

Friends of the Congregational Library Newsletter

Volume 8 No 4

Autumn 2025

Chair's reflections

Dear Friends

At a recent meeting of the Friends' Committee mention was made of the use of the collections of books but also original manuscripts in our archives. It made me recall a visit I made to the then Centre for the Study of Christianity in the Non-Western World at the University of Edinburgh. Their reading room was actually a hive of activity but mainly confined to digitised versions of material.

I found myself at two minds about this process. On the one hand this digitised material was now far more easily accessed and did not require travel to a particular library. Research was open to a greater number of people—fine! However, I recalled my own research both in this country and India. The digitisation process means that one no longer searches through those very letters, written often in beautiful copperplate, which had been sent, in my case, from India some one hundred and sixty years, more or less, previously. Looking through those letters I realised that very often scarcely a dozen people, if that, had previously touched them. There was a sense of privilege and close connection with the writers. One recognised handwriting, family difficulties and the growth of children—‘we have educated our son as best we could but now I need to ask the Society (in the case the Church Missionary Society) for £60 p.a. to enable him to attend Repton’.

Another letter comes to mind, an indication of the beginnings of the church in the Panjab. It was written in American by two Presbyterian missionaries and was replete with hope and expectation ... ‘the whole land, almost, is before us, and millions are accessible in every direction’. ‘...

we feel clear in deciding on (a base in) Umbala and Loodiana (sic) ... in the territory of Lahore ... under the influence of Runjeet Singh, long the most formidable enemy of the British, but in friendship at present.' The letter continues: 'This region of the country is connected by commercial business, with Afghanistan, Cashmere, and Tibet, in all of which countries, no efforts have been made to fulfil our Savior's last commandment.'

Alongside them the Church Missionary Society worked among the Sikh community in the Panjab, believing that 'when converted to Christ, they will become soldiers of the Cross' in the way that 'they have joined us (the British) as soldiers in Burmah, in China, in Delhi, in Abyssinia and have aided us in conquering many countries and taking possession of their capitals for our Queen'.

What is striking is that letters written by those aware of the realities of life in India do not always reflect the expectations of the mission enthusiasts or 'home staff' in the U.K. In the 1880s and 90s one CMS missionary, Guilford, recognised that a house was needed close to a Sikh pilgrimage centre in Tarn Taran. I found a letter from him asking for Rs 5000 to pay for the building of a house there. Six weeks later I found myself standing on the veranda of that very house, the site of a meeting of 500 people 'comprising Christians, Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims and Chuhras'. Representatives of each faith offered prayer for much needed rain. On the second day afterwards, there was a torrential downpour. Guilford used the phrase 'united prayer' in his description of the event in his letter home but it was greeted with horror. Pasted in one of the CMS letter books, a heading was given to it written in red ink—a 'very strange prayer meeting for rain'. The thought of anything which smacked of interfaith activity was anathema to a mission society and often still is.

So, who has access to archival material such as this? And how is knowledge of the issues considered shared with those whose idealistic understanding of missionary work does not acknowledge the realities of life in cultures other than their own? I very much hope that our archival material can be used in wider fields than the purely academic.

John Parry

Lectures

The 2025 Lecture will be held on Thursday 20 November in London, preceded by the following visit and Friends' AGM:

2.00pm Meet at the site of Memorial Hall in Farringdon Street to look at Memorial Stones and for a short talk about the Congregational Memorial Hall.

Walk to Stationers Hall (just off Ludgate Hill) about 350 yards or 5–7 minutes walk.

2.30pm A tour of the Tokefield Centre at Stationers Hall. The Tokefield Centre contains the archive of the Stationers Company and among the registers are found entries for many of the books published in England. We hope to look at entries for books which are of interest to Congregationalists such as *The Pilgrim's Progress* and possibly some papers connected with the Mayflower Pilgrims.

3.30pm We will walk back to St. Bride Foundation in Bride Lane again, a walk of about 350yards which should take 5–7 minutes.

4.00pm AGM Friends of the Congregational Library
AGM in the Farringdon Room at St Bride Foundation,
14 St Bride Lane, Fleet Street, London EC4Y 8EQ

4.30pm Tea

5.30pm This year's Congregational Lecture will be given by Rev. Doug Gay, Lecturer in Practical Theology at Glasgow University and Principal of Trinity College (Glasgow) who will speak on the subject, 'Faithful Adaptation—how God changes the Church's mind about ethics'.

To assist with planning for the event, please email the Secretary of the Friends of the Congregational Library at admin@pondsquarechapel.org, if you wish to attend.

If you have more time that day, or are in London on another occasion, here are some ideas of other sites you may find interesting:

In terms of sites for Nonconformist/Congregational visitors to London, of course Bunhill Fields is a must, but right opposite it in City Road is Wesley's Chapel with the museum of Methodism in its crypt and Wesley's house next door. Bunhill has Watts, Blake, Bunyan, Daniel Williams and many more. The Savoy Hotel, just off the Strand has a series of blue plaques along the wall of the side road leading to it. One of those blue plaques commemorates the Savoy Conference of Congregationalists

of 1658. Visitors to London might also like to see notable churches of the Congregational tradition such as Westminster Chapel, City Temple, Whitefield's Tabernacle, Christ Church and Upton Chapel (as Surrey Chapel the place of worship of Charlie Chaplin in childhood with his mother) and Union Chapel, Islington. Isaac Watts' chapel was in Bury Street, St Mary Axe. Abney Park, where Watts lived for many years, is now a cemetery containing many Nonconformist celebrities. Tabernacl King's Cross was where Howell Elvet Lewis (Elfed the bard and hymn writer) was minister.

It is also worth visiting Tyburn (Marble Arch) the site of the executions of Barrow and Greenwood in 1593. Also, St Thomas a Watering, the execution site of John Penry in 1593, is commemorated by Penry Street SE1, off the Old Kent Road. Nonconformists were imprisoned in the Clink Prison, Southwark, near the Globe Theatre and Southwark Cathedral. Carteret Street SW1, near Westminster Chapel, was the location of Livingstone House when it was for many years the headquarters of the London Missionary Society. Memorial Hall was located on Farringdon Street but the foundation stone can still be seen around the corner in Fleet Lane, the site of the Fleet Prison where Congregationalists were imprisoned. Off Walworth Road, Browning Street SE17 commemorates the poet, who attended the then York Street Chapel. It continues as Stead Street commemorating the minister of the chapel, brother of the famous journalist, W T Stead. All that is left of the chapel is the burial ground.

Alan Argent

Annual subscriptions

Annual membership remains at £10 and subscriptions for 2025 are due on 1 April.

The current bank details are:

The Congregational Memorial Hall Trust (1978) Limited
Triodos Bank, Sort Code 16-58-10, Account No 21019541

Cheques may also be sent to the Treasurer:

Steve Summers, Clerk, The Congregational Memorial Hall Trust (1978)
Limited, 12 Trinity Avenue, Northampton, NN2 6JJ

Retirement of Willie Duncan

After eight years of faithful service, the Clerk to the Congregational

Memorial Hall Trust, Willie Duncan, is retiring at the end of October. Meetings of the Trust and its Library Committee will feel very different without Willie's presence. We will miss his guidance and wise counsel.

Willie has managed the affairs of the Trust and Congregational Library with competence, and helped us through the great changes we have faced with the closure and sale of Dr Williams's Library in Gordon Square which had been the home of our Library for over forty years. Willie has kept our accounts in good order and has helpfully guided the Trustees with his professional opinion. He has always worked well and easily with the Trustees, members of the Library Committee and our staff.

Willie has served the Friends of the Library as our Treasurer and has been a familiar face at our Lectures, doing much the organising of these events and for this we are grateful. He has become a real friend to the Friends. We will miss Willie and his enormous contribution to the life and work of the Congregational Memorial Hall Trust. We are truly thankful for all that Willie has done during the time he has been with us and we pray God's blessing upon him and Sheila as he begins his retirement.

Chris Damp

Steve Summers, the new Clerk to the Council of the Congregational Memorial Hall Trust (1978) Limited.



Given my experience in the voluntary, community, faith-based, social enterprise, charity, and business sectors over more than four decades, I am delighted to be appointed as the new Clerk to The Congregational Memorial Hall Trust. Of course, I have a very hard act to follow! From the onset, I would very much like to acknowledge and emphasise my appreciation to Willie Duncan for his outstanding work as Clerk and for his careful handing over of the role.

My previous roles have included

founding The Resources in Community Trust over 30 years ago to provide decent housing and support, particularly for young people; Chair of Trustees at The YMCA Northamptonshire for 9 years; co-founder and current Chairperson of The McCarthy Dixon Foundation, a Charitable Incorporated Organisation which has recently been awarded the Kings Award for Voluntary Service; a Grants Adviser & Assessor with Northamptonshire Community Foundation for the past 16 years; a member of the Shared Interest Society Ltd. for 40 years and a Council Member for 6 years; a Management Committee member and volunteer with my local United Reformed Church (URC) Child Contact Centre and a Steering Group member of the Northamptonshire Parents & Carers Forum Group, both for the past 6 years.

I have recently ceased employment after 26 years as URC Head of Community Engagement. This included oversight roles for many church and community projects, a number of ecumenical representative roles and a panel member of the Community Projects Awards and the Legacy Fund. Previous employment has been with Northampton Borough Council, Barnado's, the Diocese of Peterborough and the Diocese of Birmingham in different Youth & Community Development Worker roles.

I have experience in academic environments as an Associate of Goldsmiths, conducting Research into the Values of Faith-based Social Enterprises; as an External Examiner for the Community Leadership MA with the University of Northampton and in various roles with Chester, Staffordshire and De Montford Universities. I have limited experience in a library environment other than University libraries, although I spent many hours as a child and young person in libraries since my mother was a public, schools and archivist librarian!



As an active member of the United

Reformed Church and having lived much of my life in Northampton, where Philip Doddridge was Principal of ‘undoubtedly one of the best dissenting academies’,¹ I have a fair knowledge of the Reformed church traditions and am strongly in support of the aims and ethos of the CMHT. This Clerk post enables the continuation of my commitment and desire to be professionally involved with key denominations, while working in this important role is an outworking of my Christian faith and discipleship.

My personal passions are to collaborate and work in partnership with the many excellent networks, organisations, community groups, faith groups and charities to alleviate poverty, to confront injustice, to address the climate crisis and to work towards the Common Good. I combine my family commitments as an adoptive and birth parent of four children aged from 15–39 years alongside the above roles, while ensuring that there is still time to enjoy the countryside, to regularly play tennis, go cycling, swimming and to church, and to support the Northampton Saints rugby and Cobblers football teams!

I look forward to supporting the Friends of the Congregational Library to the best of my ability. Please do not hesitate to contact me: steve.summers@conglib.ac.uk

Thank you.

Update on the Congregational Library

Since the last update, things have been developing quickly and positively in the Congregational Library. The unpacking is going extremely well and the library now actually looks like a library rather than a series of empty rooms. In March we recruited two volunteers, who are generously giving up two mornings a week to help fill the shelves (and learn a little about librarianship along the way!). With their help we have now unpacked over 300 boxes and are moving at a steady clip of 40 boxes a fortnight. It’s slow and hard work, particularly as some of the books need some minor conservation work done as they are coming out of storage, but it’s so satisfying to see them going up on the shelves at last.

We have now installed eight environmental monitors. This will help us keep tabs on conditions in the Tower and, in spring 2026, should help

¹ *Joseph Priestley, scientist, philosopher, and theologian*. Ed. Isabel Rivers and David L. Wykes. OUP: 2008, p. 26



Unpacking is going well: we have filled a whole row in the Cheshunt Room already.



A conservation vacuum cleaner (known as a “conservac”) surrounded with materials for safe mould removal. Five books that were unpacked with signs of mould have now been returned to the shelves.

us decide how best to deal with the ongoing humidity and temperature fluctuations there. Monitors have also been installed in the Cheshunt and Carrie Rooms. Shelving is also due to be installed in the Carrie Room in early September, which is good news as unpacking in the Cheshunt Room is going so well the Carrie Room may well be required before the end of the year.

Now that we have so many more books on the shelf, we have been starting to think about conservation issues. Given they have been in storage for so long the books are in remarkably good condition, but a few are inevitably going to need intervention, particularly as a significant proportion of the collection is over 400 years old. We have started measuring some of the books for boxes and have been removing mould from some of the damper items in the collection (thankfully there aren't many!). We have also been learning some basic “book first aid” skills and are beginning to prioritise the collection for future conservation care. A big shout-out goes to Jane Giscombe, the library's conservator, for all the help and advice she has been giving.

Enquiries have continued coming in, mostly by email, although we've had the occasional walk-in as well. A hard copy of the Surman Index was installed in the library reading room in March and has proved especially popular with enquirers. Queries have ranged from simple requests for books to in-depth research on a particular chapel or Congregational minister. If you have a research project we might be able to help with, or are simply curious about what materials we have, email Jacqueline Reiter at jacqueline.reiter@conglib.ac.uk and she will do her best to help.

In addition to enquiries, we've also had several readers, some coming from as far away as Wales to use the collections. The reading room has been working very well and it's lovely to have so much room to accommodate our users.

The library now has a Twitter and Instagram feed (@conglibuk) and there are plans to expand to Facebook and perhaps even YouTube in the near future. The monthly updates on the website have also proved popular—feedback has been very good—and the volunteers may write some guest posts in future about some of the books they have been unpacking. Watch this space!

Jacqueline Reiter, Congregational Librarian



We have a hard copy of the Surman Index in the library now.

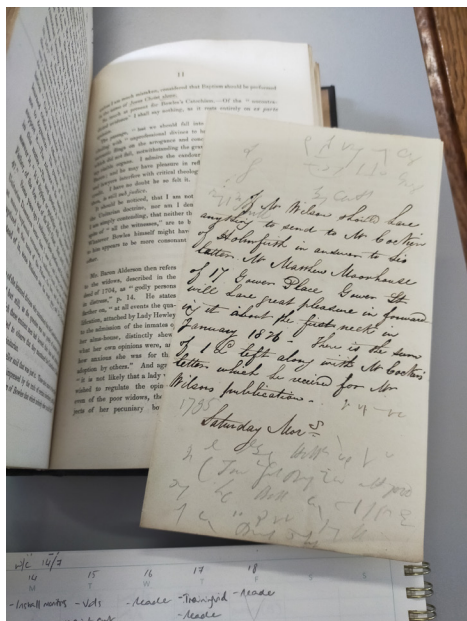


The view from the top of the Tower at Westminster College, looking out towards Cambridge University Library.

Leaving A Mark: Joint exhibition between the Congregational Library, the Theological Federation, and Westminster College Archives at Westminster College, Cambridge

The Congregational Library is taking part in a joint exhibition at Westminster College Library in Cambridge during Lent term (September–December 2025). Along with materials from Westminster College Archives and the various libraries of the Theological Federation, the library has provided a selection of bookmarks—and other things deliberately or accidentally left in our books over the years. These include traditional bookmarks, like two woven silk “Stevengraphs”—invented in the 1860s by Thomas Stevens (1828–1888), a manufacturer based in Coventry who produced over 900 designs at his factory using Jacquard looms; early twentieth-century photographs; amusing bookplates; pressed flowers and leaves; and a letter to Joshua Wilson, one of the Congregational Library’s main founders. These items show how a library is not just a collection of books, but also a way of connecting with readers from the past.

You are welcome to visit the exhibition at Westminster College, which is on public display in the library area.



A letter addressed to Joshua Wilson, one of the founders of the Congregational Library, by Matthew Moorhouse, undated but circa 1825. It refers to a pamphlet written by Wilson, which we have been unable to trace (any ideas welcome!), and refers to Rev. John Cockin of Holmfirth, a correspondent of Wilson’s father Thomas. This letter was found tucked into a volume of pamphlets relating to the extended, and ultimately successful, lawsuit to bar Unitarians from controlling Lady Hewley’s Trust. (Cong.Lib. 40.3.2)

Jacqueline Reiter, Congregational Librarian

CHURCH, STAGE AND TOY STAGE

At the farewell lunch given to me by the Memorial Hall Trust at the Reform Club in January of this year, many of those present were curious to learn about my principal hobby, which is the study of the Regency and Victorian children's plaything, the toy theatre. This discussion took my thoughts back to a previous lunch, when the Trust celebrated the thirtieth anniversary of my coming to work for the Library. On that occasion I was given an official present of some theatre tokens and an unofficial present of a book about Morris dancing, and was thus outed as having sympathies with at least two of the things that the Library's puritan ancestors held in particular abhorrence.

Of course, the English puritans are not the only church leaders to have harboured anti-theatrical prejudices. In the France of Molière, actors were routinely denied Christian burial, and as late as 1820, when the Duc de Berry was assassinated, and lay dying in his box at the Paris Opéra, the Archbishop of Paris refused to come and administer the last sacrament without a promise that the entire building would afterwards be razed to the ground. This centuries-old enmity has sometimes left theatre historians scratching their heads for an explanation. I remember a lecture given to the Society for Theatre Research many years ago, during which the question was raised, Why was the church always so hostile to the stage? In the ensuing discussion, George Speaight (toy theatre historian and devout Roman Catholic) thumped his chair and declared, "I know that it WAS so, but I don't know WHY it was so!" The chairman for the evening, who was not confining himself to his chair, then went up to Sybil Rosenfeld (another venerable presence) and said, "Would you, with all your years of experience, and vast reserves of knowledge, like to say something on the subject?" There was a moment's pause for thought, after which her answer came back, "NO!"

Despite this hostility, church and stage have sometimes been subject to parallel restrictions, though their mutual antipathies have prevented them from acknowledging the fact, let alone making anything like common cause. It also seems to have prevented people from appreciating the situation, even in retrospect. On the rare occasions when I have put forward a suggestion along these lines, it has not met with much more than puzzlement. So I apologize in advance if I am about to bang my head against a wall of disbelief once again.

The Act of Uniformity, which effectively divided churches into established and dissenting, received the Royal Assent on 19 May 1662. Less than a month earlier, on 25 April, Thomas Killigrew had obtained from the King a theatrical patent under the authority of the Great Seal, to which was added a similar patent, granted to William Davenant, on 15 January 1662/3. These documents established a system by which two London theatres (Drury Lane and, eventually, Covent Garden) enjoyed a monopoly of the spoken (or “legitimate”) drama, while other theatres, if allowed to exist at all, had to operate under a singing and dancing licence and keep up a pretence of not actually being theatres.

One of Britain’s claims to be in the avant garde of liberty rests on our having abolished pre-censorship of printed works so early as 1695. This was one of the first fruits of that much-maligned thing, government by party, since, although Whigs and Tories would both have liked the right to censor each other’s publications, both realised that they must sometimes be out of office, and would then be subject to the censorship of their opponents, if the entire process were not abolished. But the theatre was put in an anomalous position when, in 1737, the thin-skinned Walpole government introduced pre-censorship of stage plays, which had to be submitted to the Lord Chamberlain’s office for licensing before they could be performed.

Relief from the burdens of 1662 and later did not come swiftly or comprehensively. For nonconformists, the Repeal of the Test Acts in 1829 was a significant milestone. In 1832 a select committee of the House of Commons made proposals for reforming the theatre monopoly system, though it was not until 1843 that the Theatres Act (or Theatre Regulation Act) implemented these suggestions. Even then the censorship system was left untouched, and indeed its scope was enlarged, since more theatres now became subject to it. When the tercentenary of 1662 was commemorated by conformists and nonconformists in friendly co-operation, a note of caution was struck by Dr Geoffrey Nuttall, who felt obliged to point out a number of ways in which nonconformists were still subject to disabilities. And it was not until 1968 that pre-censorship of stage plays by the Lord Chamberlain was finally abolished.

In 2007 I was asked to talk to the 1662 Society about the toy theatre. We were just then celebrating the 200th anniversary of the abolition of the slave trade within the British Empire, so my examples of plays

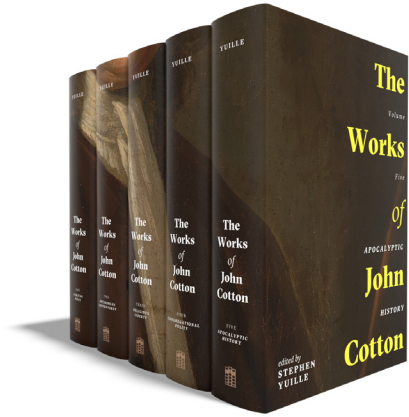
preserved by the miniature stage, which draw its materials entirely from the successes of the London theatres, included some that dealt with the slavery question, from an interesting variety of viewpoints. Three Fingered Jack tells the story of an escaped slave who operated as a bandit in the hills of Jamaica. The play dates from 1800, but was still being performed in the early 1850s, when it was finally adapted for the toy theatre. It is entirely on the side of the plantation owners. The good slaves help to defeat the bad slaves, and order is restored. In 1852 Mrs Beecher Stowe's novel *Uncle Tom's Cabin* created a sensation on both sides of the Atlantic, and in the autumn of that year adaptations were produced at countless London theatres. Two theatres even made it the subject of their Christmas pantomime. The toy theatre preserves for us one straight adaptation and one pantomime version. The novel is often criticised nowadays for being too conciliatory, but in her 1856 follow-up, *Dred*, Mrs Stowe "took the gloves off" (as one modern editor puts it) and exposed the horrors of slavery in graphic detail. The reaction of the London theatres is instructive. Once again, many adaptations were staged, but these were all in theatres in the East End or south of the river. The theatres of the West End would not touch it. Nevertheless, two versions appear in the toy theatre, one of them interesting because it includes a final scene of *Dred*, the black freedom-fighter, taken up to heaven and surrounded by white, female angels. This scene was specifically banned by Lord Chamberlain and so was never seen on the live stage. Presumably the artist who drew this toy theatre version was allowed to watch rehearsals and so recorded the taboo-breaking scene before it had to be cut from the production.

Throughout the Victorian era, protestant folk wanting to express their opposition to slavery or other concerns (such as drink, gambling, prostitution, or war) headed for Exeter Hall in the Strand, which was a byword for activism of this sort. Simultaneously, theatre audiences made their way to Drury Lane, Covent Garden and other theatres in the same vicinity, to have their feelings stirred by plays that often treated the same subjects. In other words, the two groups supported many of the same causes, but did so in parallel grooves rather than in concert, while remaining officially at loggerheads. And the student of these things can easily feel closer to both groups in the present than ever they felt to each other in the past.

David Powell

John Cotton's Works

At the 1976 Westminster Conference, R.T. Kendall gave a controversial paper entitled "John Cotton: The First English Calvinist". I read this when it was published in printed form, the following year. It sparked my interest in Cotton. In the early eighties, during my theological training, I was given the essay title "Describe the contribution to Puritan Life and Thought of either John Cotton or Richard Baxter". I chose Cotton. I then gave a paper



at the 1987 Congregational Studies Conference on John Cotton's Doctrine of the Church. Following that, I decided to do examine Cotton's doctrine of conversion. Realising that the necessary texts were only available in the original 17th century editions, I began transcribing the material. The first was a sermon, "The Covenant of God's Free Grace". His doctrine of conversion took a back seat as I began transcribing more and more Cotton material, eventually all of it. Reformation Heritage Books (RHB) heard of what I had done and asked if they could take my work and publish it, having first modernized the English. This has now been done and the five volumes of John Cotton's Works will be published in November 2025. The introductory price is \$300 (a \$100 discount) plus shipping costs from America. It will also be available on Amazon. As part of my agreement with RHB, a set will be sent to the Congregational Library and to the Evangelical Library.

John Cotton (1585–1652) is one of the most important theologians of the Congregational Way in the seventeenth century. Born in Derby he went up to Trinity College in 1597 and then to Emmanuel College in Cambridge. Graduating B.D. in 1610. He became vicar of St Botolph's Church in Boston, Lincolnshire (known as Boston Stump) in 1612, which is around the time he believes he was converted, having listened to the preaching of Richard Sibbes. As a result, he adopted Puritan principles. He slowly developed his views on church government while there. After twenty

years in Boston he lost his wife to malaria. In 1632 he married his second wife. Also at this time his Puritanism came to the attention of the High Commission Court, and he was reported for his nonconformity. He felt he had no option but to flee to America, which he did in 1633. On the voyage his first son was born, named, appropriately, Seaborn. He would not have the infant baptized until they reach a properly constituted church. After arriving in Boston, Massachusetts he became the teacher of the church there (his view of Ephesians 4:11 was that the phrase “pastors and teachers” referred to two separate offices). His preaching/teaching was popular and the membership of the church grew. In 1636 he had to defend his teaching in what became known as the Antinomian Controversy. He began to flesh out his views on church government, most famously in his 1644 book *The Keyes of the Kingdome of Heaven* which he later defended against attacks from presbyterians in his 1648 book *The Way of Congregational Churches Cleared*. One important presbyterian was convinced of Cotton’s position: John Owen, who became the most prominent member of the Independents. Cotton (with others) was invited to attend the Westminster Assembly, but the governor questioned the point of travelling 6,000 miles (round trip) to agree with five men (the Dissenting Brethren, who promoted *The Keyes* as the middle way between Brownism and Presbyterianism). Cotton had a famous paper debate with Roger Williams, who later founded Rhode Island. Williams wrote a reponse against a letter Cotton had written to someone in England. Williams’s book was *The Bloody Tenant of Persecition*. Cotton responded with *The Bloody Tenant Washed and made white in the bloud of the Lambe*. Williams’s reply was *The Bloody Tenant yet more Bloody*. Cotton never replied, dying in 1652. To summarise Cotton’s position on this matter, a person has liberty of conscience until their conscience is instructed (by someone who agreed with Cotton). If they then disagreed, they were sinning against their own conscience and could be punished. As a consequence of Cotton’s view, Massachusetts was essentially a theocracy and dissent was not permitted. It was also a condition of citizenship that a person was a church member, having a credible profession of faith. The next generation did not all meet those requirements and thus a solution had to be found to the problem of a reducing number of citizens. This came to be known as the “Halfway Covenant”, by which those baptized in infancy could have a sort of church membership without such a profession of faith. This caused problems in later generations and in part explains

the ejection of Jonathan Edwards from his church in Northampton, Massachusetts in the late 1740s.

Many of Cotton's books were composed of printed versions of sermons. The longest book is his series of sermons on 1 John. A heavily (and badly) edited version was published in 1961 by Sovereign Grace Publishers. Pages and paragraphs reordered or omitted completely. Many of Cotton's writings can be found on Amazon in facsimile. I hope (eventually) to produce a reset version in the original English in the years ahead.

Dr Digby L. James

Website

The Congregational Memorial Hall Trust and Congregational Library Website can be found here: www.conglib.ac.uk

Facebook Page

A closed group has been created on Facebook for the Friends of the Congregational Library. It is hoped to use this to communicate information to Friends and allow for discussions. It is moderated by Dr Digby James. Search Facebook for it and send a request to join. It is a bit quiet at present, but hopefully as more Friends join it might liven up.

The Friends of the Congregational Library Committee

President — vacant, Christopher Damp, Jonathan Dean, Ann Davies (Newsletter editor), Steve Summers (Treasurer), Digby James (vice-Chair), Patricia Judd (Secretary, email address: admin@pondsquarechapel.org (FCL) c/o Pond Square Chapel, South Grove, London N6 6BJ), Peter Jupp, Derek Lindfield, John Parry (Chair), John Thompson, Margaret Thompson, John Travell.

Contributions to the next Newsletter should be sent (preferably emailed as Microsoft Word documents) to Ann Davies, email: anndaviesbedford@gmail.com by 31 January 2026.