent campaigns “in the East and Middle West, Wilmington, Baltimore, South Bend.” She had expected to travel longer, but got “a rather nasty bang in an auto accident,” which forced her to shorten her trip.

Upon returning from this trip, she received a letter calling her to appear before the Southern California District to discuss the nature of her theological convictions and cooperative relationship with the Assemblies of God. Perplexed about the nature of this meeting, she wrote immediately to Gaston: “Now as I have paid my dues, labored all year at Bible teaching and evangelism, etc., and lived in charity with all my brethren, I cannot see that I have left any room for doubt as to my desire to continue in fellowship.” She surmised that the only thing that the letter could be referencing was her being a professor at L.I.F.E Bible School. Some members of the Assemblies questioned McPherson’s adherence to Pentecostal distinctives and were further scandalized by her widely-reported disappearance in 1926.

Though Lilian declared her loyalty to the Assemblies of God, she also defended her calling to Angelus Temple. She even stated that she would consider relinquishing her credentials before giving up the opportunity to influence so many students. Gaston encouraged her to avoid a reactionary decision, by inviting her to write her district superintendent that she “would welcome advice and counsel from my brethren of the ministry” and that she was “seeking the glory of God in the greatest possible service.” The sound counsel and conciliatory tone seem to have provided sufficient impetus for Lilian to stay with the Assemblies of God, as she remained an active credential holder for more than ten additional years.

Written Work

So that others might never fall into the same snare, Dr. Yeomans frequently lectured and wrote about the subtleties of addiction. She had a regular column in the Pentecostal Evangel and numerous articles in Triumphs of Faith. Her first article for the Evangel was a serial on divine healing in 1923. The miraculous power of God to heal and restore was to become the central feature of her written work. In addition to her numerous articles, Dr. Yeomans also authored six books published by Gospel Publishing House: Healing From Heaven (1926); Resurrection Rays (1930); Divine Healing Diamonds (1933); Balm of Gilead
(1936); *The Royal Road to Health-Ville* (1938); and *The Hiding Place* (1940), as well as numerous tracts. Historian James Opp declared that no other physician in the twentieth century wrote more prolifically about divine healing. Like her periodicals, her books and tracts contain a combination of personal testimony, stories of faith, and theological instruction. Several of her published works, such as *Healing from Heaven*, originated first as lectures delivered in the classroom or the pulpit.

True to her own Bible saturated healing, Lilian’s writings are filled with Scripture quotations and biblical stories that illustrate her understanding of the healing work of God. Using her personal testimony as a launching point, she wrote of God’s power to deliver from a whole variety of habits and diseases. Speaking directly to readers, she counseled: “You may not be in the morphine habit. I hope not. Perhaps you are in the habit of self-indulgence, though, and, if so, there is the same deliverance for you. Possibly you are in need of some physical deliverance.... I see in this Word all that is needed for our redemption.”

**Take Happiness for Your Health, and Other Theological Helps**

Dr. Yeomans would frequently harken back to Old Testament themes to illustrate the care of God, the Heavenly Father, for His earthly children. She highlighted the faith narratives of Abraham, Joseph, and Moses; especially those stories which spoke of health or healing. Her theology of divine healing was trans-testamental, and it centered on the unconditional belief that God desired to heal everyone, *both* spiritually and physically. Lilian noted the connection she saw between sin and sickness. To escape the law of sin and death one must embrace the “natural law” of God. She also saw a relationship between healing and faith, and this became a prominent motif in her writings. Responding to the question, “Can I prevent God’s word from healing me?” Yeoman’s wrote, “Certainly you can.... To get the action for any remedy you have to take that remedy according to directions.” Citing Matthew 9:29 and Hebrews 4:2, she observed that the proper way to take the “remedy” of God’s word is to mix it with faith.

A gifted author, she wove together exhortation, testimony, and humor to communicate her message. In her tract entitled “Moses’ Medicine Chest,” Dr. Yeomans reflected on how the Lord used Moses to keep the children of Israel healthy during their trek through the wilderness:

Moses, we know that those people you led out of Egypt were made of flesh and blood, just as we are. They had real hearts and real lungs, real glands and real gall ducts. And everybody in that expedition had an appendix! Yet all enjoyed perfect health and vigor. Oh, Moses, let us see inside that medicine chest!

Dr. Yeomans also believed that happiness and good humor were essential to physical health. She taught that being happy was “our duty” and that Scriptures exhorting believers to “Be glad and rejoice” (Joel 2:21) were commands of God. Citing Deuteronomy 28:47, 48, 60, 61 she seemed to wonder how anyone who loved and served God could not be happy. Sickness was part of the curse, she posited, and must therefore be the punishment for not being happy with God’s provision. As universal as the laws of electricity or gravity, she wrote, “God’s law for us is Holiness, Health, and Happiness. In absolute obedience to it, Jesus Christ, the Spotless Lamb, went about healing all that were sick, and diffusing joy and gladness.” She also found that release from oppression came through praising God. She exhorted others: “Make heaven ring with your testimony to His loving kindness, tender mercy and faithfulness! Extol His great Name!”

As Lilian’s golden years progressed, long-time ministry companions became ill. When her own sister, Charlotte, stepped down from active ministry she wrote, “I cannot say how sorry I am to have her retire from the firing line even...”
for a short period. However she still prays and sings the wonderful songs God gives her and I believe her ministry is blessed of the Lord.... I believe she has work to her credit ... which will stand the fire that is to try every man’s work.”

It appears Lilian may have personally taken care of Charlotte until her death in 1939. The depth of Lilian’s connection to her constant companion and ministry partner may be felt in the posthumous tribute, “a succor of many, and of myself also.”

Lilian seems to have lessened her ministry activities after the death of her sister, but she never officially retired. Rather, she continued preaching about the goodness of the Lord, both in person and in writing. In 1940, at the age of 79, Lilian Yeomans still claimed to have preached “approximately 100 times during the past year.”

Later in 1940, while evangelizing in the Midwest she succumbed to heat prostration and had to cut the trip short. She lamented to the Lord, wondering why He did not simply take her “home.” As she prayed about this, the Lord showed her she still had work to do. But what sort of work might this be, at her age? Then she recalled how her old friend Carrie Judd Montgomery had encouraged her to have her sister’s songs printed. Consequently, Lilian assembled her last published booklet, Gold of Ophir: Spiritual Songs Given Through Amy Yeomans. Fewer than five months before her death, Lilian wrote the following on her final Assemblies of God annual ministerial questionnaire: “Have not preached during the past year ... resting and writing ... enabled to do work for the Lord by means of correspondence.”

In spite of her failing health she requested prayer that “God may fit me for return to active work.” Dr. Lilian B. Yeomans reported for active duty in heaven on December 10, 1942. Joining her sister Charlotte, she was buried at Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Glendale, California. The Pentecostal Evangel honored her legacy by reprinting her testimony, noting: “Many who have been won for Christ and healed through her ministry will rise up and call her blessed. Prov. 31:28.”

Legacy

A morphine addiction brought successful medical doctor Lilian B. Yeomans face to face with her personal limitations. Arriving at the end of her own strength she discovered the freedom and redemption found only though the healing power of God. This experience was so transformational that she could not keep it to herself. Working first bi-vocationally, and then as a full-time minister, Lilian devoted the second half of her life to testifying of “the Great Deliverer I had found.” An ordained evangelist with the Assemblies of God, an inspiring educator, and a gifted author of numerous books and articles, Lilian worked closely with other leading Pentecostals.

Though her ministry was a success, and her work testifies to the diligence with which she carried out her call, she did not take credit for her achievements. Author Jodie Loutzenhiser captured the essence of Lilian’s life and ministry: “She did not just say, ‘To God be the Glory,’ she lived it!” Though Lilian B. Yeomans has passed into eternity, her legacy lives on through her written work. May the testimony of her life call a new generation to boldly proclaim the freedom and redemption found in a wholehearted pursuit of God.

NOTES


“Lilian Yeomans” research file of Gordon P. Gardiner for his book, Out of Zion, located at the FPHC. Henry J. Morgan ed., Canadian Men and Women of the Time: A Handbook of Canadian Biography of Living Characters (Toronto: W. Briggs, 1898), 1108. Her parents named their firstborn Lilian, perhaps in part because of the lilies which grew at that time of year, and Barbara after her maternal grandmother. See: Morgan, 1108.


4Gardiner, 6; Morgan, 1108.

5Gardiner, 6.

6Ibid.

7Kim Mayer, Bentley Historical Library, The University of Michigan, correspondence with Glenn Goehr Assemblies of God Archives, September 12, 1996, which includes information from the necrology file of Amelia Le Sueur Yeomans—Record card completed June 11, 1900 and a form for alumni and former students completed and sent to the alumni office, February 3, 1911. Photocopies in Amelia Yeomans file, FPHC. See also Dr. Amelia Yeomans, 1, which states there were no women medical students in Canada until 1880.

8Captain Augustus Asa Yeomans, Assistant Surgeon, died on May 19, 1880 in Toronto Canada. See: “1881,” US Army Military Registers 1789-1969, 266. See also Dr. Amelia Yeomans, 1.

9Toronto Mail, May 20, 1880. See also Toronto Globe, May 20, 1880.

10Mayer correspondence; Carlotta Hacker, Dr. Amelia Yeomans, The Indomitable Lady Doctors (Halifax, Nova Scotia: Formac Publishing Company Ltd., 2001), 89.
Dr. Amelia Yeomans, 2; Lilian Yeomans file, FPHC.

11 Amelia Yeomans file, FPHC.; Hacker, 89.
12 Gardiner, 6.
13 Lilian Yeomans file, FPHC.
14 Dr. Amelia Yeomans, 2; Lilian Yeomans file, FPHC.
15 Amelia Yeomans file FPHC. Thomas W. Miller, Canadian Pentecostals: A History of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (Ontario: Full Gospel Publishing House), 73; One historian described the effect of the changes to Winnipeg between 1870 and 1880 in the following terms, “Overcrowding in the city’s north end, poverty, unemployment, prostitution and inadequate sewage, housing and medical facilities were only a few of the problems plaguing the new provincial capital.” See: Dr. Amelia Yeomans, 2.

16 Dr. Amelia Yeomans, 2; According to Carlotta Hacker, both Dr. Amelia Yeomans and her daughter Lilian were well established in their practice in Winnipeg by 1885. See: Hacker, 70.

17 Amelia Yeomans file, FPHC. See also: “Medical,” Winnipeg Manitoba Daily Free Press, December 22, 1887, 4; Dr. Amelia Yeomans, 2. Amelia was active in multiple social and humanitarian endeavors including the Women’s Christian Temperance Movement, the Winnipeg Humane Society (vice president), and was the founder and president of the Manitoba Suffrage Club. See: Morgan, 1108.

18 Winnipeg Manitoba Daily Free Press, April 7, 1886, 2.


20 Winnipeg Manitoba Daily Free Press, December 22, 1887, 4. Dr. Amelia Yeomans, 2. Amelia was active in multiple social and humanitarian endeavors including the Women’s Christian Temperance Movement, the Winnipeg Humane Society (vice president), and was the founder and president of the Manitoba Suffrage Club. See: Morgan, 1108.


22 Ibid., 12-13.

23 Ibid., 12.

24 Ibid.


26 Robeck, 1222; Yeomans, “Out of the Depths,” Evangel Tract No. 917, 7; Yeomans, Healing from Heaven, 12.

27 Yeomans, Healing from Heaven, 12.

28 Ibid.

29 Ibid., 12-13.

30 Ibid., 13.

31 Ibid.

32 Ibid.


34 Yeomans, Healing from Heaven, 14.

35 Ibid., 15.

36 Ibid.

37 Ibid.


39 Yeomans, Healing from Heaven, 17.


41 Yeomans, Healing from Heaven, 11.

42 Ibid., 12; Robeck, 1222.


44 Yeomans, Healing from Heaven, 15.


46 Ibid., 5, 9.


48 Ibid., 5, 11.

49 Ibid., 10.

50 Ibid., 5, 6.

51 Ibid., 10.

52 Ibid., 11.

53 Ibid.

54 Ibid.

55 Yeomans, Healing from Heaven, 11.

56 Ibid., 15.


58 Yeomans, “Out of the Depths,” Evangel Tract No. 917, 6. This testimony was also reprinted in Carrie Judd Montgomery’s Triumphs of Faith 32:10 (October 1912): 220-226; see also: Yeomans, Healing from Heaven, 16.

59 Yeomans, Healing from Heaven, 12.

60 Ibid.


62 Ibid., 7.

63 Ibid., 8-9. All Scripture quotations drawn from the KJV unless otherwise noted.

64 Ibid., 9.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

67 Ibid.

68 Yeomans, “Delivered from the Use of Morphine,” 201.

69 Dowie, “Cheering Words,” Leaves of Healing, February 5, 1898, 295. This publication which contained testimonies from the Zion Home’s guests, lists both Dr. Lilian (name incorrectly spelled), and her sister, Miss C. A. Yeomans.


71 Ibid., 351.


73 Yeomans noted of her experience, “I doubt if any competent physician would have dared to take it away from me.” Dowie, “Cheering Words,” Leaves of Healing, February 5, 1898, 295.


78 Ibid.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid.

81 Ibid.

82 Dowie, “Cheering Words,” Leaves of Healing, February 26, 1898, 350; Robeck, 1222.


84 Yeomans, Healing from Heaven, 19.


86 Grant Wacker, Chris R. Armstrong, and Jay S. F. Blossom, “John Alexander Dowie: Harbinger of Pentecostal Power,” in Portraits of a Generation: Early Pentecostal Leaders, ed. James R. Goff and Grant Wacker (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2002), 3-19. It is not clear if Lilian would have seen the leaving out of Dowie’s name as a human or Holy Spirit prompted omission. See: Yeomans, “Out of the Depths,” Evangel Tract No. 917, 12, where she states, “I was greatly helped in my hour of anguish and sore trial by the prayers and counsels of some of God’s people. I had thought to mention the names of some of these, but I am withheld from doing so.” This phrase was also included in Yeomans, “Out of the
The birthday of Pentecost in Manitoba was either May 2 or May 3, 1907, depending on which account one takes as primary. Miller, Canadian Pentecostals, 75, 76; Yeomans, “This is THE Rest ...,” 1; Gloria G. Kulbeck, What God Hath Wrought: A History of the Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada (Toronto: The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, 1958), 139-140.

Yeomans, “This is THE Rest ...,” 1.

Apostolic Messenger 1:1 (February & March 1908)/4, accessed via IFPHC on April 30, 2015; Yeomans, “This is THE Rest ...,” 1.

Yeomans, “This is THE Rest ...,” 1.

Allan A. Swift, correspondence with P. S. Jones, September 24, 1959, and October 16, 1959, PAOC Archives.

John H. Watts, “Pentecostal Tabernacle of Calgary: An Historical Sketch,” January 19, 1959, PAOC Archives. See also: Kulbeck, 166.


Douglas, A Mother in Israel, 107-108; Yeomans, The Hiding Place, 4.

Lilian Barbara Yeomans, ministerial file. It appears the family may have moved back and forth between San Francisco and Vancouver, British Columbia.

Ibid.; Charlotte Amelia (Amy) Yeomans, ministerial file.

“Glad Tidings Assembly and Bible Training School, San Francisco Calif,” Pentecostal Evangel, Aug 6, 1921, 14.

Lilian Barbara Yeomans, ministerial file; Charlotte Amelia (Amy) Yeomans, ministerial file.


James W. Opp, “Balm of Gilead: Faith, Healing, and Medicine in the Life of Dr. Lilian B. Yeomans” (paper presented to the Canadian Society of Church History, Memorial University of Newfoundland, June 3-4, 1997), 5.

Lilian Barbara Yeomans, ministerial file. She also notes having served the Southwestern Bible School, Enid, Oklahoma (no date listed).

Loutzenhiser, 4; Braiderd (MN) Daily Dispatch, March 23, 1927, 7.

Loutzenhiser, 4.

See: Carry On L.I.F.E (Los Angeles: Lighthouse of International Foursquare Evangelism, 1931), 171 and 1933, 92. “Although she received much acclaim during her life she was always careful to give God the glory. She knew that she was just the vessel and God was the actual healer.” Loutzenhiser, 4.

Braiderd (MN) Daily Dispatch, March 23, 1927, 7; A similar note about her preaching occurs in the Alton (IL) Evening Telegraph, June 5, 1926, 3.


Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid.


Lilian Barbara Yeomans, ministerial file.

Ibid.

Ibid.

Ibid. This was not the end of the controversy. After visiting an ill Sister McPherson, she noted in a letter to General Council Secretary J. R. Evans, dated September 15, 1930, that “Exception was taken to my action ... and I am informed that an effort is being made to oust me from the District Council.” Evans replied that while he had not heard of her particular case, “it was the opinion of the Executive brethren that we could not endorse any of our General Council ministers having anything to do with Angeles [sic] Temple ... we feel it would be very unwise for you to take up work at that school.” Though she continued as an Assemblies of God minister until her death in 1942, she was again the subject of scrutiny by the Southern California district as noted in a letter from General Secretary J. Roswell Flower to Yeomans dated June 6, 1938.

Lilian B. Yeomans “Poppies Red and Poppies White,” Pentecostal Evangel, January 23, 1926, 5; Lilian B. Yeomans, “The Living Dead: Victims of the Narcotic Evil,” pamphlet (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 1931); The Springer Leader announces her preaching every night at “8 o’clock” at the Gospel Tabernacle on Boonville and Lynn St. (April 8, 1930, 5), “Subject for Tuesday night: ‘How I was delivered from being a drug addict,’ &c.”


Most of Dr. Yeomans’ books went through several editions and in the process a few

Continued on page 78
underwent name changes, including: "Divine Healing Diamonds," which became the Great Physician (1961); and The Royal Road to Health-Ville, which became Health and Healing (1966). Lilian also compiled a list of her sister’s “Spiritual Songs” or poems under the title Gold of Ophir: Spiritual Songs Given Through Amy Yeomans (1941); original copies of her GPH tracts, often drawn from portions of previously printed articles may be found on file at the FPHC.

138Opp, The Lord for the Body, 177.
140Yeomans, “Delivered from the Use of Morphine,” 199.
141Yeomans, Healing from Heaven, 18; Lilian wrote, “If one asks us, ‘How can I be sure that these promises of pardon and cleansing refer to me and are effective in my case today?’ we reply, ‘Because Jesus Christ said, Him that cometh unto Me I will in no wise cast out.’” Yeomans, “Free from the Law of Sin and Death,” Tract No. 442 (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, n.d.), 2.

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