

# *The Gospel Standard Baptist Library*

Newsletter Number 3

Summer 2014

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## **Introduction**

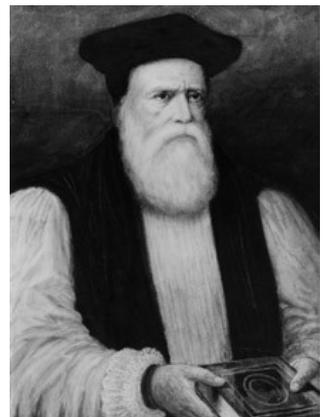
We are pleased that there has been increased interest in the Gospel Standard Library since we started advertising and circulating this News Letter. We would be pleased if readers might be inclined to pass on this briefing to friends that might also be interested. It can be freely downloaded from our website. The Library possesses in its collection a comprehensive collection of reformed literature ranging from the Reformation, through the era of the Puritans and Scottish Covenanters, writings of many notable preachers of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century revivals, as well as many of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Independents, such as William Huntington. Most significantly, it contains the largest collection of Strict Baptist material in the world, and a significant number of these items are not available in any other library. As such, it is an important resource for our churches, and its significant role in preserving our heritage is, we feel, generally unrecognised.

We would emphasize that it is impossible to have a library where every book is in absolute agreement with all that we hold denominationally. There have been, and are, shades of opinion even amongst our churches over some of the finer points of doctrine. Therefore, though we wish to maintain the high standard of scriptural, spiritual and experimental content, every volume must be read with prayerful discernment. If it is, we feel that the reader will profitably separate the chaff from the wheat and reap some rich crumbs from the Master's table.

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## **Some Welsh Authors and their Books**

In the last issue, we covered Scotland and some of the books by Scottish authors in the Library. We promised in future issues to look at Ireland and Wales. For both of these countries the Library possesses considerably less material. For Wales, which we now consider, this is certainly not a reflection of the spiritual condition of Wales, but possibly much of the original writings by the Welsh divines were published primarily in their own language, and thus have not been readily accessed by our churches. The Welsh have always held their language very dear to them and the July issue of *The Friendly Companion*, contained a piece notifying the reader of the return of an original edition of the Welsh Bible to the home of the translator, William Morgan,



William Morgan

which is owned and opened as a museum by the National Trust. Morgan was the first to translate the Scriptures from the original languages into Welsh, and in doing so helped to standardise the Welsh language for future generations. There is little in the Library about him, but his work of translation no doubt prepared the way for the Evangelical Revivals of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century in Wales. Wales was particularly influenced by the ministry of George Whitefield, Daniel Rowland and Howel Harris. Unlike the Arminian Wesleyan Methodists of England, the Welsh Methodists were generally Calvinistic. There are two volumes of the recently reprinted *The Calvinistic Methodist Fathers of Wales* which gives a good insight into religious developments in Wales, and is well worth reading. The Library has various biographies of some of these able Welsh ministers as Daniel Rowland, John Elias, and Howell Harris. The life of the notable Welsh Baptist, Christmas Evans, has also been recorded by a number of biographers, including Mr Ramsbottom, and the Library has an interesting and profitable volume of his sermons too.



The Countess of Huntingdon

Wales was also the home of Trevecca, the College founded by the Countess of Huntingdon for the training of ministers. The Countess of Huntingdon was a wealthy lady during the 18th Century, who, having been called by grace, set up a group of churches, and paid their ministers, as a way of propagating the Gospel. These churches were Calvinistic, and the Countess was a great friend of George Whitefield. The Countess was one of those rare examples of the not many “noble” that are called, but she literally gave up all she had for the cause of the Gospel. The library has several biographies of the Countess, most notably the *Life and Times of Selina the Countess of Huntingdon* by Aaron Seymour, and the more recent biography by Faith Cook. The Library has a copy of the

hymnbook produced for the Countess of Huntingdon’s Chapels and a history of her most famous chapel at Spa Fields in London, titled: *Two Calvinistic Methodist Chapels 1743-1811*, by the famous historian of the Countess of Huntingdon’s Connexion, Edwin Welch. Perhaps it is a little known fact that, Jenkin Jenkins, the well known friend of William Huntington, was trained at Trevecca, and pastored the Countess of Huntingdon’s chapel in Lewes, before William Huntington paid to have Jireh Chapel built for his later ministry. The Library has the Last *Fragments of Jenkin Jenkins* by William Huntington amongst its collection.

Among the children’s books, there is the account of Mary Jones, who walked the Cadair Idris range to Bala, to obtain a Bible from the well known minister, Thomas Charles, who later founded the British and Foreign Bible Society.

## The Two World Wars

This year is the 100th anniversary of the commencement of the First World War. There were a number of mercies that were known in both of the World Wars. The so termed “Angel of Mons” and the “miracle” of Dunkirk were two such particular deliverances. Several of our ministers record their experiences during those times. In the first World War: Mr Bradford (Pastor at Matfield) wrote of his naval experience in his autobiography; Mr H Salkeld wrote of his experiences in the trenches of France both in his autobiography *All the Way* and his book *The Vital Year*. (First World War). Several of our other ministers, particularly Mr J. H. Gosden and his brother Mr F. L. Gosden, mention their war service in passing. Then of the Second World War, Mr Stehouwer, wrote *Kept - Some Wartime Experiences*.

A couple of accounts, by lay men who served in the First World War include: *In the Service of the King*, by Sergeant J. Chapman and *God's Mercy and Goodness During the Great War*, by Stephen Clark of Mayfield. The recent book, eminently suited to young people (as well as older readers) *Kept Safely in the Darkest Night* translated by J Marcus Banfield, records deliverances during the Second World War in Holland. The magazines of the period also contain a lot of material, particularly *The Friendly Companion*, and *The Christian's Pathway*. The former magazine, during 1919 and 1920, serialised the war diaries of Marcus Banfield (Uncle of the Marcus Banfield mentioned above), who was killed in action. The latter published monthly “muster rolls” will pictures and accounts of soldiers from our churches; alongside the well known sermon by Mr Herbert Dawson on *The Christian Soldier*.



Marcus Banfield

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## Doctrine: Baptism

Perhaps less read, the Library also has a good selection of books covering points of Doctrine. These deserve to be better used. Martin Luther said, “Doctrine is heaven” and while we would readily emphasise that we cannot learn religion, as school boys learn their lessons, something must be known and felt. Nevertheless, there is an inestimable benefit to be obtained from considering the precious doctrines of our most holy faith. Doctrine is the food of faith, it strengthens and nourishes it, and it is central to the desire that we might “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.” We would therefore commend the books in our doctrinal section to you and hope to look at some of them in successive newsletters.

We begin in this issue by considering Baptism, as being the major doctrine which separates us denominationally, from many who may otherwise profess to believe the same as we do on the central doctrines of our faith (the Trinity, the Person of Christ, and the Doctrines of Grace etc.).

The Library has a whole section of books which relate to Baptism. We cannot mention them all, but choose a few. Firstly, there is the little book by the Puritan John Norcott, titled *Baptism Discovered Plainly According to the Word of God*. This was always highly recommended by Mr Popham as being amongst the best books on the subject. The much later book, *Baptism in its Mode and Subjects*, published in the 19th century by the Irish Baptist Minister, Alexander Carson, while not easy reading, is generally regarded as the most comprehensive book on the subject. Both Abraham Booth and John Gill wrote able defences of Believer's Baptism, and these are also in the Library's collection. From our own men, we have two books written by lay-men, *The Baptism of John, Whence Was It?* by Edward Poulson, a deacon at Gower Street and for a brief time, editor of *The Friendly Companion*, and *A Defence of Water Baptism* by John Gadsby. Mr F Windridge also wrote a short work on Baptism, titled *Baptism a Reply*; this is learned, but easy reading.

There are also a number of books dealing with the history of baptism, perhaps most notably, Robinson's *The History of Baptism* and Whitley's *Witness of History to Baptist Principles*. More recent publications of this nature also include the very readable, and highly interesting, *Baptism – Archaeological, Historical & Biblical* by F M Buhler, which demonstrates that baptism by immersion has been practised from the earliest days of Christianity.



An early baptismal pool found in Istanbul

## How to Use the Library

**Borrowing Books:** To borrow any of the books mentioned in this newsletter, you do not have to visit the Library, or become a subscriber. Simply phone or email the librarian (contact details below) with the book title you wish to borrow and your address. The book will be posted to you free of charge. Return postage is paid and you have three months to read the book. Similarly, you can borrow any book from the catalogue (except those marked as being in the reserved collection); the catalogue is available on the website.

**Surplus Books:** The Library regularly receives books surplus to requirements and these are sold to raise money for the maintenance and expansion of the Library's collection and general upkeep. A catalogue is regularly produced.

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