

Whitley Lecture 2012:

***Religious Liberty in Continental Europe* - Ian M Randall**

This paper described campaigning that took place by British Baptists on behalf of their persecuted dissenting brothers and sisters in mainland Europe in the period from the 1840s to the 1930s. In their campaigns for freedom, Baptists formed alliance with other evangelicals and with political figures. Baptists were also concerned with liberty of conscience more widely.

Centre for Baptist History and Heritage Studies
Occasional Papers Volume 4 and Whitley Publications

The Whitley Lecture 2012

**Religious Liberty in Continental Europe
Campaigning by British Baptists, 1840s to 1930s**

Ian M. Randall

Whitley Publications

Regent's Park College, Oxford

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First published 2012

Whitley Publications,
c/o Regent's Park College,
Oxford,
OX1 2LB.

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Regent's Park College,
Pusey Street,
Oxford,
OX1 2LB.

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18 17 16 15 14 13 12 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 978-0-9565006-1-8

Front cover illustration: Edward Steane and James Henry Rushbrooke.

Photographs by Katja Cross.

Back cover illustration by Chris Lewis. Used with permission.

Typeset by Troon & Croft
Printed and bound in Great Britain
by AlphaGraphics Nottingham
www.alphagraphics.co.uk/centres/nottingham-uk007/index.html

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*To colleagues and students at
the International Baptist Theological Seminary, Prague,
who have helped me to understand our European story.*

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THE WHITLEY LECTURE

The Whitley Lecture was first established in 1949 in honour of W.T. Whitley (1861–1947), the Baptist minister and historian. Following a pastorate in Bridlington, during which he also taught at Rawdon College in Yorkshire, Whitley became the first Principal of the Baptist College of Victoria in Melbourne, Australia, in 1891. This institution was later renamed Whitley College in his honour.

Whitley was a key figure in the formation of the Baptist Historical Society in 1908. He edited its journal, which soon gained an international reputation for the quality of its contents – a reputation it still enjoys nearly a century later as the *Baptist Quarterly*. His *A History of British Baptists* (London: Charles Griffin, 1923) remains an important source of information and comment for contemporary historians. Altogether he made an important contribution to Baptist life and self understanding in Britain and Australia, providing a model of how a pastor-scholar might enrich the life and faith of others.

The establishment of the annual lecture in his name is designed as an encouragement to research and writing by Baptist scholars, and to enable the results of this work to be published. The giving of grants, advice and other forms of support by the Lectureship Committee serves the same purpose. The committee consists of representatives of the British Baptist Colleges, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, BMS World Mission, the Baptist Ministers' Fellowship, and the Baptist Historical Society. These organizations also provide financial support for its work.

The Whitley Committee is delighted to welcome Ian Randall as the lecturer for 2012. Ian was born in the north of Scotland and studied economics and history at university in Aberdeen, where he met his wife, Janice. After working for a time in human resources, he felt called to Baptist ministry and trained at Regent's Park College before taking up pastorates in Wraysbury, and Windsor.

Ian joined the staff at Spurgeon's College in 1992 to teach church history and spirituality. He also spent some years on secondment to the International Baptist Theological Seminary (IBTS) in Prague, where he supervised many research students. He is now a senior research fellow at IBTS and Spurgeon's. Baptist and wider Evangelical history, especially in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, has been Ian's main interest. He has written several books, including *The English Baptists of the Twentieth Century* and *Communities of Conviction: Baptist Beginnings in Europe*. Ian now lives in Cambridge, where he is part-time assistant minister at Cambourne Church (an ecumenical missional congregation), and is also a locum chaplain at Addenbrooke's Hospital. Ian and Janice have two married daughters, who live in the Czech Republic and Sweden.

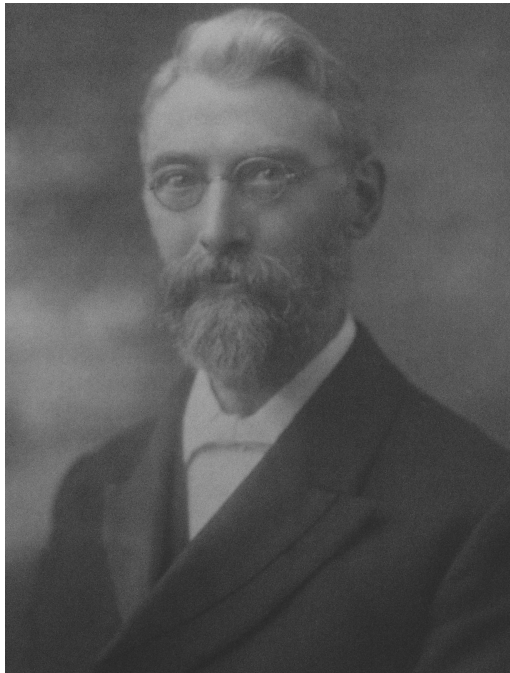
This lecture communicates both Ian's mastery of our denominational history and his enthusiasm for our Baptist heritage and culture. However, he does much more

than simply recount the deeds of our dissenting forebears. The British Baptists who expressed solidarity with their persecuted dissenting brethren in Europe did far more than offer passive moral and spiritual support to those subjected to religious oppression. They also campaigned actively for freedom by forming alliances with influential political figures – considered controversial by many Christians – and by cooperating with other bodies (such as the Evangelical Alliance, formed in 1846) to maximise their impact. Neither was the concern of British Baptists just with the persecution of other Baptists – they advocated liberty of conscience more widely.

All this is still important with respect to our own freedom of belief in an era of religious disenchantment. James Henry Rushbrooke, deeply involved in working for religious freedom in Eastern Europe, believed that ‘the price of liberty is eternal vigilance’ and in the 1930s identified the primary obstacles to liberty for British Baptists as apathy and ignorance from within, and atheism and totalitarianism from without. These issues are still with us today and we need to find new ways to address them so that we can sustain our core commitments to justice and freedom of conscience in the twenty-first century.

Sally Nelson

Secretary, Whitley Lectureship Management Committee



William Thomas Whitley (1861–1947)

Religious Liberty in Continental Europe: Campaigning by British Baptists, 1840s to 1930s

Speaking at the inaugural meetings of the Baptist World Alliance in London in 1905, Professor Joseph Lehmann of the Baptist Seminary in Hamburg talked about how difficult it was to imagine ‘the state of things on the Continent seventy or eighty years ago’ when Johann Gerhard Oncken, the ‘great pioneer’ of the continental European Baptist movement, ‘attained to Scriptural views on Baptism and the Church of Christ by the simple study of the New Testament’.¹ Lehmann’s recital of European Baptist advance was greeted by applause. It was in the late 1820s, when Oncken was a home missionary in Hamburg, that he began his ‘simple study’. At the time, he and others associated with him were experiencing considerable opposition from civic and religious authorities to their evangelistic work. In a shoemaker’s workshop, said Oncken, ‘those whose hearts were separated from the state church, gathered themselves to study the holy writings, particularly the book of Acts ... Here we soon recognised that the church of Christ can only be composed of converted persons who have made a confession of their faith in His death by being baptized.’² Oncken, his wife Sarah, and five others, were baptised in 1834. Lehmann’s speech in 1905 in London conveyed to an international audience the growth of Baptist life in Germany and across Europe. He stressed the importance of the achievement of religious liberty, which had come about through political changes in Germany and through Baptists having been helped by American and British friends – ‘among the latter the untiring endeavours of Edward Steane, D.D., as secretary of the Evangelical Alliance’. This study examines the way British Baptists involved themselves in struggles for religious liberty in continental Europe up to the Second World War.

European Baptists: Seeking ‘nothing but liberty’

Edward Steane was the most prominent British Baptist to take up the cause of religious liberty across Europe in the period from the 1850s to the 1870s. After studies at Bristol Baptist College and the University of Edinburgh, Steane became pastor of Denmark Place Chapel, Camberwell. His prodigious energy meant that he was able successfully to combine this role with other significant responsibilities: as one of the secretaries of the Baptist Union,³ editor of the *Baptist Magazine*, a

¹ *Baptist Times and Freeman*, 21 July 1905, supplement, p. IX.

² H.-B. Motel, *Glieder an Einem Leib: Die Freikirchen in Selbstdarstellungen* (Konstanz: Christliche Verlagsanstalt, 1975), p. 100, cited by W.L. Wagner, *New Move Forward in Europe* (South Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1978), p. 6. For books on Oncken in German and English, see G. Balders, *Theurer Bruder Oncken* (Wuppertal und Kassel: Oncken Verlag, 1984); and J.H. Cooke, *Johann Gerhard Oncken* (London: Partridge, 1908).

³ Baptist Union will be used to refer to the Baptist Union of Great Britain and Ireland.

secretary of the Evangelical Alliance, and editor of the Alliance's paper, *Evangelical Christendom*.⁴ At the formation of the Evangelical Alliance in 1846 in London, of the 922 attendees 84% came from Britain, 8% from the United States, and of the remaining 7% most were from continental Europe. The hope was for an international Alliance, but this foundered because of strong objections to American slave-holders becoming Alliance members.⁵

Johann Oncken, who was present in 1846, made a speech encouraging steps that would broaden the worldview of British Christians, especially relating to Europe, where their knowledge was, he asserted, 'sadly deficient'.⁶ Oncken's speech seems to have made an impression, and a year after the founding of the Alliance *Evangelical Christendom* reported on Baptists in Hamburg, suggesting that, like the Hebrews in Egypt, the more they faced opposition, the more they grew.⁷ It soon became a feature of *Evangelical Christendom* to report on fellow-evangelicals facing opposition in their witness. In 1851, in a paper on 'Religious Liberty', Frederick O. Nilsson from Sweden described cases such as that of a man in the north of Sweden – 'where there has been, and still continues to be, a great religious movement, and where conventicles are rather frequent' – who visited a friend one Sunday, read a chapter from the Bible and said the Lord's Prayer, and was promptly prosecuted for preaching illegally and breaking the sabbath. Swedish parents were being given heavy fines if they did not have their infants baptized. Any 'dissent' from the Lutheran Church could lead to banishment from Sweden for life.⁸

An important reason why Baptists in Britain in the 1850s responded to these reports was that the language of 'dissent' was their language: they were Dissenters themselves, who had suffered persecution in the past. Also, their sense of responsibility drove them to action.⁹ Magnus Lindvall describes how in the nineteenth century in Sweden 'a latitudinarian Lutheranism had given rise to the emergence of a pietistic/revivalist movement' which operated within Lutheranism and was expressed in informal meetings called 'conventicles'.¹⁰ Some participants in conventicles became Baptists. Frederick Nilsson, who had been converted when in the USA and had returned to Sweden as a colporteur, was baptized by Oncken in

⁴ *Evangelical Christendom* [hereafter *EC*], 1 June 1882, pp. 165-67. Steane was *EC* editor from 1847 to 1864.

⁵ For this see I. Randall and D. Hilborn, *One Body in Christ: The History and Significance of the Evangelical Alliance* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2001), pp. 61-70. One of the principal voices objecting to slave-holders being in the Evangelical Alliance was the British Baptist, John Howard Hinton.

⁶ *Report of the Proceedings of the Conference held at Freemasons' Hall, London, From August 19th to September 2nd Inclusive, 1846* (London: Partridge and Oakley, 1847), p. 242.

⁷ *EC*, Vol. 1, September 1847, p. 276.

⁸ *EC*, Vol. 5, 1851, pp. 426-28.

⁹ D.W. Bebbington, 'The Baptist Conscience in the Nineteenth Century', *Baptist Quarterly* [hereafter *BQ*], Vol. 34, No. 1 (1991), pp. 13-24.

¹⁰ M. Lindvall, 'Anders Wiberg: Swedish Revivalist and Baptist Leader', *BQ*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (1987), p. 173.

Hamburg in 1847. Subsequently, in Nilsson's own words, what happened in Sweden was that God was 'pleased to commence a Church on New Testament principles' – that is a Baptist church.¹¹ Across Scandinavia these views of baptism, and of the church as a gathering of committed believers, were provoking opposition.¹² There were attempts in the early 1840s by British Baptists to support Baptists imprisoned in Denmark.¹³ However, Edward Steane considered that the most effective support which could be given to fellow Baptists in Europe was through a larger body, the Evangelical Alliance, rather than through actions by Baptists on their own. Since the Alliance had within its membership individuals from several denominations, specifically Baptist beliefs could not be stressed, but what could be advocated was religious liberty. Yet even this was controversial. A French Evangelical Alliance leader, Adolphe Monod, writing in 1851, quoted a Church of England bishop who said it was impossible for him to unite himself with Dissenters in any common enterprise. 'How', he asked, 'could I, who believe that I ought to uphold and serve the Established Church, act permanently with a brother who thinks that he ought to attack and destroy it?' The bishop advised, 'Suppress every common action, or your Alliance will perish.'¹⁴

Fortunately for Baptists in Europe, it was the activist Steane, not the bishop, who was directing the Evangelical Alliance's view of 'common action'. Steane had, Ernest Payne notes, 'the lion's share in shaping the constitution of the Alliance and a chief part in its early administration'.¹⁵ Along with other British Baptists, Steane was motivated not only by a wish to promote the religious liberty which was so important to all Baptists, but by the desire to help Baptists whom they knew personally. In 1851, at the second meeting of the 'Union of Associated Churches of Baptised Christians in Germany and Denmark', John Howard Hinton and Steane, as joint secretaries of the Baptist Union (Hinton had also been Steane's pastor in Oxford), travelled from Britain to Hamburg to participate. The German Baptists recalled much later how, as German believers gathered around the communion table, Hinton was 'overwhelmed by the work of grace before him'.¹⁶

In early 1853, Steane received and printed several letters from Baptist pastors in Germany detailing persecutions being experienced: the threats received from the authorities, the periods spent in prison, and the confiscation of possessions. All of this was happening, as they saw it, because they were establishing new Protestant congregations. One Baptist pastor reported in February 1853 that three

¹¹ T. Armitage, *A History of the Baptists* (New York: Bryan, Taylor, 1887), p. 831.

¹² HJ Danielson, 'The Swedish Baptist Union', in *Baptist Work in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden* (Stockholm: Baptist Union, 1947), p. 63.

¹³ G.R. Breed, *Particular Baptists in Victorian England* (Didcot: Baptist Historical Society, 2003), pp. 40-41, 47.

¹⁴ A. Monod, 'Intervention of the Evangelical Alliance on Behalf of Persecuted Brethren', *EC*, Vol. 5, 1851, p. 430; cf. Randall and Hilborn, *One Body in Christ*, pp. 71-102. I am indebted to my fellow-author, David Hilborn, for his analysis.

¹⁵ E.A. Payne, *The Baptist Union: A Short History* (London: Baptist Union, 1959), p. 82.

¹⁶ *Baptist Times* [hereafter *BT*], 21 July 1905, Supplement, p. IX.

Commissioners of the Government had ransacked his house, with Bibles and books such as ‘Bunyan’s *Holy War*, *Pilgrim’s Progress*, Baxter’s *Saint’s Rest*’ being confiscated and removed.¹⁷ British Baptists felt these sufferings in a personal way and experienced a sense of solidarity.

The concern to achieve religious liberty was further strengthened by the knowledge that lack of freedom hindered the spread of the gospel. Oncken himself had been converted in Britain as a result of Presbyterian and Methodist influences, and in typical evangelical language spoke of his conversion in terms of an ‘inexpressible blessing’.¹⁸ In 1823 he had been appointed by the Continental Society as a missionary to Germany. For Oncken the work of evangelism was paramount and his gifts in this area were outstanding. In the minutes of the organizing committee of the German Baptist Union in 1849, Oncken gave the following reason for the creation of the new body: ‘Every apostolic Christian church must be a Mission Society, and they are from God’s Word the correct mission societies ... the mission work must be furthered through the joining together of more churches.’¹⁹ The reports that Steane received in the early 1850s from these evangelistic German Baptists spoke of the cause of the Baptists in Germany as being ‘the cause of all Protestants’, since what was being sought was ‘nothing but liberty of conscience, liberty of worship, liberty to proclaim the grace of God to perishing sinners’.²⁰ One Baptist writer on the Evangelical Alliance, J.W. Ewing, noted that in the German state of Saxe-Meningen the small Baptist community was prohibited from observing the Lord’s Supper and their pastor was barred from home visitation. An appeal from Steane and the British Evangelical Alliance directly to the German Minister of the Interior resulted in a degree of liberty being granted.²¹ The imperative of evangelism and the planting of churches galvanized British Baptists.

Edward Steane, however, wanted a more systematic approach to the problem of lack of religious freedom. In 1851 Steane and Hinton were part of a delegation from the British Evangelical Alliance to the German *Kirchentag*, which was a recently-formed annual Lutheran assembly drawing together clergy and laity. At that meeting Steane suggested ‘that some steps should be taken for the promotion of religious liberty by Christians of different nations, and for their united co-operation in its

¹⁷ *EC*, Vol. 7, 1853, p. 149.

¹⁸ H. Luckey, *Gerhard Oncken und die Anfang des Deutschen Baptismus* (Kassel: J.G. Oncken Verlag), p. 42, cited by Wagner, *New Move Forward*, p. 5.

¹⁹ *Protokol Auszug Der Bundes Conferenz Gehalten Von Den Abgeordneten Der Vereinigten Gemeinden Getaufter* (Hamburg: J.G. Oncken Nachfolger, 1849), cited by Wagner, *New Move Forward*, pp. 13-14. For more see I.M. Randall, ‘“Every Apostolic Church a Mission Society”: European Baptist Origins and Identity’, in A.R. Cross, ed., *Ecumenism and History: Studies in Honour of John H.Y. Briggs* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2002), pp. 281-301.

²⁰ *EC*, 1853, p. 114.

²¹ J.W. Ewing, *Goodly Fellowship: A Centenary Tribute to the Life and Work of the World’s Evangelical Alliance, 1846–1946* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1946), p. 63.

advancement'.²² There was not enough agreement about this at the time (some Lutherans were decidedly hostile), but in October 1852 a representative meeting of European evangelicals was held in Florence. This led to a definite plan to form an association for the promotion of religious liberty along the lines that had been suggested by Steane. In the next few months Steane continued to take initiatives. He told the May 1853 meeting of the British Evangelical Alliance Executive Council that in the Principality of Lippe-Schaumburg some German Baptists were being imprisoned for their convictions, and he went on to report that two MPs, Arthur Fitzgerald Kinnaid, an evangelical Anglican, and Samuel Morton Peto, a leading Baptist businessman who was known for his commitment to the cause of religious equality, had called for the British Foreign Minister, Lord Clarendon, to take action.²³ This use of evangelical figures who carried political clout was to become a prominent feature in campaigning for religious liberty. Baptists realized that they needed to work in co-operation with other bodies, in particular in this period the Evangelical Alliance, and to channel their protests in ways that enabled them to be heard.²⁴

'Acts of cruel persecution'

Some progress was made in achieving greater freedom in parts of Europe in 1853. The openness exhibited by Frederick William IV, the King of Prussia, was applauded by British Baptists. The Evangelical Alliance Council stated in May 1853 its appreciative feelings:

The Council ... place on record their deep sense of obligation to his Majesty the King of Prussia for the personal interest which he has manifested in the wrongs endured by his subjects who have suffered from the operation of intolerant laws, and the enlightened

²² *EC*, Vol. 7, 1853, p. 306.

²³ Evangelical Alliance Executive Council Minutes [hereafter Executive Council Minutes], 11 May 1853. Executive Council Minutes are held at the Evangelical Alliance offices in London. I am grateful to Kim Walker, who is in charge of the archives, for her help.

²⁴ This activist role of the Alliance has not always been recognised. Clyde Binfield, *George Williams and the YMCA* (London: Heinemann, 1973), p. 158, suggests, 'The Alliance did not possess the vital influence to be expected from the nineteenth century Evangelical Revival's only ecumenical movement.' David M. Thompson, 'The Liberation Society, 1844-1868', in P. Hollis, ed., *Pressure from Without* (London: Edward Arnold, 1974), p. 213, comments that some Dissenters lobbied Parliament and demonstrated, but 'others eschewed political action altogether and formed the Evangelical Voluntary Church Association and were later involved in the Evangelical Alliance'. Michael R. Watts, *The Dissenters: Volume 2. The Expansion of Evangelical Nonconformity 1791-1859* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), pp. 510-11, considers Nonconformists in the Alliance had an 'escapist' spirituality. But as Timothy Larsen, *Friends of Religious Equality: Nonconformist Politics in Mid-Victorian England* (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 1999), p. 258, notes, several leading Nonconformists were founding members of the Anti-State Church Association and gave strong support to the Alliance.

and liberal views by which he has guided the recent measures of his government in relation to this subject. They offer their Christian congratulations to their brethren of the Baptist denomination on the new liberty they have acquired in that kingdom.²⁵

With significant momentum evident, Steane organized a meeting, which was held in Hess Homburg in August 1853, with representative evangelical leaders from England, Germany, France, and Switzerland present. Because a broad range of views was expressed, the outcomes from this gathering were limited. The majority view was that struggles for religious freedom should be supported only where those whose freedom was being restricted were 'persons who hold to the distinctive and fundamental principles of the Gospel, as maintained and re-asserted at the Reformation'. The Lutherans who participated were probably behind a promise to 'abstain carefully from all interference in politics, and to manifest on all occasions the respect which is due to constituted authorities'.²⁶ This was not the wide-ranging commitment which Steane would have wanted, and he realized that even these modest statements might not receive the affirmation of the *Kirchentag*.²⁷ Steane was also aware that all that the *Kirchentag* had done was to raise the question for discussion, 'How should the [Lutheran] Church treat separatists and sectarians, such as Baptists and Methodists?'²⁸

In the event, there was an adverse reaction to Steane's initiatives. In 1854, August von Bethmann-Hollweg, who was Vice-President of the Second Chamber of the Prussian Parliament and was then President of the *Kirchentag*, wrote to the Swiss evangelical leader, Jean Henri Merle d'Aubigné, to complain that the German Baptists were 'turning away from the great Church [the Lutheran Church], for the most part, persons who are already awakened ... to unite them into little sectarian flocks'. Taking Old Testament strictures against religious plurality as his guide, Bethmann-Hollweg argued *against* religious freedom. Sir Culling Eardley (a Congregationalist), the British Evangelical Alliance chairman, entered the fray. German Baptists, he reported, were insisting that most converts to Baptist churches were drawn 'not from the Church, but from the world'.²⁹

Partly as a response, Steane and T.R. Brooke, an Anglican clergyman in Gloucestershire, undertook remarkably extensive fact-finding journeys across Europe in 1854 to meet those suffering persecution and to talk to leading government officials. In a lengthy and meticulously-documented report they presented what they called 'painful facts' about the way the 'Protestantism of Europe' was protesting against Roman Catholic infringements of religious liberty while at the same time using state privileges to refuse freedom to fellow-Protestants,

²⁵ Executive Council Minutes, 11 May 1853.

²⁶ *EC*, Vol. 7, 1853, p. 308.

²⁷ *EC*, Vol. 7, 1853, p. 309.

²⁸ G.W. Lehmann, *Religious Liberty in Germany: A Letter to the Assembly of the German Evangelical Churches held in Berlin in September 1853* (London: Houlston and Stoneman, 1854). Introduction by J.H. Hinton and Edward Steane, p. 3.

²⁹ *EC*, Vol. 9, 1855, pp. 49-52.

notably Baptists.³⁰ Months of negotiation followed. Help was available from Friedrich Wilhelm Krummacker, court preacher in Berlin, who later famously said that the Evangelical Alliance was not seeking to ‘Anglicize, Gallicize or Americanize the German people’.³¹ German Baptist representatives secured an interview in 1855 with the King of Prussia, who had received a favourable report about Baptists from Carol Bunsen, his envoy in London, who knew Hinton and Steane, as a result of which the King promised to take action about persecution – something, he said, ‘so foreign to my conviction’. Oncken, writing to Steane, had no faith that there would be progress.³² But Oncken was wrong. Pressure for change achieved results. By the mid-1860s, in an atmosphere of much greater freedom in Germany, C.H. Spurgeon had arranged with Oncken that the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London would undertake the full financial support of two of Oncken’s expanding number of home missionaries in Germany.³³

From the 1860s, with the situation for Baptists in Germany having improved, attention moved to persecution in Eastern Europe. There was growing awareness within Evangelical Alliance and British Baptist circles of the difficult situation of Baptists in a number of Eastern European countries.³⁴ At an Evangelical Alliance conference in Dublin in September 1863, James Henry Millard, by then joint secretary with J.H. Hinton of the Baptist Union, informed the delegates about Baptists in the Russian Empire who were being severely oppressed by the Russian authorities. He asked conference members to support the Baptist Union and the German Committee of the Evangelical Alliance in steps that they were taking to approach Russian government officials. The conference responded to this plea, and agreed that a deputation including Lord Frederick Calthorpe and Arthur Kinnaird, who had been involved before in Baptist affairs, would seek a meeting with the Russian Ambassador in London.³⁵ Millard also spoke to the Council of the Evangelical Alliance in November 1863, giving further details of the situation of Baptists in the Baltic countries and in Poland. The Council asked the Russian Ambassador in London to pass a message of protest to the Tsar, Alexander II, and by

³⁰ *EC*, Vol. 8, 1854, pp. 16-28. The report was separately published as *Protestant Persecutions in Switzerland and Germany: Results of an Investigation into cases of Protestant Persecution on the Continent* (London: Partridge, Oakey, 1854). It included twenty-five pages of documents gathered from the authorities.

³¹ *EC*, Vol. 11, 1857, pp. 361, 366. For background see N.M. Railton, *No North Sea: The Anglo-German Evangelical Network in the Middle of the Nineteenth Century* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), pp. 169-93.

³² *EC*, Vol. 9, 1855, pp. 83-86.

³³ *The Sword and the Trowel*, August 1865, p. 366; cf. I.M. Randall, “‘The World is our Parish’: Spurgeon’s College and World Mission’, in I.M. Randall and A.R. Cross, eds, *Baptists and Mission* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007), pp. 73-74.

³⁴ For more see I.M. Randall, ‘Eastern European Baptists and the Evangelical Alliance’, in S. Corrado and T. Pilli, eds, *Eastern European Baptist History: New Perspectives* (Prague: IBTS, 2007), pp. 14-33.

³⁵ Executive Council Minutes, 4 November 1863.

January 1864 *Evangelical Christendom* could report that at least one imprisoned Baptist, Brother Gaertner, had been freed.³⁶ In 1864, *Evangelical Christendom* carried reports of Baptists in Poland and Russia being persecuted, but also of significant Baptist growth. On behalf of the Baptist communities suffering severe persecution, J.H. Millard expressed thanks for the support being given by the Evangelical Alliance.³⁷ Baptist protests were more effective when channelled through wider evangelical networks.

Links between British evangelical leaders and Russia were strengthened through the work of a prominent British evangelical associated with the Brethren movement, Granville Waldegrave – Lord Radstock. In 1868 he spoke about the evangelical faith to several members of the Russian aristocracy who were in Paris.³⁸ These contacts led to Radstock visiting St Petersburg several times, with the result that several influential Russian figures became evangelicals, notably Count Aleksei P. Bobrinskii, at one time Russian Minister of Transportation, Count Modest M. Korff, and Colonel Vasilii A. Pashkov, who had been Captain of the Cavalry and aide-de-camp to the Emperor. Pashkov was enormously wealthy, owning several estates and copper mines in the Urals.³⁹ Others from England who spoke at the St Petersburg meetings included George Müller, famous for his orphan homes in Bristol.⁴⁰

The St Petersburg revival produced some defections from the Orthodox Church of people seeking deeper evangelical fellowship. Baptist life was emerging and attracting attention.⁴¹ There were also some Russian aristocrats wanting to become Roman Catholics.⁴² Against a background of religious tension, a high level Evangelical Alliance delegation met in 1871 with Prince Aleksandr M. Gorchakov, Chancellor of the Russian Empire, to discuss freedom of belief. There were evangelical leaders from nine countries, with the British delegation, which included Steane, the biggest national group.⁴³ The plea for religious liberty appeared to fall largely on deaf ears. The Prince insisted there was freedom in Russia, except that no member of the Orthodox Church could leave it. He also told the visitors that their delegation could not be received by the Tsar as he could not appear to be giving in to

³⁶ *EC*, Vol. 18, 1864, p. 51; cf. R.S. Latimer, *Under Three Tsars: Liberty of Conscience in Russia, 1856–1909* (London: Morgan & Scott, 1909), pp. 89–90.

³⁷ *EC*, Vol. 18, 1864, pp. 134, 208.

³⁸ A. Trotter, *Lord Radstock: An Interpretation and a Record* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, [1914]), pp. 178–187. Radstock spoke fluent French.

³⁹ Trotter, *Lord Radstock*, pp. 188–200; J.H. Rushbrooke, *The Baptist Movement in the Continent of Europe* (London: The Kingsgate Press, 2nd edn, 1923), pp. 138–39.

⁴⁰ Latimer, *Under Three Tsars*, p. 75.

⁴¹ I.M. Randall, *Communities of Conviction: Baptist Beginnings in Europe* (Prague: EBF, 2009), pp. 87–98.

⁴² There were over two million Protestants in Russia, mainly Lutherans and Mennonites, and about the same number of Roman Catholics.

⁴³ *EC*, Vol. 25, 1871, pp. 243–45.

international pressure.⁴⁴ Technically, the mission failed. However, in the course of the next year the Tsar relaxed religious laws in the western part of the Empire and there was some improvement for Baptists in Lithuania and other Baltic regions. American Evangelical Alliance literature certainly claimed the visit to Europe a success.⁴⁵

During the period from the early 1870s to the early 1880s, many Baptist communities in Eastern Europe experienced significant progress, but were also subject to considerable persecution. In 1873 Steane, who was no longer Evangelical Alliance Secretary but was still active, brought to the Executive Council of the Alliance a report received – from the German Baptists – about Russia. The Foreign Secretary of the British Alliance, Hermann Schmettau, had been in correspondence with G.W. Lehmann, the Baptist pastor in Berlin. Lehmann, a close colleague of Oncken's, wrote a book on religious liberty which had an introduction by J.H. Hinton and Steane. This affirmed 'the right of every man to worship God according to his own conscience'.⁴⁶ The Council heard of 'acts of cruel persecution of Baptist Christians in the South of Russia', with instances in which 'several brethren, rather than recant their faith, had now been a year in prison', and a 'sister' had been imprisoned for six months'. The Alliance immediately set up a committee of enquiry to ensure that 'reliable information can be furnished as to the alleged facts' and to act vigorously 'on behalf of our suffering brethren'.⁴⁷ Later in 1873, a memorandum was presented to Baron d'Offenberg, a member of the Russian government, about twelve Baptists arrested in Kiev, Ukraine. Baron de Rosen, a close friend of the Tsar, became involved. All were released except one, Jerome Balaban, who was in Odessa. The Russian government felt that the religious problems were being exaggerated by German Mennonites who had emigrated to America to avoid military service.⁴⁸ The Baptist case, however, was strengthened in the 1870s not only because of Baron de Rosen but also because of the growing Baptist links with Vasily Pashkov, who was a close friend of the Tsar.⁴⁹ Influential figures continued to be important.

⁴⁴ Executive Council Minutes, 28 December 1870; cf. Ewing, *Goodly Fellowship*, pp.70-71.

⁴⁵ P.D. Jordan, *The Evangelical Alliance for the United States of America, 1847-1900: Ecumenism, Identity and the Religion of the Republic* (New York, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1982), pp. 115-16.

⁴⁶ Lehmann, *Religious Liberty*, p. 4.

⁴⁷ Executive Council Minutes, 12 May 1873.

⁴⁸ Letters of Prince Dondonkov-Korsakov to Baron de Rosen, 9 April 1874; Baron Andrew Rosen to Edward Young, Washington, 15 April 1874; printed in *EC*, vol. 28 (August, 1874), pp. 234-37.

⁴⁹ One Russian-German Baptist who worked increasingly with Pashkov was Ivan Kargel. See G.L. Nichols, *The Development of Russian Evangelical Spirituality: A Study of Ivan V. Kargel (1949-1937)* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2011).

‘All forms of religion ... freely expressed’

Although British Baptists were especially concerned about the persecutions of fellow-Baptists, their involvement with issues of religious liberty was wider. Their interest was aroused by the case of Dr Achilli, a prominent Catholic priest who had become a Protestant and started distributing Bibles in Rome. In 1849 he was arrested, imprisoned, and investigated by the Inquisition. News of this reached the Executive Council of the British Evangelical Alliance and was considered at the Alliance’s 1849 conference, held in Glasgow. This conference was in any case taking up the question of religious liberty, and agreed to protest to the Swiss Canton de Vaud about the legal restrictions faced by a Free Evangelical Church there.⁵⁰ The Glasgow conference also agreed that Sir Culling Eardley, together with Edward Steane, Charles Cowan (a Scottish MP with radical tendencies), and Baptist Noel, who left Anglican ministry and became a Baptist minister that year, would seek support in London and Paris, and would perhaps go to Rome.⁵¹ Baptist Noel was to travel extensively alongside Steane ‘in defence of evangelical minorities’.⁵² At Westminster, the Liberal Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, took up the case and the renowned French Foreign Minister (and political philosopher) Alexis de Tocqueville intervened in Rome. Achilli had been freed by March 1850, thanks to the efforts of the Alliance group, not least its Baptist members, and it was decided to bring Achilli to Britain.⁵³ He arrived in August 1851 and addressed Alliance audiences.⁵⁴ Achilli later moved to the United States, but at this stage he proved a deep disappointment to the evangelical community since he founded a heterodox, sectarian movement and was later found to be a womanizer.⁵⁵

At the same time as arrangements were made for Achilli to come to Britain, another case in Italy caught Baptist and wider evangelical attention. In 1851 the Duke of Tuscany decreed that anyone found in possession of a Bible could be imprisoned. Count Guicciardini, a Florentine nobleman who had renounced Catholicism and had begun to attend Protestant services, was arrested under this new law. He had been hoping to attend the Evangelical Alliance’s International Conference in London in August 1851 – a conference convened to coincide with the

⁵⁰ Ewing, *Goodly Fellowship*, p. 59. For the roots of the evangelical movement in Geneva and the Canton de Vaud, associated with the Scottish Baptist Robert Haldane and with César Malan, see T.C.F. Stunt, *From Awakening to Secession: Radical Evangelicals in Switzerland and Britain, 1815–35* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), pp. 32–40, 51–74.

⁵¹ Executive Council Minutes, 11 October 1849; 5 March 1850. For Baptist Noel, see D.W. Bebbington, ‘The Life of Baptist Noel’, *BQ*, Vol. 24, No. 8 (1972), pp. 389–411.

⁵² J.H.Y. Briggs, *The English Baptists of the Nineteenth Century* (Didcot: Baptist Historical Society, 1994), p. 234.

⁵³ Executive Council Minutes, 5 March 1850.

⁵⁴ Executive Council Minutes, 23 August 1851.

⁵⁵ M. Trevor, *Newman: The Pillar of Cloud* (London: Macmillan, 1962), pp. 547–602. C. Calver, ‘The Rise and Fall of the Evangelical Alliance: 1835–1905’, in S. Brady and H. Rowdon, eds, *For Such a Time as This: Perspectives on Evangelicalism, Past, Present and Future* (London: Evangelical Alliance/Milton Keynes: Scripture Union, 1996), p. 155.

Great Exhibition.⁵⁶ At the 1852 Alliance conference, in Dublin, the Alliance Council asked Steane to take on the case of the Count, who was then in prison. This time Steane drew in C.M. Birrell, a respected Baptist minister in Liverpool, and a Dr Kirkpatrick, to construct an appeal to the Duke of Tuscany.⁵⁷ Steane also spoke to the Evangelical Alliance about a middle-aged Italian Protestant couple, Francesco and Rosa Madiiai, who had been accused of heresy and condemned to four years of hard labour.⁵⁸ Their crime was described by the Tuscan Procurator-General as ‘impiety’, specifically ‘proselytism to the so-called *Evangelical confession*’. Steane reported that Francesco was asked if he had been born a Roman Catholic and had replied ‘Yes, but now I am a Christian according to the Gospel.’⁵⁹ The Alliance Council publicized the story and it found a place in *The Times*. A protest meeting was held in the evangelical centre in the Strand, in Exeter Hall. Steane, Birrell and Kirkpatrick met the Foreign Secretary, Lord John Russell, whose interest in religious liberty was known.⁶⁰ Steane documented the activities of a heavy-weight deputation which went to Florence. Lord Russell was accused by the Tuscan government of bullying, but he persisted, and on 18 March 1853 he told the House of Commons that the Madiiais had been released.⁶¹

The 1850s also saw some efforts being made to secure greater religious freedom in Turkey.⁶² Against the background of executions of Muslims who had turned to Christianity, the International Evangelical Alliance Conference in Paris in 1855 agreed that an approach should be made to the Turkish Sultan for ‘the establishment of real religious freedom’ in the Turkish Empire. The Alliance highlighted that it was ‘still a capital offence for a Turk to make a profession of Christianity’, but, significantly, made clear that it did not want ‘to oppose such an evil in the spirit of the crusaders upholding the Cross in the East by exterminating the Crescent!’ The statement continued, ‘In entreating your Majesty to adopt this course, we are unanimous in desiring that the whole of Europe should practise what the Allied Powers would enjoin on Turkey.’⁶³ Steane and other Alliance leaders were astounded when in February of the following year the Sultan produced an edict which allowed ‘all forms of religion’ to be ‘freely professed’, and which proclaimed that ‘no subject shall be hindered in the exercise of the religion that he professes, nor

⁵⁶ Executive Council Minutes, 21 August – 3 September 1851.

⁵⁷ Executive Council Minutes, 24 August 1852. For Birrell, see A. Birrell, *Things Past Redress* (London: Faber & Faber, 1937).

⁵⁸ Executive Council Minutes, 24 August 1852.

⁵⁹ Edward Steane, *The Madiiai: A Narrative of the Recent Persecutions in Tuscany* (London: Seeleys, 1853), pp. 25-26.

⁶⁰ See Spencer Walpole, *The Life of Lord John Russell* (London: Longmans, 1889), pp. 139-61.

⁶¹ Steane, *The Madiiai*, p. 85.

⁶² Executive Council Minutes, 23 August 1851.

⁶³ *EC*, Vol. 9, 1855, p. 299.

shall be in any way annoyed on this account'.⁶⁴ There was to be widespread freedom for building new churches, synagogues, and temples, and religious freedom was to be applied in many areas: employment policy, education, military service, legal processes, housing, and municipal funding. Steane wrote in his preface to the publication of the Sultan's text that it was an 'extraordinary' document, a 'triumph' for the cause of religious liberty, and concluded that 'regarded in almost any, but especially in a religious point of view, the nations of Europe have not read a State paper for centuries destined to effectuate such marvellous changes as this'.⁶⁵ The outcome in practice was mixed, although equality remained the official position of the Ottoman Empire.⁶⁶

Many documents that Steane produced show his ability to put his points in a compelling way.⁶⁷ At times, however, his comments were so caustic that they became counter-productive. An example was his dealings with the Swedish Lutherans. In 1855 Steane reported on persecutions of members of the Lutheran Church in Sweden who had been holding conventicle meetings. In one Lutheran parish more than 250 people had been fined or imprisoned. Following a conference in Paris on religious liberty, Steane hoped the *Kirchentag* would co-operate with a proposed deputation to Sweden. *Kirchentag* leaders were critical, however, of the way Steane was broadening the aim of his campaigns to include 'the universal recognition of an abstract and unconditional religious freedom'. The only help Lutherans would offer, they insisted, would be to those holding to a Reformed confession of faith. Even then, the *Kirchentag* was not prepared to be involved in the Swedish situation because it did not want to interfere in the affairs of another Lutheran Church. Steane's call for active effort was met by determined opposition.⁶⁸ Typically, Steane did not give up, and in 1858 he and J.H. Hinton visited Sweden on behalf of the Baptist Union. As Steane explained, this was partly to attend meetings of the recently-formed Baptist Union of Sweden and partly to speak to influential figures 'both in Church and State, to plead with them in the interests of religious liberty'.⁶⁹ They constituted the first British deputation to visit Sweden with this aim,

⁶⁴ 'Religious Liberty in Turkey: Firman and Hati-Sherif by the Sultan, Relative to Privileges and Reforms in Turkey', in *EC*, Vol. 10, 1856, pp. 117-21.

⁶⁵ *EC*, Vol. 10, 1856, pp. 117.

⁶⁶ S.J. Shaw and E.K. Shaw, *History of the Ottoman Empire and Modern Turkey*, Volume 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 177.

⁶⁷ Among his publications were *The Rights of Conscience: An Argument* (London: G. & J. Dyer, 1843) and *The Doctrine of Christ Developed by the Apostles: A Treatise on the Offices of the Redeemer and the Doxology of the Redeemed* (Edinburgh: Edmonston and Douglas, 1872). Other topics he covered were more pastoral in nature. Most were drawn from his preaching ministry.

⁶⁸ *EC*, Vol. 10, 1856, pp. 16-18.

⁶⁹ *EC*, Vol. 12, 1858, p. 309. The Swedish Baptist Union was led by the dynamic Anders Wiberg, a former Lutheran minister.

and lengthy and fascinating reports were produced by Steane.⁷⁰ These indicate the wide range of meetings they held, with Lutheran and Baptist leaders, in which not only were Baptist issues raised, but also questions of freedom for Roman Catholics. However, in one report Steane went as far as to suggest that the Lutheran Church in Sweden was ‘perhaps, the most despotic ecclesiastical body in existence’.⁷¹

Not surprisingly, Steane’s outspoken comments were greeted with outrage in Swedish Lutheran circles. The leading religious journal in Stockholm, the *Watchman*, complained that in his accounts of ecclesiastical conditions in Sweden, Steane had been ‘guilty of several not inconsiderable exaggerations’. Steane was not intimidated. ‘Popish Tuscany’, he responded, ‘prosecuted, condemned, and banished the Mediais for becoming Protestants; Protestant Sweden prosecutes, condemns and banishes six women for becoming Roman Catholics.’ The only difference, for Steane, was that Sweden was also ‘banishing for life’ fellow-Protestants.⁷² The activities of Steane and fellow-Baptists, as well as of other Nonconformists and some Anglicans, support Ruth Rouse’s view that the defence of religious liberty became the Evangelical Alliance’s ‘one distinctive, strong and continuous practical activity’ during the Victorian era.⁷³ Rouse also suggests that the Alliance was ‘prone, sometimes perhaps uncritically, to defend the small body or sect against the national church’.⁷⁴ What should be recognized is that much of the energy for this came from those who saw themselves as having fought precisely those battles in Britain. Nor – as we have seen – did Baptists such as Steane restrict themselves to campaigning on behalf of their fellow-Evangelicals. When Steane was advocating the cause of Baptists in Hesse Cassel, Germany, the conversation with the authorities turned to the Turks. Steane pointed out that in England the Turks were tolerated. The reply, made ‘with a sneer’, was that ‘such things might do for England’, but that in Hesse Cassel there would be no Turks and ‘assuredly, they [the authorities] would not have the Baptists’.⁷⁵ For Steane and other Baptists of his time, the issue was whether there would be religious liberty for all. This was a cause that called for Baptist commitment.

⁷⁰ A book was also produced, Edward Steane and J. Howard Hinton, *Notes of a Tour in Sweden during the Summer of 1858* (London: James Nisbet, 1859). There was high praise for C.O. Rosenius, an outstanding Lutheran lay preacher in the Bethlehem Chapel in Stockholm. Steane and Hinton commented that they ‘learned to love him warmly’, p. 171.

⁷¹ *EC*, Vol. 12, 1858, p. 345.

⁷² *EC*, Vol. 13, 1859, pp. 24–25. See Erik Sidenvall, ‘The Elusiveness of Protestantism: The Last Expatriations for “Apostasy” from the Church of Sweden (1858) in a European Perspective’, *Journal of Religious History*, Vol. 31, Issue 3 (2007), pp. 253–68.

⁷³ R. Rouse, ‘Voluntary Movements and the Changing Ecumenical Climate’ in R. Rouse and S.C. Neill, eds, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517–1948* (London: SPCK, 1954), p. 323.

⁷⁴ Rouse, ‘Voluntary Movements and the Changing Ecumenical Climate’, p. 323.

⁷⁵ *EC*, Vol. 8, 1854, p. 21.

An Arm Stretched Out

Ongoing tensions within Germany and elsewhere between Lutherans and Baptists led to five German pastors alleging in 1883 that non-Lutherans were being excluded from the German Evangelical Alliance.⁷⁶ At the same time there were attempts to have an international Alliance conference in Sweden, but the Lutheran Archbishop of Uppsala said that ‘scarcely any’ key Lutherans would attend, and in 1884 he wrote to suggest the conference should be postponed for a few years.⁷⁷ The pan-European energy which had been injected into the British Evangelical Alliance by Steane seemed to be waning. The Alliance had on its Executive Council key parliamentarians and others of influence: in 1880 six peers and seven MPs, as well as the Lord Mayor of London, a High Court judge, and the Dean of Canterbury.⁷⁸ But Baptists needed those who would understand their concerns and continue the campaigns for freedom and justice. One such was Friedrich Baedeker, a German who had been converted in England in 1866 through Radstock, and who moved to St Petersburg and lived and worked in Russia from 1877. He had a remarkable preaching ministry in Russian prisons, his travels taking him across Siberia.⁷⁹ There was intensified persecution of Russian Baptists from the early 1880s, after the assassination of Alexander II. Anti-evangelical activity was led by the chair of the Orthodox Church Holy Synod, Konstantin Pobedonostsev. When evangelicals from St Petersburg, the Caucasus, and South Russia came together for a major conference in 1884 it was almost immediately suppressed.⁸⁰ Colonel Vasilii Pashkov was told to leave the country.⁸¹ R.S. Latimer commented that it was ‘the arm of the Alliance that was stretched out’ when Baptists and other Russian dissenters from the Orthodox Church ‘were reduced to destitution by the floods of persecution, into which they were driven by Pobedonostsev and his agents’. Baedeker was central in this ministry, bringing money, sharing news, and speaking to the authorities.⁸²

The typical picture across Eastern Europe in the 1880s was of considerable difficulty for Baptists. Incidents were reported in detail to Evangelical Alliance and Baptist leaders, and to the British and Foreign Bible Society. In Hungary, for

⁷⁶ Executive Council Minutes, 13 December 1883.

⁷⁷ Executive Council Minutes, 13 April 1882; 7 December 1882; 17 January 1884; 13 March 1884.

⁷⁸ Executive Council Minutes, 10 November 1880. The President was Lord Polworth; Vice Presidents included the Earl of Chichester, Lords Ebury, Waveley, and Wriothsley Russell, Right Hon. William Brooke, Alderman McArthur MP (Lord Mayor of London), Lord Justice Lush, and the Dean of Canterbury. Executive Council members included W.S. Allen, MP, Richard Davies, MP, Alderman Fowler, MP, A. McArthur, MP, Sir Thomas McClure, MP, and Sir Charles Reed, MP.

⁷⁹ R.S. Latimer, *Dr. Baedeker and his Apostolic Work in Russia* (London: Morgan & Scott, 1907).

⁸⁰ I.S. Prokhanoff, *In the Cauldron of Russia, 1869–1933* (New York, NY: All-Russian Evangelical Christian Union, 1933), pp. 55–56.

⁸¹ *EC*, Vol. 34, July 1880, pp. 207–208.

⁸² Latimer, *Under Three Tsars*, p. 221.

example, Baptists in a village near present-day Budapest were beaten and the furniture in their prayer house was destroyed in 1882. One member, a lady of seventy, was thrown up in the air like a ball, while others were stamped on. Some Lutheran pastors made life very hard for Baptists. In one case a Baptist mother had refused to have her child baptized. The child was ill and later died, and the mother was allegedly kept away from the corpse by two policemen, while the local Lutheran pastor conducted – against her will – a Lutheran funeral.⁸³ These details came to the British Evangelical Alliance through Baptist channels and protests were sent to the King of Hungary. A proposal was brought to the Hungarian Parliament that the Minister of Public Worship and Education prepare a law on religious liberty, but one speaker argued that while the followers of the Hungarian Baptist leader, Heinrich Meyer, should have freedom to hold meetings, they could not be recognized as a church. ‘I have a great respect for cabinet-makers, and also for agricultural labourers’, he stated, ‘but I do not consider them fitted to found and conduct churches.’⁸⁴

Issues of religious liberty were also raised by Edward Millar in Vienna, who oversaw British and Foreign Bible Society work across the Austro-Hungarian Empire. He was originally from Bath and later became part of the German Baptist movement. Millard’s advocacy of freedom of religion helped to change some of the attitudes of the government.⁸⁵ In another part of the Empire, in Bohemia, Jindřich Novotný, who had a Roman Catholic background, was part of a British and Foreign Bible Society circle in Bohemia and was the first Czech to be ordained as a Congregational minister.⁸⁶ Novotný came to definite baptistic convictions and was baptized in Poland in 1885. On returning to Bohemia, he formed the Prague Congregation of Christians Baptised in Faith. Baptist work flourished with support from the German Baptist Union and also from Bristo Baptist Church, Edinburgh (Novotný had studied in Edinburgh), against a background of strong opposition from Catholic leaders and government authorities.⁸⁷

The growth of German Baptist life and the widespread German-linked Baptist network that was in place in many parts of Europe by the 1890s afforded another channel for British Baptists to express concern about restrictions of religious freedom. A letter from Martin Wilkin and Horace Newton, representing the German Baptist Union, appeared in *The Freeman* (later the *Baptist Times and Freeman*), in 1891. This referred to persecutions of Russian Baptists and quoted from the correspondent of the *Daily News* in St Petersburg. The correspondent reported on

⁸³ *EC*, Vol. 38, April 1884, pp. 123-24.

⁸⁴ *EC*, Vol. 39, March 1885, p. 92. Annual Report to the Evangelical Alliance Council, 1884, p. 11.

⁸⁵ I.M. Randall, ‘Nineteenth-Century Bible Society Colporteurs in Eastern Europe’, paper delivered at the Henry Martyn Centre, Cambridge, and at IBTS, Prague (2011).

⁸⁶ J. Novotný, *The Baptist Romance in the Heart of Europe* (New York, NY: Czechoslovak Baptist Convention, 1939), pp. 60-65.

⁸⁷ ‘Baptist Union in Czechoslovakia’, in *Czech Ecumenical Fellowship* (Prague: Czech Ecumenical Fellowship, 1981), p. 77.

increased persecution of 'Stundists', described as 'a sect of Evangelical Baptists who refuse to worship images and who get their name from the German word for hour, signifying the duration of their services'. As one example of the persecutions, seven Baptists brought before the courts and charged with leaving the Orthodox faith had been sentenced to periods of imprisonment of up to five years, in one case with exile to Siberia. Wilkin and Newton said they would seek to obtain confirmation of the injustices being reported, though accessing facts was particularly difficult in relation to Russia. They concluded, 'We will endeavour to open communications at once with the view both of effecting the object and of also securing the co-operation of the Evangelical Alliance and other bodies in promptly taking such steps as may appear advisable.'⁸⁸ William Sears Oncken, who was a son of Johann Oncken and who lived in Lincoln, was also seeking to maximize support for Eastern Europe. In an article in *The Freeman*, 'Europe for Christ', he spoke of needs in Austria, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Bohemia, and Russia, asking 'What can British Baptists do for them?' He felt that 'much may be done', illustrated this from the work of his father, 'whose truly apostolic labours seem to be known in these days by comparatively few', and referred to 'tyranny, persecution and misery' in Europe.⁸⁹ British Baptists needed to be more active.

In 1892, the British Evangelical Alliance asked E.W. Benson, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Presidents of the Methodist Conferences, the Moderators of the Presbyterian Churches, and the Chairmen of the Congregational and Baptist Unions to join with Evangelical Alliances in different countries in making representations to the Russian Orthodox Church about the persecution of dissenters.⁹⁰ In the meantime, distressed by news that 3,250 Stundists (probably mostly Baptists) were in prison or in exile, John Clifford became actively involved. Clifford was a towering Baptist figure who would be prominent a decade later in the formation of the Baptist World Alliance. Supported by British Evangelical Alliance secretary A.J. Arnold, John Clifford successfully moved a motion at the Baptist Union Assembly affirming Evangelical Alliance efforts on behalf of religious dissenters in Russia.⁹¹ For their part, however, many Russian believers began to feel that public representations to their government were making matters worse.⁹² Despite differences of view, a document was finally signed by 123 leaders from the main Protestant denominations. It was translated into Russian by Vasiliy Pashkov and in March 1893 was sent to Orthodox Church leaders.⁹³ There was no reply – indeed two years later there was reference to the fact that still no reply had been received⁹⁴ – and, understandably,

⁸⁸ *The Freeman*, 8 May 1891, p. 306.

⁸⁹ *The Freeman*, 2 February 1894, p. 66.

⁹⁰ Executive Council Minutes, 18 February 1892; 21 April 1892.

⁹¹ Annual Report to the Evangelical Alliance Executive Council, 1893, pp. 11-13.

⁹² Report of the Evangelical Alliance Executive Council, 1891, p. 20; 1893, p. 11; Executive Council Minutes, 4 July 1889.

⁹³ Executive Council Minutes, 15 December 1892; 9 February 1893; 9 March 1893; 11 April 1893.

⁹⁴ *EC*, Vol. 49, July 1895, pp. 219-20.

some Evangelical Alliance members pressed for further action. In July 1893 the Executive Council of the Alliance heard from A.J. Arnold that he had talked to Athelstan Riley, a well known High Church Anglican layman and a friend of Pobedonostsev, and had asked Riley if it was worth going to St Petersburg to make representations. Riley's view was that any visit would fail.⁹⁵

In 1894, however, Tsar Alexander III died, and there was much discussion at the January 1895 Evangelical Alliance Executive about whether to send an international delegation to see the new Tsar, Nicholas II. While Baedeker was in favour, Radstock and others strongly disagreed, preferring quiet diplomacy.⁹⁶ Baedeker, however, was not to be deterred, and a public meeting in London was held at which he and Miss von Kirchner, a Russian Baptist, spoke about Russian developments.⁹⁷ By this time Baedeker was in close contact with a rising Russian evangelical leader, Ivan S. Prokhanov, then in his mid-twenties (and later the leader of the Russian Evangelical Christian Union), who studied at Bristol Baptist College for a year.⁹⁸ It was judged that it was worth making an approach to the new Tsar. In 1895, a petition signed by 1,000 evangelicals was prepared by Prokhanov for presentation to Nicholas II, but this was not delivered as Prokhanov was travelling and making strategic Evangelical Alliance, Mennonite and Baptist contacts outside Russia.⁹⁹ At the International Evangelical Alliance Conference in London in 1896, celebrating fifty years of Alliance life, Prokhanov was introduced to the large audience by Baedeker, and Prokhanov argued that representations to the Tsar by the Alliance were not fruitless; they did influence the Russian educated classes and 'turned their minds to questions of religious liberty'. Prokhanov also asked prayer for Pobedonostsev, 'who is inspiring all the persecutions in Russia'.¹⁰⁰ Subsequently a memorandum from the 1896 conference was sent to the Tsar, and Radstock tried to see him, but failed.¹⁰¹ Victory in the fight for religious freedom seemed elusive.

'Europe – The Desire of the Christ'

The formation of the Baptist World Alliance (BWA) in 1905 gave fresh impetus to Baptist action on behalf of Baptists who were being persecuted. This was combined with British Baptist optimism about the future of the Free Church movement.¹⁰² At the Baptist World Congress meetings in London at which the BWA was formed,

⁹⁵ Executive Council Minutes, 13 July 1893.

⁹⁶ Executive Council Minutes, 17 January 1895; *EC*, Vol. 49, April 1895, pp. 127-28.

⁹⁷ Executive Council Minutes, 14 March 1895.

⁹⁸ Prokhanoff, *In the Cauldron of Russia*, pp. 97-100.

⁹⁹ Executive Council Minutes, 12 September 1895; Prokhanoff, *In the Cauldron of Russia*, chapters 12 and 13.

¹⁰⁰ *Jubilee of the Evangelical Alliance: Proceedings of the Tenth International Conference Held in London, June-July, 1896* (London: J.F. Shaw, 1897), pp. 307-13.

¹⁰¹ Executive Council Minutes, 12 November 1896.

¹⁰² See I.M. Randall, *The English Baptists of the Twentieth Century* (Didcot: Baptist Historical Society, 2005), pp. 13-62: 'The Future Rests with the Free Churches'.

Baron Woldemar von Üxküll from Estonia and D.I. Mazaev reported on behalf of Russian Baptist communities.¹⁰³ They spoke of the new freedoms in Russia that had come earlier that year, but also of many of their members who had suffered severely.¹⁰⁴ Two rising Baptist ministers contributed significantly to a follow-up conference, convened by and for European Baptists, held in Berlin in 1908. They were Newton H. Marshall and James Henry Rushbrooke, both of whom had been deeply influenced by John Clifford, had studied at the Midland College in Nottingham, and had undertaken further study in Germany.¹⁰⁵ Baptist Union General Secretary John Howard Shakespeare, Marshall and Rushbrooke shared in the organization of this first European Baptist Congress, which attracted 1,800 delegates. Newton Marshall was central to the Congress. In the lead-up to it he preached a sermon in his own church, Heath Street Chapel, Hampstead, London, on 'Europe – The Desire of the Christ', in which he spoke about the great history of Europe and yet the sad reality that the 'real gods of the people' of Europe now seemed to be militarism – 'the spear that stabbed Jesus Christ' – and mammon. This sermon, which was published in the *Baptist Times*, ended with a powerful appeal to British Baptists to come to Berlin and 'make plans for a forward movement in every country of Europe'.¹⁰⁶ A similar appeal followed from German Baptists. J.G. Lehmann from Germany, who was a Vice-President of the BWA, told British Baptists that 'we long for your love'.¹⁰⁷

Most countries in Europe were represented at Berlin. Rushbrooke wrote just prior to the conference to ask British Baptists not to come to Berlin to patronize, and encouraged them to receive as well as give. Rushbrooke's wife, Dora, was German, from Pomerania, and Rushbrooke wrote from there. He put forward the idea of 'a European brotherhood' – taken up by John Clifford in his opening address on 'The Brotherhood of European Baptists' – and suggested that the British should 'avoid gathering in exclusively English groups, and embrace every opportunity of talking face to face with delegates from other lands', and on Sunday should not make the mistake of attending English-language services.¹⁰⁸ The report by Rushbrooke of the

¹⁰³ *Baptist World Congress, London, July 11-19, 1905: Record of Proceedings* (London: Baptist Union Publication Department, 1905), pp. 7-8, 182-185. Princess Sofie Lieven, of St Petersburg, described the scene on Easter Sunday 1905 when the freedoms were announced: 'At the service in the great hall of our house, my mother addressed the crowded congregation and said with a radiant face that she had joyful news to give to the brothers and sisters which would be read out by brother Odintsov. Loudly and clearly he read the decree of the Czar outlining the details of the freedom which was being granted to us for each one to believe according to his own conscience. The congregation fell to its knees and each one of us with tears of joy thanked the Lord in our own words for this gift beyond price.' Quoted in Michael Rowe, *Russian Resurrection* (London, Marshall Pickering/Collins, 1994), p. 45.

¹⁰⁴ *BT*, 21 July 1905, supplement, p. IX.

¹⁰⁵ *BT*, 13 September 1901, p. 618.

¹⁰⁶ *BT*, 20 September 1907, p. 691.

¹⁰⁷ *BT*, 29 November 1907.

¹⁰⁸ *BT*, 28 August 1908, p. 60; 4 September 1908, p. 613.

conference was enthusiastic. Among the addresses which Rushbrooke saw as being 'of the highest order' was one by Rueben Saillens from France on 'Baptists as Pioneers of Freedom of Conscience Today'.¹⁰⁹ Vasiliy Pavlov from Russia recalled his years in exile and said he felt, as he looked at the Berlin audience, that he was dreaming.¹¹⁰ John Clifford, Newton Marshall and Rushbrooke were also involved in this period in initiatives led by Allen Baker, a Liberal MP and a Quaker, which led to the formation in 1910 of 'The Associated Councils in the British and German Empires for Fostering Friendly Relations between the Two Peoples'. Baker helped launch the journal, *The Peacemaker*.¹¹¹ Rushbrooke became editor of *The Peacemaker*, which achieved a circulation of 67,000.¹¹² The period from 1908 to 1910 saw developing connections across Europe, shaped largely by Marshall and Rushbrooke. A European Baptist network began to develop.¹¹³

At the Second Baptist World Congress, held in Philadelphia, USA, in June 1911, an event which owed a great deal to the organizational ability of J.H. Shakespeare,¹¹⁴ a powerful address on Europe was given by Newton Marshall. He appealed for 'the attention, the focused prayers, the active co-operation of the Baptists of the world, on behalf of that Europe which for many centuries has been the peculiar home of the Christian religion, but which today is so largely in the grip of anti-Christ'. His argument was that Protestantism in Europe had been 'so much taken up with partisan polemics, so closely associated with the fortunes of princes and the national ambitions of certain arrogant races' that as a result 'pagan prophets like Nietzsche and Haeckel and Ferrer have found an eager crowd to accept their teaching'. For Marshall there was a calling for the BWA to carry on 'the cause that the European delegates advocate. The true watchword of this Congress should be Europe for Christ!'¹¹⁵ Later in the Congress, C.T. Byford, another British Baptist with a special interest in Europe, adapted the message of Acts: those scattered through persecution

¹⁰⁹ *BT*, 4 September 1908, p. 615.

¹¹⁰ Tony Peck, "'Against the Tide': Episodes Highlighting the Situation of Religious Freedom for Baptists in Central and Eastern Europe, 1908–2008", in J.H.Y. Briggs and A.R. Cross, eds, *Baptists and the World: Renewing the Vision* (Oxford: Centre for Baptist History and Heritage and the Baptist Historical Society, 2011), pp. 107–108.

¹¹¹ K. Robbins, *The Abolition of War: The 'Peace Movement' in Britain, 1914–1919* (Cardiff: University Wales Press, 1976), p. 18. See also, K. Robbins, 'Protestant Nonconformists and the Peace Question', in A.P.F. Sell and A.R. Cross, eds, *Protestant Nonconformity in the Twentieth Century* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2003), pp. 216–39.

¹¹² *BT*, 6 January 1914, p. 24; K.W. Clements, 'Baptists and the Outbreak of the First World War', *BQ*, Vol. 26, No. 2 (1975), p. 80.

¹¹³ For this story, see B. Green, *Crossing the Boundaries: A History of the European Baptist Federation* (Didcot: Baptist Historical Society, 1999). For a theological-ecclesiological analysis, see K.J. Jones, *The European Baptist Federation: A Case Study in European Baptist Interdependency, 1950–2006* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press, 2009).

¹¹⁴ P. Shepherd, *The Making of a Modern Denomination: John Howard Shakespeare and the English Baptists, 1898–1924* (Carlisle: Paternoster Press, 2001), pp. 68, 89n.

¹¹⁵ *The Baptist World Alliance: Second Congress: Philadelphia June 19–25, 1911: Record of Proceedings* (Philadelphia: Harper and Brother, 1911), pp. 216–20.

in Russia ‘went as far as Siberia and Trans-Caucasia, Kurdistan and Moldavia, Roumania and Bulgaria, preaching the word of the Lord and the hand of the Lord was with them and a great number believed and turned to the Lord’.¹¹⁶ Vasiliy Pavlov was present, representing the Russian Baptist Union, and Ivan Prokhanov, who was elected a Vice-President of the BWA, represented the Russian Evangelical Christian Union.¹¹⁷ Pavlov spoke of greater freedom in Russia, but of recent regulations ‘that forbid the services in the open air and all processions, save funerals, that means our baptisms; further the Sunday Schools and young men’s associations are forbidden without special permission’. He continued, ‘In many places our members are beaten and their gatherings are dissolved by mob, as for instance, in Siberia a mob entered the house of one brother where was a prayer meeting, dissolved it by gun firing and tried to kill him.’¹¹⁸ This was a foretaste of much worse to come.

The Philadelphia meetings were followed, for Europeans, by the Second European Congress, held in Stockholm. By this time the Swedish Baptist Union was as large as the German Union. Rushbrooke was prominent at Stockholm, and, as John Briggs notes, informative papers were presented by C.T. Byford and others on the progress of the gospel in Eastern Europe. One of the most notable features of the Baptists from that region was ‘the fervency of their prayer meetings where restrictions of language did not prevail’.¹¹⁹ In the following year, Rushbrooke travelled to Constance in Germany with John Clifford to attend a Protestant Peace Conference. This had to be abandoned because of the outbreak of the First World War, and Rushbrooke tried to reach the Baltic coast to join his wife and daughter. He was under close surveillance and, believing that he was going to be interned indefinitely, he sent his resignation to his church, Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church. He also gave his congregation specific advice: ‘Love your land, as true Englishmen: but do not forget to be Christians. Have room in your hearts for those who are called your “enemies”, multitudes of whom serve the same Lord.’¹²⁰ The church did not accept his resignation and the Rushbrookes were able to return to England at the end of October 1914. For Rushbrooke the war was an ‘awful fact’ which had seemed impossible and in the face of which, he admitted, his personal

¹¹⁶ *The Baptist World Alliance: Second Congress*, p. 229. C.T. Byford contributed to a collection of papers which J.H. Rushbrooke edited in 1915: *The Baptist Movement in the Continent of Europe* (London: The Carey Press, 1st edn, 1915).

¹¹⁷ *The Baptist World Alliance: Second Congress*, p. xv.

¹¹⁸ *The Baptist World Alliance: Second Congress*, p. 233.

¹¹⁹ See J.H.Y. Briggs, ‘From 1905 to the end of the First World War’, in R.V. Pierard, ed., *Baptists Together in Christ, 1905–2005: A Hundred-Year History of the Baptist World Alliance* (Falls Church, VA: BWA, 2005), p. 41.

¹²⁰ B. Green, *Tomorrow’s Man: A Biography of James Henry Rushbrooke* (Didcot: Baptist Historical Society, 1997), pp. 61–63. For an earlier biography of Rushbrooke, see E.A. Payne, *James Henry Rushbrooke, 1870–1947: A Baptist Greatheart* (London: The Carey Kingsgate Press, 1954).

faith had ‘almost reeled’.¹²¹ It was a tragic set-back to all the efforts made to achieve Baptist solidarity in Europe. The Baptist cause also lost Newton Marshall in 1914. His early death from typhoid deprived European Baptists of a fine thinker. J.H. Shakespeare highlighted Marshall’s deep concern not only for action in Europe but also for prayer and penitence.¹²²

At each of the four BWA Congresses held in the 1920s and 1930s several issues connected with Europe and with religious liberty were addressed. At the BWA Congress in Stockholm in 1923, Rushbrooke, who had been appointed the Alliance’s Commissioner for Europe and was publicizing the Congress widely, was delighted that a large delegation from Russia, led by Ivan Prokhanov, was able to attend.¹²³ At the next Congress, held in Toronto in 1928, Russians attended, but a year later, under Stalin, the situation for Christians in Russia became desperate. The BWA Executive called on Baptists to engage in ‘continuous and united prayer for their fellow-believers in Russia, and for all others who in that land in this twentieth century are denied religious liberty’.¹²⁴ There were strong echoes of what had been said many times in the previous century. The location of the next Congress caused considerable controversy. Berlin was the chosen location, but with the rise to power of the Nazi Party in 1933, some Baptist leaders felt that going to Germany was not now appropriate. There was much debate, but finally J.H. Rushbrooke’s view, which was that the Congress should go ahead in Berlin, prevailed. Rushbrooke argued that a demonstration of the freedom of the Baptist family to express its views was important. M.E. Aubrey, from Britain (as Baptist Union General Secretary), used the Congress, which attracted 8,000 Baptists (only 300 from Britain), to speak about freedom of conscience, but Carl Schneider of the Hamburg Baptist Seminary also used it to praise the Third Reich.¹²⁵ At the BWA Congress in Atlanta, USA, in July 1939, Aubrey, speaking about ‘Persecution and the Totalitarian State’, made a plea for Baptists to recognize that ‘persecution has broken out afresh, and the ancient lie that the welfare of the state, as that is interpreted by those who hold the reins of power, must be the supreme consideration of the individual citizen, has lifted its

¹²¹ *British Weekly*, 10 September 1914, p. 573.

¹²² *BT*, 20 March 1914, p. 243.

¹²³ Green, *Tomorrow’s Man*, pp. 98-100. Rushbrooke also wrote for the historical community: J.H. Rushbrooke, ‘Baptists in Continental Europe: A Survey and an Appeal’, *BQ*, Vol. 1, No. 5 (1923), pp. 196-202.

¹²⁴ R.S. Wilson, ‘Coming of Age: The Post-War Era and the 1920s’, in Pierard, ed., *Baptists Together*, p. 69. For Russian Baptists 1905–1929, see Heather J. Coleman, *Russian Baptists and Spiritual Revolution, 1905–1929* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005).

¹²⁵ J.H. Rushbrooke, ed., *Fifth Baptist World Congress, Berlin, August 4-10, 1934* (London: Baptist World Alliance, 1934), pp. 182, 192-93; Green, *Tomorrow’s Man*, pp. 118-21; chapter 8.

head again and must be fought anew'.¹²⁶ Within a few weeks Europe was engulfed in war.

The Role of Rushbrooke

Just as Edward Steane found the Evangelical Alliance to be a suitable vehicle for campaigning in the 1850s and 1860s, so Rushbrooke found that vehicle in the BWA. Although parallels were not drawn, a European tour which Rushbrooke undertook in 1920 mirrored that of Steane in 1854. The BWA asked Rushbrooke and C.A. Brooks from New York to survey religious, especially Baptist, life in post-war Europe and to report on what they found.¹²⁷ The survey involved a gruelling nine-week tour, taking in Germany, Poland, the Baltic States, Sweden, Czechoslovakia, Ukraine, Austria, Hungary, Romania, the Balkans, Italy, Switzerland, and France.¹²⁸ Seventy-two delegates from Baptist Unions and Conventions in Britain, America, Canada, Australia, and from eighteen continental European countries, then met in London from 19th to 23rd July 1920 to hear reports from Rushbrooke and Brooks.¹²⁹ There was a determination to give relief aid to the many devastated parts of Europe. A range of matters was discussed and actions agreed. Among these was a decision to 'bring the matter of religious persecution in Romania to the attention of the British Home Office and the American State Department, requesting them to make strong representations to the Romanian Government for full religious liberty'. The Conference also received a proposal from Brooks and J.W. Ewing, representing American and British Baptist thinking, that Rushbrooke be appointed BWA Commissioner for Europe. This was unanimously and enthusiastically affirmed.¹³⁰ As well as the specific reference to Romania, which reflected the shock Rushbrooke and Brooks had felt on their visit there, a wider statement was produced on religious liberty:

Religious liberty places all men on exactly the same basis before God and in relation to human governments. We therefore call on the governments of the world to delay no longer in enacting into law this priceless human right.¹³¹

Rushbrooke invested a great deal of time in the 1920s in seeking freedom of worship for Baptists in Romania. To a large extent his policy was the same as that of Steane. Influential figures had to be utilized. In 1921 Rushbrooke, together with T.R. Glover, a Baptist layman who was the Public Orator of the University of Cambridge,

¹²⁶ J.H. Rushbrooke, ed., *Sixth Baptist World Congress, 1939* (Atlanta, GA: BWA, 1939), pp. 198-99.

¹²⁷ Irwin Barnes, *Truth is Immortal: The Story of Baptists in Europe* (London: Carey Kingsgate Press, 1955), p. 92.

¹²⁸ Green, *Tomorrow's Man*, p. 73.

¹²⁹ Green, *Tomorrow's Man*, p. 80.

¹³⁰ Green, *Tomorrow's Man*, p. 82.

¹³¹ *BT*, 30 July 1920, p. 505.

travelled to Romania to meet with key Romanian government officials.¹³² The object of the visit, as Rushbrooke explained it, was to protest to the Romanian government against the harassment and persecution of Baptists. They met the Minister of Religious Cults, Octavian Goga, representing General Averescu's government. Glover had with him a letter from the Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University who 'took the opportunity of asking for the good offices of the authorities of the University of Bucharest in support of Dr Glover's efforts for his fellow-Baptists in Roumania'. Glover also had conversations with Romanian academics on a range of issues.¹³³ Rushbrooke had considerable evidence of violence being perpetrated against Baptist church leaders and members (including women being flogged), and of imprisonment, the closing of churches, and the confiscation of property. Although a new law was promised ensuring rights for Baptists, this was not introduced. Promises were also made that a series of oppressive regulations would be annulled, but this did not happen. The Orthodox Church was asserting religious supremacy in Romania and the government was clearly co-operating in harassing religious minorities.¹³⁴ Rushbrooke took the view that while in parliamentary debate Goga had used the language of freedom for wider political ends, but this was not translated into action: repressive laws had not been repealed.¹³⁵

Within a few months Rushbrooke was back in Romania, with a view to delivering a renewed protest. Between the time he left London and reached Romania the government of General Averescu fell, but shortly after Rushbrooke's arrival in Bucharest the new Prime Minister, Take Ionescu, agreed to see him. The Prime Minister requested that Rushbrooke produce a memorandum setting out the grievances of the Baptists, detailing names, places and dates. Rushbrooke made sure that this was done before he left Bucharest. He wrote,

Your Excellence, I have to thank you for your generosity in receiving me this morning amidst the crowd of claims upon your attention. I now enclose the memorandum promised, with sincere apologies for its disorderly condition. It has been prepared and typed in great haste.

After leaving your Excellency I had the privilege of a conversation with the Kultus-Minister, who has promised to issue forthwith an ordinance which shall

1. Definitely revoke the ordinance of April last No.15831
2. Assure the Baptists absolute freedom.
3. Ensure that the freedom is understood to include freedom of propaganda;

¹³² H.G. Wood, *Terrot Reaveley Glover: A Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1953), p. 152.

¹³³ *BT*, 29 April 1921, p. 257.

¹³⁴ Aurel Mateescu, *Persecution in Romanian Baptist Life* (Oradea: Emmanuel University Press, 2007), p. 49.

¹³⁵ *BT*, 6 January 1922, p. 4.

4. Impose no restrictions except that nothing shall be taught contrary to public morals or the safety of the State, and that preachers shall be (except with the special permission of the Kultus-Minister) Rumanian citizens.

He has further promised to give sympathetic consideration to the application for recognition of the Baptist organisation of the land, and if any difficulties arise in connection with its proposed statutes to point them out with a view to their rectification, so that full recognition may be extended.

Your Excellence will realise that if such action be promptly taken, and the persecution of the Baptists described in the accompanying memorandum be terminated, the discomfort and resentment among American and British Baptists caused by the treatment of their fellow believers in Rumania will be dispelled.

With every good wish for your person, your Government, and your land,

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's very faithful servant,

J.H. Rushbrooke

In 1923, however, at the BWA Congress in Stockholm, Rushbrooke made the disappointing announcement that while the new constitution of Romania acknowledged the principles of religious liberty, the government's understanding of 'liberty' was seriously defective. Consideration was being given to making a formal appeal to the League of Nations about Romania. Rushbrooke explained that he had made further representations to the Romanian government and had achieved some changes to the legislation, but, he said, 'the spirit of the local representatives of authority remains unchanged and the central Government is by no means lacking in sympathy with their standpoint'.¹³⁶ One of the leaders of the Romanian Baptist Union, Constantin Adorian, also spoke at Stockholm. He gave a detailed account of the sufferings of Baptists, but struck an encouraging note in relation to evangelism: 'Persecution has often been a main cause contributing to the spread of the Gospel. This is so even in our day, and especially in Rumania.'¹³⁷

Rushbrooke also offered the Stockholm Congress a wider European perspective. His view was that persecution was to be found in comparatively few countries in Europe. Romania, he believed, was the worst example. In Poland, however, mob violence directed against Baptists had recently been encountered. Rushbrooke spoke of 'a reactionary and repressive' spirit being widespread in Spain, with lawless violence exhibited by local police. Latvia, he said, was an example of a country where there were 'unfortunate relations between the Administration and certain privileged churches'. Throughout south-eastern Europe generally, Rushbrooke suggested that governments showed a tendency to meddle in the internal affairs of

¹³⁶ W.T. Whitley, ed., *Third Baptist World Congress, Stockholm, July 21-27, 1923* (London: Kingsgate Press, 1923), pp. 92-93.

¹³⁷ C. Adorian, 'Rumania: Persecution and Consolidation', in Whitley, ed., *Third Baptist World Congress*, pp. 51-54.

religious communities. In Czechoslovakia the government had pledged itself to the separation of church and state, and Rushbrooke had engaged in constructive conversations with T.G. Masaryk, the President, but the strong influence of Roman Catholicism had delayed the execution of new democratic policies.¹³⁸ Rushbrooke paid as many visits as he could in the 1920s to Eastern European countries, including the Soviet Union. There was great concern about the terrible famine conditions, and important relief efforts were undertaken by Baptists. Although Russian Baptists saw growth in the 1920s, there was repression of Christians in the USSR, and John Clifford signed a protest prepared by the Archbishop of Canterbury about attacks on the Orthodox Church.¹³⁹ Rushbrooke's own major concern remained Romania. In the 1930s, when almost all the approximately 1,600 Baptist churches in Romania were closed through a government decree, Rushbrooke, who was by that time General Secretary of the BWA, organized an international campaign.¹⁴⁰ He was able to count on support from, among others, Henry Martyn Gooch, General Secretary of the Evangelical Alliance.¹⁴¹

While Rushbrooke worked hard in the inter-war years to serve the cause of Baptists across Europe, many British Baptists found it hard to keep up an informed interest in countries that they had never visited and in which the experiences of Baptists were so different to their own. A visit made by M.E. Aubrey in 1926, the year in which Rushbrooke was President of the Baptist Union, resulted in a powerful plea by Aubrey to British Baptists on behalf of Rushbrooke's work as Commissioner for Europe. Aubrey was impressed by the vitality of Eastern European Baptist witness. In Budapest he addressed several large audiences, with 3,000 people at the final rally, and pondered on the remarkable growth in the Hungarian Baptist community, which fifty years before did not exist. Aubrey suggested that 'in many things continental Baptists can give us yards and leave us behind in a sprint'. He instanced Romania, where Baptists he met did not speak 'dolefully' about persecution but highlighted 3,400 baptisms taking place in a single year. One Romanian preacher was pointed out to Aubrey as having been whipped because of his preaching. The comment by the speaker who related the story was that forty-two baptisms had resulted. Aubrey went on to indicate that British Baptists should especially be appreciative of J.H. Rushbrooke's share in the success of the work in Europe. Aubrey acknowledged,

I did not realise before going out how much he [Rushbrooke] meant to those continental Baptists. They call him when they welcome him 'Father of the Baptists in Europe' and

¹³⁸ J.H. Rushbrooke, 'Relations of Baptists with European Governments', in Whitley, ed., *Third Baptist World Congress*, p. 92.

¹³⁹ G.K.A. Bell, *Randall Davidson, Archbishop of Canterbury* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 3rd edn, 1952), pp. 1079-80. For the 'golden years' of the Russian Baptists, see Konstantin Prokhorov, 'The "Golden Age" of the Soviet Baptists in the 1920s', in Corrado and Pilli, eds, *Eastern European Baptist History*, pp. 88-101.

¹⁴⁰ Green, *Tomorrow's Man*, pp. 150-53.

¹⁴¹ *EC*, July-August, 1929, p. 123; November-December 1930, p. 209.

things like that. He takes his long and weary journeys among them, sometimes adventuring to remote and unpleasant places at inhospitable seasons. He fights their battles with authority, gaining a respectful hearing from governments, counsels and guides them, is at their service with advice in disputes and every manner of subject. Day after day and sometimes far into the night I saw him at it, cheering, helping, serving.¹⁴²

There was a certain irony in Rushbrooke being known as the ‘father’ of Baptists in Europe. Rushbrooke wrote a book in 1923 to introduce European Baptist history to English-speaking readers and noted that Johann Oncken had long been known as the ‘father’ of German Baptists. For Rushbrooke it was hardly an exaggeration to call Oncken the ‘father’ of the continental Baptists as a whole.¹⁴³ What Rushbrooke was doing, as Aubrey saw it, was to help to keep this remarkable Baptist community across Europe vibrant and united. Aubrey’s verdict was, ‘We cannot let him down.’¹⁴⁴

Obstacles to Religious Freedom

In the 1920s and especially in the 1930s, Rushbrooke and other British Baptist leaders reflected on the varied obstacles to religious freedom that existed and the ways in which such liberty might be enhanced. The experience in Romania had convinced Rushbrooke of the truth of the adage, ‘The price of liberty is eternal vigilance’. In Romania Rushbrooke’s dealings with a range of officials were disappointing. He took the view that some figures in government to whom he spoke were ‘friends of religious freedom’ but that there was no effective administration to carry through reforms.¹⁴⁵ Speaking in Stockholm in 1923, Rushbrooke argued that it was ‘of the first importance for our work that the attitude of European governments towards religious minorities should be closely and continuously watched’. He considered that the principle of religious freedom was receiving lip service in almost all countries, but that its full implications were by no means understood.¹⁴⁶ Pursuing the theme of ‘eternal vigilance’ in an address he gave in 1938 to Northern Baptist Convention delegates, meeting in Milwaukee, USA, Rushbrooke spoke of the ‘exiled, imprisoned, harassed Christians of Russia – not Baptists only’. He suggested they were seldom remembered. ‘The unvarying story of repression bores us.’¹⁴⁷ Religious freedom would not be achieved without determined and often costly effort.

¹⁴² *BT*, 4 November 1926, p. 787.

¹⁴³ Rushbrooke, *The Baptist Movement in the Continent of Europe* (1923 edn), p. 76.

¹⁴⁴ *BT*, 4 November 1926, p. 787

¹⁴⁵ *BT*, 6 January 1922, p. 4.

¹⁴⁶ Rushbrooke, ‘Relations of Baptists with European Government’, p. 92.

¹⁴⁷ Rushbrooke MSS, ‘Baptists as Defenders of Religious Freedom’, address by J.H. Rushbrooke to the Northern Baptist Convention at Milwaukee, USA, 28 May 1938. Rushbrooke Papers, The Angus Library and Archives, Regent’s Park College, Oxford. I am grateful for Emma Walsh’s help in accessing these papers.

By the early 1930s there was an increasing conviction among some Baptist leaders that while Christians were often passive about their faith, an 'anti-God' movement was committed, active, and growing. This movement was clearly opposed to religious liberty. Speaking at the Berlin Baptist World Congress in 1934, E.A. Payne, who was to follow Aubrey as General Secretary of the Baptist Union, gave an address on 'Anti-God Propaganda'.¹⁴⁸ Payne was aware of 'a persistent, powerful and penetrating propaganda which aims at destroying not only Christianity but all religion'. This was spreading throughout the world. In Russia an attempt was being made forcibly to suppress all religious practice and to undermine all religious belief. It was not that atheism was new, but Payne saw the disbelief promoted in the 1930s as more aggressive than ever before. The phrase 'militant atheism' was apt. The anti-God movement in Russia and elsewhere, he suggested, was 'unparalleled in its intensity and thoroughness, its bitterness and universality'.¹⁴⁹ Payne analyzed developments such as atheistic sentiments in newspapers and magazines, and anti-religious museums. Not only was there contempt for Christianity, but also for the Muslim faith and for Judaism. But a particularly distressing feature of the anti-God propaganda, for Payne, was the way in which Christ was represented – as a person who was a deliberate deceiver, as the willing tool of capitalism. Payne echoed the wish of someone in Russia who longed that the Russian people might hear T.R. Glover speak on the 'Jesus of History'.¹⁵⁰ The problem with atheism, Payne was intent on arguing, was that it did not allow other views to be heard. It denied freedom.

While Rushbrooke did not differ from Payne in the evaluation which Payne offered of atheism, Rushbrooke was also concerned to stress – from his experience – that in campaigning for religious freedom it was crucial to assess the situations in different countries in a fair-minded way. In 1929, writing in the *Baptist Times*, he argued that it was not helpful when some of those who attacked the Soviet system did not give the Soviet government credit for having done anything good.¹⁵¹ Rushbrooke's own approach was always to seek to obtain reliable information before making statements. In 1932, Rushbrooke gave an address to the Assembly of the Baptist Union of Australia on 'Religious Persecution in Russia' and in his address he suggested that Russian Communism was 'by no means utterly evil'. This was a somewhat startling statement to make against the background of Stalin's Terror, but Rushbrooke argued that in overthrowing 'Czardom' forever the Russian Revolution had achieved 'a clear gain for the human race'. It was true that churches in Russia were being closed, but it was unhelpful, indeed 'ignorant and foolish', said Rushbrooke, when it was stated that all churches were closed. On the other hand,

¹⁴⁸ W.M.S. West, *To Be A Pilgrim: A Memoir of Ernest A. Payne* (Guildford: Lutterworth Press, 1983), pp. 47-49.

¹⁴⁹ E.A. Payne, 'Anti-God Propaganda' in Rushbrooke, ed., *Fifth Baptist World Congress, Berlin, 1934*, p. 160. Payne continued his interest in Russia: see E.A. Payne, *Out of Great Tribulation: Baptists in the U.S.S.R.* (London: Baptist Union, 1974).

¹⁵⁰ Payne, 'Anti-God Propaganda', pp. 161, 164.

¹⁵¹ *BT*, 26 September 1929, p. 713.

Rushbrooke was critical of any naively optimistic statements about religious liberty in Russia. He described how a British Labour MP had talked in the House of Commons about being free to worship in a splendid church in Russia. Within days, however, that church had been levelled to the ground.¹⁵² It was important to deal with religious persecution on the basis of a reasonably informed knowledge of the situation.

Atheism was vigorous in its opposition to religious freedom, but a religious country such as Romania, with its commitment to Orthodoxy, was also profoundly repressive. Rushbrooke took the view in 1938 that apart from Russia there was no state in Europe in which religious restrictions on Baptists had been so numerous and ‘the denial of freedom so persistent’.¹⁵³ Thus it was not only atheism, but other ideologies, such as nationalism, fascism, and state-church totalitarianism, which were enemies of religious liberty. Speaking in 1939 in Atlanta, Georgia, at the Sixth Baptist World Congress, M.E. Aubrey addressed the issue of totalitarianism, with Nazi Germany clearly in his thinking. There was a ‘sharp exchange’ at the Congress with the German Baptist leader, Paul Schmidt, over totalitarianism, liberalism, and collectivism.¹⁵⁴ Aubrey argued that ‘totalitarianism has presented to the Christian church as great a challenge as any it has had to face since the fall of the Roman empire’, and he contended that the claim ‘that the need and the authority of the state must override every other loyalty is one which Christians can never admit’. For Aubrey, Baptists and others in the Free Churches – still called ‘dissenters’ in England, he noted, because they do not choose to worship according to the forms prescribed in the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England – must of necessity be those who affirmed that ‘the first loyalty of every Christian is neither to class, nor sect, nor state, nor race, but to Almighty God who has revealed His nature and His will in Jesus Christ our Lord’.¹⁵⁵

This raised the final issue for Baptists, which was that along with the call to campaign for religious liberty was a call to Christian witness. In 1934 Payne argued that such witness must not be accompanied by ‘denunciation and outraged protest’, nor should it be ‘a repetition of old phrases’. Rather the ideal should be ‘the presentation of a full orb ed adventurous gospel, a faith willing to look at all the facts in the face, a devotion to truth, beauty and goodness, a patient and self sacrificing discipleship’. In addition, Baptists were called to a form of witness which was not hostile to science, and was accompanied by service to humanity.¹⁵⁶ Rushbrooke

¹⁵² Rushbrooke MSS, ‘Religious Persecution in Russia’, address by J.H. Rushbrooke to the Assembly of the Baptist Union of Australia, Adelaide, 19 August 1932. Rushbrooke Papers, The Angus Library and Archives.

¹⁵³ Rushbrooke, ‘Baptists as Defenders of Religious Freedom’, pp. 3-4.

¹⁵⁴ Erich Geldbach, ‘The Years of Anxiety and World War II’, in Pierard, ed., *Baptists Together*, p. 91. See B. Green, *European Baptists and the Third Reich* (Didcot: Baptist Historical Society, 2008), pp. 65-70.

¹⁵⁵ M.E. Aubrey, ‘Christianity and the Sixth Baptist World Congress’, in Rushbrooke, ed., *Sixth Baptist World Congress, 1939*, p. 199.

¹⁵⁶ Payne, ‘Anti-God Propaganda’, p. 164.

similarly spoke of the advantage of explaining Baptist perspectives to those who did not understand them, and the way in which he had found a positive response when campaigns for liberty were accompanied by humanitarian relief efforts. Speaking in Los Angeles in 1939, he talked about his involvement in continental Europe since his days as a student and how ‘for twenty years I have given my life to the service of the kingdom of God through Baptist people’. He insisted that he had a large heart for others, ‘and especially for other Evangelicals’, but his own growing conviction was ‘that it is the Baptists who before all are able to preach the Gospel in all its simplicity, and effectively to press for liberty in all its range of fulness’.¹⁵⁷ In this he echoed in part what he had said as Baptist Union President in 1926 – that Baptists had taken seriously the ‘great, simple, splendid Gospel whose rediscovery and reassertion is the glory of the Reformation’.¹⁵⁸ This gospel both called for and produced freedom.

Conclusion

I have looked in this study at a century of British Baptist endeavour in the cause of religious liberty in continental Europe. In the period from the 1850s to the 1870s the main channel through which Baptists operated in seeking to promote such religious freedom was the Evangelical Alliance. In May 1854, when Edward Steane was driving forward this agenda, the Evangelical Alliance Executive Council affirmed that

... in the present position of the Continental nations, moreover and especially in view of the numerous and severe persecutions which so many of their fellow Christians are called to suffer, and which disgrace alike the age and the countries in which they are perpetrated, the Council feel themselves constrained to manifest their sympathy with those foreign brethren who for conscience towards God endure grief, suffering wrongfully, and to use their efforts in every legitimate method which Divine Providence may open to them for the removal of the restraints which are imposed upon the human conscience by many of the Governments of Europe, so that full Religious Liberty may be enjoyed by all their peaceful and loyal subjects.¹⁵⁹

This combined a commitment to using ‘every effort’ with a sense of doing what was God’s will. Britain was at this time an increasingly powerful nation and, as Brian Stanley has noted, there was a growing evangelical sense that ‘providence had marked out for Britain a humanitarian and salvific role in the world’.¹⁶⁰ Baptist

¹⁵⁷ Rusbrooke MSS, Rushbrooke, an address by J.H. Rusbrooke delivered in Los Angeles, USA, 22 June 1939. Rushbrooke Papers, The Angus Library and Archives.

¹⁵⁸ J.H. Rushbrooke, *et. al.*, *The Faith of the Baptists* (London: The Kingsgate Press, 1926), pp. 61, 70; cf. *BT*, 20 May 1926, p. 347.

¹⁵⁹ Executive Council Minutes, 11 May 1854.

¹⁶⁰ B. Stanley, ‘British Evangelicals and Overseas Concerns: 1833–1970’, in J. Wolffe, ed., *Evangelical Faith and Public Zeal: Evangelicals and Society in Britain, 1780–1980* (London: SPCK, 1995), p. 81.

campaigning in Europe in this period came up against the serious problem of fellow-Protestants who were wary about (or opposed to) religious freedom. However, progress was made in securing freedoms, with relationships which Baptists across Europe had with each other being crucial. From the 1880s Baptists looked less to the Evangelical Alliance in pursuing this task, and from the early twentieth century a new Baptist vision for Europe, stimulated by new leadership, began to develop. Newton H. Marshall and James Henry Rushbrooke were central to this development. Rushbrooke's work was prodigious. From 1920 to 1928 he visited almost every country in Europe at least once, and some several times. In 1929 he re-iterated that religious freedom was 'a civic and human right of all'.¹⁶¹ In the 1930s, as Rushbrooke and other British Baptist leaders reflected on Baptist efforts for religious liberty, they saw major obstacles that still had to be overcome. They observed the problems of inactivity, the dangers inherent in the rise of intolerant atheism, the problem of inadequate information about situations of conflict, and the threat of totalitarianism in different forms. Part of the response should, they believed, be a proper application of Baptist principles.

The period that followed in European history, after the Second World War, was one which saw the rise of Communism and a deeply divided Europe. The vision that Rushbrooke articulated in 1935 about pan-European work by British Baptists, that they should be good Europeans,¹⁶² was not able to be fulfilled in the way that he hoped until the 1990s – well after his death. Despite the end of Communism in Europe, there remain serious – and perhaps increasing – issues of religious freedom in Europe, including in Britain. However, this is not an issue for Europe alone. It is global. In the light of the study offered here, some questions can be asked about campaigning for religious freedom. What are the appropriate bodies through which Baptists today should act? Are there individuals who have a calling in this area, as was the case with Steane and Rushbrooke? Are the reflections I have elicited from the 1930s still relevant? In 1923 Rushbrooke said that no part of his work in Europe had been of more importance than 'offering counsel and encouragement to those who have suffered, and approaching ministers of State on their behalf'. In doing this he always made a point of explaining Baptist attitudes to Christian witness and service as well as wider issues of religious freedom. He felt that where there had been success it was because the evident Baptist concern for liberty had clearly been accompanied not by assertion of religio-political power but by actions that were taken by Baptists 'for the welfare of all lands and people'.¹⁶³

¹⁶¹ *BT*, 26 September 1929, p. 714.

¹⁶² *BT*, 11 April 1935, p. 279.

¹⁶³ Rushbrooke, 'Relations of Baptists with European Governments', p. 92.

The Centre for Baptist History and Heritage

Regent's Park College, Oxford



Aims

The aims of the Centre are:

- to deepen an awareness and appreciation of Baptist history and theology
- to develop research and scholarship in these areas
- to relate Baptist history and theology to Baptist life and principles today

The Centre pursues these aims by:

- providing College membership for students studying for research degrees in related areas
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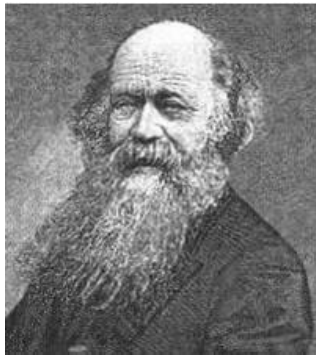
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The Revd Dr Joseph Angus
(President of Regent's Park College, 1849–93)

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Centre for Baptist History and Heritage Studies

Anthony R. Cross and Nicholas J. Wood (eds)

Exploring Baptist Origins

Vol. 1

The 400th anniversary of the origins of the Baptists in Amsterdam in 1609 is here celebrated by Baptist historians and theologians. Originally presented as a lecture series at Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, in the autumn of 2009, these fuller versions of the papers examine various aspects of Baptist beginnings in the light of the latest research and seek to explore some of their implications for today. Subjects discussed are the adoption of believer's baptism, whether Baptists are a church or sect, Thomas Helwys' *The Mystery of Iniquity*, William Kiffen and the Anabaptist Petitions of 1660 and 1661, Baptists and millennialism, the dangers of 'just' reading the Bible, and Baptists and Anabaptists. Contributors are Anthony R. Cross, Paul S. Fiddes, Brian Haymes, Larry J. Kreitzer, Crawford Gribben, Stephen R. Holmes, and Keith G. Jones.

Anthony R. Cross is Director of the Centre for Baptist History and Heritage and a Research Fellow of Regent's Park College, University of Oxford.

Nicholas J. Wood is Director of the Oxford Centre for Christianity and Culture at Regent's Park College, and Fellow in Religion and Culture, University of Oxford.

2010 / ISBN 978-0-9539746-6-5

Paul W. Goodliff

Ministry, Sacrament, and Representation

Ministry and Ordination in Contemporary Baptist Theology, and the Rise of Sacramentalism

Vol. 2

This study in the surprising rise in a sacramental understanding of ministry amongst ministers of the Baptist Union of Great Britain is the result of empirical research which compares the conciliar statements about ministry and ordination, and the wider literature, that together comprise the formal understanding of ministry amongst Baptists for the past seventy years, with the actual beliefs of over 300 ministers surveyed in 2007. Sacramental views have seen a remarkable resurgence amongst the more recently trained, and this study explores the reasons for this rise amongst both ecclesial factors and wider cultural processes. These include changes in the character of Evangelicalism, the widespread impact of charismatic renewal, the acceptance of ecumenism and a kind of 'demotic' post-liberal theology now mainstream for British Baptists. The study also places these developments within a MacIntyrean framework, especially in the rejection of two models of ministry: the therapeutic and the managerial.

Paul W. Goodliff is currently Head of the Department of Ministry for the Baptist Union of Great Britain, a tutor in Christian doctrine for the Open Theological College and an Associate Research Fellow of Spurgeon's College.

2010 / ISBN 978-0-9539746-8-9

Darrell Jackson

'As we are gathered ...': Membership and Belonging in Contemporary Baptist Congregations

Vol. 3

Statistics show a decline in membership and an increase in regular church attendance. This timely work observes practices and theologies of both membership and belonging emerging from local congregations. It examines theological writing about membership, constitutional resources for membership, and the language of church members and non-members. Jackson concludes that these three emphases – covenantal, denominational, and relational – fail to connect, producing popular understandings that will prove problematic in the long term. His solution prioritises the congregation as a site of theological production and outlines a post-foundational theology of belonging and membership that understands the church as the body

of Christ, catholic, and covenantal. A process for achieving this is located in the discussion and adoption of a sixth 'Core Value' – relational communities.

Darrell Jackson has ministered in a local church, an Association, the Baptist Union of Great Britain, the Conference of European Churches, and is now the Director of the Nova Research Centre and Lecturer in European Studies at Redcliffe College.

2012 / ISBN 978-0-9539746-9-6

Andy Goodliff

'To such as these': The Child in Baptist Thought

Vol. 4

This study examines what British Baptists have written about and prayed for in regard to children in the twentieth century. Beginning with the Baptist liturgical practice of infant dedication or presentation, it explores the use of scripture, in particular Mark 10.13-16; the theology of sin and salvation; the relationship of children to the church, with a focus on baptism and eucharist; and who the child is as gift, agent and made in the image of God. A final chapter argues that Baptists must root and display a theology of the child in infant presentation.

Andy Goodliff trained for ministry at Regent's Park College, University of Oxford.

2012 / ISBN 978-1-907600-03-6

Peter J. Morden

'Communion with Christ and his people': The Spirituality of C.H. Spurgeon

Vol. 5

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834-92) was the most famous Baptist minister of his generation. For such a significant figure, he has received surprisingly little scholarly coverage. This present work seeks to make a contribution to Spurgeon studies by examining him through the lens of his 'spirituality'. A wealth of primary material, much of it previously untapped, is used to build up a picture of Spurgeon's spiritual life. Whereas older and more recent interpretations of Spurgeon have a tendency to be one-dimensional, examination of Spurgeon's spirituality reveals him to be a complex figure, one who was moulded by a diverse range of factors. Despite this complexity, a unifying theme for Spurgeon's spirituality is traced and fresh light is shed on the foremost popular preacher of the Victorian age.

Peter J. Morden is tutor in church history and spirituality at Spurgeon's College, London, and a fellow of the Centre for Baptist History and Heritage, Regent's Park College, Oxford.

2010 / ISBN 978-1-907600-04-3

Anthony R. Cross and Ruth Gouldbourne (eds)

Questions of Identity: Studies in Honour of Brian Haymes

Vol. 6

Throughout the Baptist tradition issues of Baptist identity are being explored and widely debated. The Rev. Dr Brian Haymes is the former Principal of Northern and Bristol Baptist Colleges, and President of the Baptist Union of Great Britain. He has lectured widely and influenced many contemporary discussions of Baptist life and thought in Britain and further afield. He has been a great encourager of both established and younger scholars and ministers, and this collection of essays takes up themes in his many and various writings. Not only is it fitting to honour one of our leading Baptist pastor-scholars, but also to explore issues of widespread importance to Baptists in the early twenty-first century. Contributors are: Faith Bowers, John E. Colwell, Anthony R. Cross, Paul S. Fiddes, Barry Harvey, Stephen R. Holmes, Ruth Gouldbourne, Alan Kreider, Robert Parkinson, Michael J. Quicke, Christopher Rowland, Sean F. Winter, Simon Woodman, and Nigel G. Wright.

Anthony R. Cross is Director of the Centre for Baptist History and Heritage and a Research Fellow, Regent's Park College, and a Member of the Faculty of Theology, University of Oxford

Ruth Gouldbourne is a former Tutor in Church History at Bristol Baptist College and presently Minister of Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church, London, and a Fellow of the Centre for Baptist History and Heritage, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford
2011 / ISBN 978-1-907600-01-2

Brian Talbot

A Man sent from God: The Life and Ministry of John T. Hamilton 1916–1999

Vol. 7

John Hamilton was a locally successful Baptist minister in the middle years of the twentieth century. This book explores his life and work from the time of his theological training in South Wales and at Spurgeon's College in London, together with his short earlier pastorates in Coggeshall and Basingstoke. In addition to service as an RAF Chaplain in the 1940s, he held distinguished pastorates in Barnsley, Liverpool, Cleveleys, Morecambe and Caton between 1951 and 1994. This study sets these ministries in their social context and where appropriate in relation to the work of other Christian churches in these particular communities.

Brian Talbot is Minister of Broughty Ferry Baptist Church, Dundee, and a Fellow of the Centre for Baptist History and Heritage at Regent's Park College, University of Oxford. His published works include: *Search for a Common Identity: The Origins of the Baptist Union of Scotland, 1800–1870* (2003) and *'Standing on the Rock': A History of Stirling Baptist Church 1805–2005* (2005).

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John H.Y. Briggs and Anthony R. Cross (eds)

Baptists and the World: Renewing the Vision

Papers from the Baptist Historical Society Conference, Prague, Czech Republic, July 2008

Vol. 8

Here are essays on theology, history and vision, traced first in the story of British Baptists, and then in the recent history of Europe, East and West whilst a final section addresses the issues in global dimensions. Mission and evangelism, religious liberty, and relationships within community which respect the kingdom values of justice, peace and the God-created world in which we live, play their part as Baptists, always a biblical people, wrestle with the meaning of scripture for discipleship in today's world. The hope is that, whilst this volume celebrates 100 years of history, it may nourish faith in such a way that today's Baptists may develop the vision to discern the missionary task in the modern world—not just for discussion, but as a spur to decisive action. In this way history may become the inspiration for the living of tomorrow's story, as vision is realised in action.

John H.Y. Briggs is President of the Baptist Historical Society in the United Kingdom; Director Emeritus of the Baptist History and Heritage Centre, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford; Visiting Research Professor, the International Baptist Theological Seminary, Prague; a Trustee of Keston College; Emeritus Professor in the University of Birmingham; and Senior Deacon Highgate Baptist Church, Birmingham.

Anthony R. Cross is Director of the Centre for Baptist History and Heritage and a Research Fellow, Regent's Park College, and a Member of the Faculty of Theology, University of Oxford

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Jonathan W. Arnold

The Reformed Theology of Benjamin Keach

Vol. 9

Taking into account the totality of Benjamin Keach's theological thought and writings, *The Reformed Theology of Benjamin Keach* places the seventeenth-century Particular Baptist theologian in his larger theological tradition. After re-creating the theologian's social

networks, this work examines the impact of those networks on the often dogmatic and polemical stances espoused by this second generation Particular Baptist leader. In the process, this work highlights the uniquenesses in Keach's theology—especially within the Baptist community—and demonstrates that his legacy pertains to more than the oft-cited hymn-singing controversy.

Jonathan W. Arnold is a Visiting Fellow of the Centre for Baptist History and Heritage, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford, and Pastor of Skiff Lake Baptist Church, Clarklake, Michigan, USA.

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Clint C. Bass

Thomas Grantham (1633–1692) and General Baptist Theology

Vol. 10

Thomas Grantham was arguably the chief spokesman and theologian of the General Baptists in the latter half of the seventeenth century. In this period no other General Baptist published as much or as widely as did Grantham. His works provide a comprehensive picture of what this understudied group of anti-predestinarian radicals believed, the analysis of which may challenge some commonly held assumptions about General Baptist sacramentalism and the extent to which Socinianism spread among their churches in the seventeenth century. Grantham emerged as the General Baptists' principal apologist, defending their anti-predestinarian doctrine as well as practices such as ordaining apostles and laying hands on new converts.

Clint C. Bass is Assistant Professor of Church History at Southwest Baptist University, Bolivar, Missouri, and a Visiting Fellow of the Centre for Baptist History and Heritage, Regent's Park College, University of Oxford.

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Karen E. Smith

The Community and the Believer

A Study of Calvinistic Baptist Spirituality in Some Towns and Villages of Hampshire and the Borders of Wiltshire, c.1730–1830

Vol. 11

The period from 1730 to 1830 was one of transition for Calvinistic Baptists. Confronted by the enthusiasm of the Evangelical Revival, congregations within the denomination as a whole were challenged to find a way to take account of the revival experience. This study examines the life and devotion of Calvinistic Baptists in Hampshire and Wiltshire during this period. Among this group of Baptists was the hymn writer, Anne Steele.

Karen E. Smith is Tutor in Church History and Spirituality at South Wales Baptist College and in Cardiff University, Wales.

ISBN 978-1-907600-09-8

Paul F. Walker

From American Slavery to English Ministry

The Revd Peter Thomas Stanford (1860–1909): Birmingham's 'Coloured Preacher'

African American ex-slave Revd Peter Stanford was minister of a Baptist church in the 'slums' of Birmingham in the 1890s. His story is one of the earliest indications that Black people played a greater part in the British church's social history than was previously imagined. Stanford is part of the neglected history of Black people in Britain prior to the immigration of the mid-twentieth century, an area of study only just emerging as a substantial area of research. His life-story, theology, social activism and writings in pursuit of racial justice are highly significant. This study uses an original method to tell Stanford's fascinating life-story, seeks to explain his presence in nineteenth-century Birmingham, and reflects on the

significance of his involvement in the struggle for racial justice through British Nonconformist churches.

Paul F. Walker is the Minister of Highgate Baptist Church, Birmingham, a Tutor for the Urban Theology Unit and Honorary Lecturer in the Department of Theology and Religion at the University of Birmingham.

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Larry J. Kreitzer is Tutor of New Testament and Tutor for Graduates at Regent's Park College, Oxford. He holds a Research Lectureship within the Faculty of Theology, University of Oxford, and is a member of the Society of New Testament Studies

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The London merchant William Kiffen (c.1616–1701) is commonly regarded as one of the founding fathers of the Particular Baptists in London. For over sixty years Kiffen played a significant role in the complex world of the seventeenth century, with its volatile mix of religion, politics and commerce. He established himself in the early 1640s as the leader of a Baptist congregation, became an important contact for the Cromwellian Commonwealth and Protectorate, and was intimately involved in the political manoeuvrings of the royal courts of Charles I, Charles II, James II and William III. In this volume Dr Kreitzer continues the investigation of Kiffen's life which he began in volume 1, offering eleven ground-breaking studies based on primary sources which were all previously either under-appreciated or unknown.

Larry J. Kreitzer is Tutor of New Testament and Tutor for Graduates at Regent's Park College, Oxford. He holds a Research Lectureship within the Faculty of Theology, University of Oxford, and is a member of the Society of New Testament Studies

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Centre for Baptist History and Heritage Studies Occasional Papers

Anthony R. Cross

Should we take Peter at his word (Acts 2.38)?

Recovering a Baptist Baptismal Sacramentalism

Vol. 1

In his inaugural lecture, Dr Anthony R. Cross, Director of the Centre for Baptist History and Heritage, Regent's Park College, Oxford, challenges the widely held assumption, not least

among Baptists, that baptism is merely symbolic, a believer's testimony to what God *has* done in the past. Cross examines this position biblically, theologically and historically and finds it wanting. Restating an understanding more faithful to biblical and early Baptist teaching he argues that baptism always has been an integral part of becoming a Christian and that it was always faith-baptism. Cross also contends for an evangelical use of the term sacrament, as he affirms what God *does* in baptism in the present. This restatement of a key Baptist conviction is an important contribution to Baptist thought and practice and to ecumenical debates. It is particularly addressed to all who claim scripture as their rule of faith and practice, urging the necessity of reform of both the theology and practice of baptism in the contemporary church. The lecture concludes by outlining seven ways in which such reform might be realized.

Anthony R. Cross is Director of the Centre for Baptist History and Heritage, a Research Fellow of Regent's Park College, and a Member of the Faculty of Theology, University of Oxford.

2010 / ISBN 978-1-907600-02-9

Ian M. Randall

'Conscientious Conviction'

Joseph Angus (1816–1902) and Nineteenth-Century Baptist Life

Vol. 2

Joseph Angus' principalship of Stepney College and then Regent's Park College in London spanned most of the second half of the nineteenth century. It was in 1865, as President of the Baptist Union, that Angus spoke of the existence of Baptists as representing a 'conscientious conviction'. This study examines the convictions of Angus in the areas of theology, education, the church and baptism, spirituality and mission. These themes indicate the major concerns which Angus brought to bear – through his extensive writing, speaking and personal engagement with people – on Baptist life. Angus' interests, as a Baptist educator and missionary thinker, were exceptionally wide-ranging.

Ian M. Randall is Director of Research at Spurgeon's College, London, and Senior Research Fellow at the International Baptist Theological Seminary, Prague. He studied for Baptist ministry at Regent's Park College in the 1980s. He is the author of a number of books and many articles on Baptist and wider evangelical history. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society.

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E. Anne Clements

Wrestling with the Word

A Woman reads Scripture

Vol. 3 and Whitley Lecture 2011

In this Whitley Lecture for 2011 Anne Clements describes her journey into ministry, and how she is developing a reading strategy able to explore the significance of stories involving women in the male-centred world of the Bible. An exposition of Jesus' encounter with the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15 provides a powerful example of how this can be done. This lecture confronts the issues raised by the recognition that the biblical text is often both patriarchal and androcentric. It suggests the formulation of a hermeneutical stance that moves beyond suspicion of the text to a position of hospitality, adopting a reading strategy that retrieves the stories of women. Attention is drawn to the gynocentric counternarrative of Matthew's Gospel, first indicated in the naming of the women in the genealogy. The lecture presents an intertextual reading of Rahab and the Canaanite woman, and concludes with a brief reflection on the theological lessons that can be drawn from the narrative.

E. Anne Clements is Pastor of West Kingsdown Baptist Church, Kent, and is completing her doctorate at Spurgeon's College.

2011 / ISBN 978-0-9565006-0-1

Ian M. Randall

Religious Liberty in Continental Europe

Campaigning by British Baptists, 1840s to 1930s

Vol. 4 and Whitley Lecture 2012

The British Baptists who expressed solidarity with their persecuted dissenting brethren in Europe did not simply offer moral and spiritual support to the cause of religious liberty. They also campaigned actively for freedom by forming alliances with influential political figures – considered controversial by many Christians – and by cooperating with other bodies (such as the Evangelical Alliance) to maximize their impact. Neither was the concern of British Baptists just with the persecution of other Baptists – they advocated liberty of conscience more widely. J.H. Rushbrooke, deeply involved in working for religious freedom in Eastern Europe, believed that ‘the price of liberty is eternal vigilance’, and in the 1930s identified the primary obstacles to liberty for British Baptists as apathy and ignorance from within, and atheism and totalitarianism from without. These issues are still with us today and we need to find new ways to address them so that we can sustain our core commitments to justice and freedom of conscience in the twenty-first century.

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Karen E. Smith is Tutor in Church History and Christian Spirituality at South Wales Baptist College, and Pastor of Orchard Place Baptist Church in Neath.

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We are here to help Baptists understand their heritage and history. We provide an appropriate academic opportunity for those who wish to study life of Baptist churches, people and ideas, so that Baptists can 'articulate and discover the faith by which we all live' (Brian Haymes). We are interested in collecting primary Baptist information for the national Baptist collection in The Angus Library and Archives, Regent's Park College, Oxford (www.rpc.ox.ac.uk), and finding such resources in local churches, Record offices and any in the possession of private individuals.

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Registered Charity Number 1125912

September 2013