

# CTF Library Newsletter

February 2025



## Welcome to the February issue of the CTF Library newsletter!

Welcome to a packed issue of the library newsletter.

As always, we have an exciting crop of new acquisitions, from saints to preaching, mission to the future of theological education (p. 2). We also have a guest contribution from Ruth MacLean, the CCCW librarian, who reviews new books on global Christianity, available for all CTF members to borrow from the CCCW Library (p. 5). Look out for more updates from Ruth in future issues!

Working in a library you never know what you might find hidden in a book. Cambridge University Library made the [national press](#) this month after finding a vintage Crunchie wrapper between some books. We're spotlighting an intriguing find of our own: a treasure trove of newspaper clippings from the 1870s-90s tucked inside a Psalms commentary by a New York reader. From sermons and lessons to shocking news stories, suspicious medical cures, and pyramid scheme ads, explore more on pages 3-4.

Finally, in the February library team update, find out about our new Guide to all the CTF libraries, including info on where, when, and how to access them.

Jane and Grace  
The Library Team

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## What's new in CTF libraries?

Highlights from collections across the CTF.

- **IOCS:** O'Mahoney, Christopher, *St. Thérèse of Lisieux by Those who Knew her : testimonies from the process of beatification* (1977).
- **Westcott:** Clammer, Tom, *Crowning the Year : liturgy, theology and ecclesiology for the rural church* (2021).
- **Westcott:** Hall, Simon, *Compelling Communication : writing, public speaking and storytelling for professional success* (2024).
- **Westfield:** Kaag, John, *Hiking with Nietzsche : becoming who you are* (2019).
- **Westminster:** Grcevich, Stephen, *Mental health and the church : a ministry handbook* (2018).
- **Westminster:** Watson, John, *The Clerical Life : a series of letters to ministers* (1898).

## What's new in eDiscover?

Explore highlights from this month's new ebook acquisitions & many more on eDiscover.

- Butler, J., *Lay Pioneering and Thriving in Mission* (2023).
- Hunter Farrell, B., *Freeing Congregational Mission : A Practical Vision for Companionship, Cultural Humility, and Co-Development* (2022).
- Smith, Graeme, and Andrew Todd, *Future Faith: Public and Practical Theologies for the Contemporary World* (2025).
- White, Peter, *Faith, Spirituality, and Praxis: Exploring Dynamics in African Grassroot Theologies and Churches* (2024).
- Yong, Amos and Barbara Brown Zikmund, *Remembering Jamestown : Hard Questions About Christian Mission* (2010).
- Zaki, Andrea Stephanous, *From Theology of Transparency to Theology of Coexistence : The Challenge for Egyptian Christians* (2021).

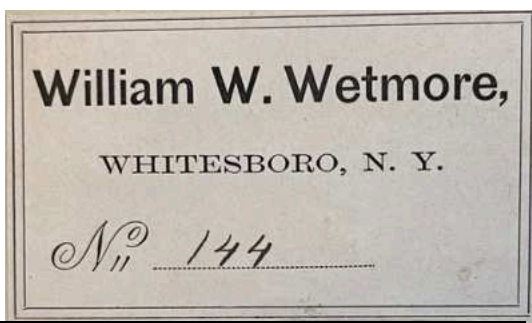




## Collection Spotlight: Personal reading and the Psalms

William W. Wetmore's copy of *The Psalms: translated and explained* by Joseph A. Alexander, 1850 (Westfield House, BS1430 ALE)

You never know what you might find tucked between the pages of an old library book. While cataloguing a three-volume commentary on the Psalms from 1850 at Westfield House, we discovered a treasure trove of 1870s-1890s American newspaper clippings. These clippings tell a story of the book owner's religious interests and personal reading habits, as he carefully saved printed sermons, book reviews, and stirring faith-related articles. They also, through the news stories and adverts inadvertently saved, provide a sideways glance at late 19th century American society.



Bookplate of William W. Wetmore, front pastedown

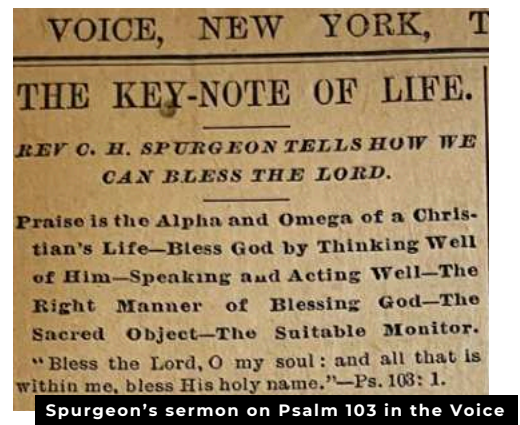
### William Wetmore, the books' owner

Full name William Wolcott Wetmore, little is known about these volumes' owner, who marked his possession with numbered bookplates. He was likely a Presbyterian, and his ancestors were amongst the US's early settlers, arriving in Boston, Massachusetts in 1635 [1]. He was born in Whitestown, New York State, in 1842, and died in Ann Arbor, Michigan, in 1916 [2]. He does not appear to have been a minister or held an official role within the church: his books reveal instead the domestic reading habits of the laity.

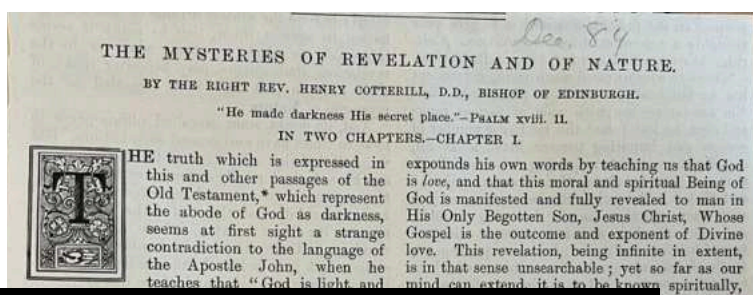
### William's reading

William carefully cut out and saved articles, sermons, and lessons relating to specific psalms, tucking them next to the matching psalm commentary in his books.

William's choice of reading material offer insight into his religious and political affiliations. Many clippings come from the New York *Independent*, a Congregationalist weekly publication running 1848-1928 [3], which had an abolitionist and pro-women's suffrage stance [4]. Other newspapers included the Presbyterian monthly *Interior* (1870-1910) [5], and the New York pro-Temperance *Voice* (1884-1895) [6]. Cuttings from the *Voice* include two sermons on the Psalms from prominent British preacher Charles Spurgeon.



Spurgeon's sermon on Psalm 103 in the Voice

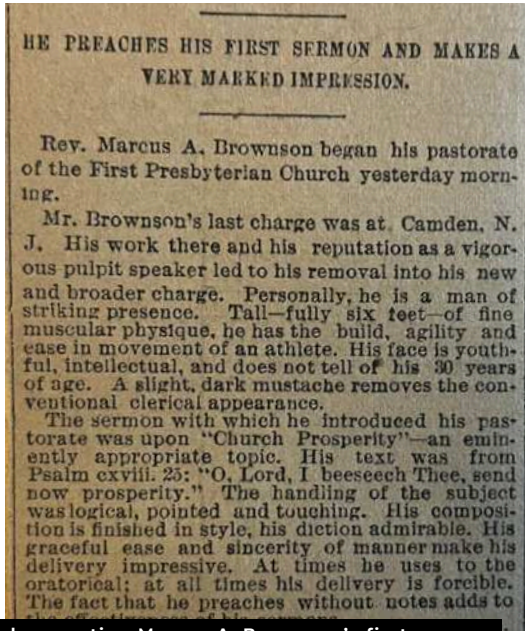


The Quiver, article on Psalm 8 by Henry Cotterill, December 1884

William also read more family-orientated serials: book reviews from the *Sunday School Times* (1859-1966) [7], and sermons from the *Quiver* (1861-1956) [8]. The *Quiver* was a Christian magazine promoting faith within the home, combining intellectual and literary articles, children's stories, and articles 'full of gushing feeling to address the heart' [9]. William's clippings give a glimpse of the educational and entertaining reading at the heart of a devout 19th century American family.



William's cuttings offer a number of curiosities showing a slice a social history, alternately shocking and amusing modern eyes - or revealing how little has changed. Here are some of our favourites.



Article reporting Marcus A. Brownson's first sermon

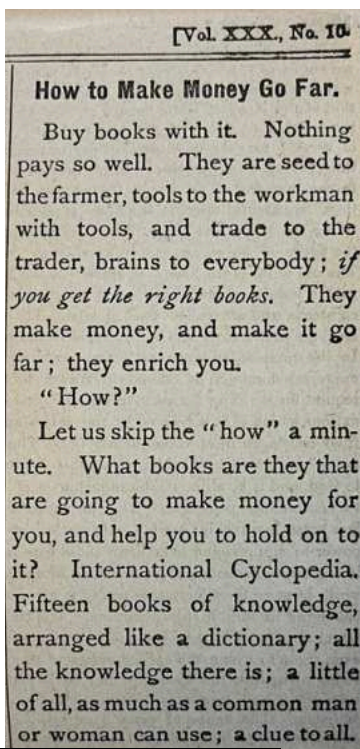
## Rave reviews for a new pastor's first sermon

William undoubtedly saved this article reporting on Rev. Marcus A. Brownson's first sermon as pastor of the First Presbyterian Church for Brownson's preaching on Psalm 108 and Church Prosperity. Clearly impressed by Brownson, the article praises his sincerity, impressive delivery, and the fact he spoke without notes.

Modern readers might raise an eyebrow, however, at the column inches dedicated not to the content of Brownson's sermons, but to admiring his appearance: 'Tall - fully six feet - of fine muscular physique, he has the build, agility and ease in movement of an athlete [...] A slight, dark mustache removes the conventional clerical appearance'. Not quite up to modern professional standards for performance appraisals...

## Get rich quick schemes, and 19th century pyramid scams...

On the reverse of William's carefully saved articles are a huge range of adverts promising their readers guaranteed wealth - if, of course, they pay up first!



Encyclopedia advert, 1888

So an advert advising that buying books makes your money go far (left) is not unfortunately extolling the virtues of library services, but a pyramid scheme enticing readers to become encyclopedia salesmen...after they shell out for the pricey books upfront.

Reading these ads showcase a vivid picture of late 19th century American life: from the gold rush to railroad construction and a post-Civil War rise in consumerism and mass production of goods [10]. One typical ad (right) tempts readers to send off 10¢ for a mysterious pack of goods to earn 'more money in a month than anything else in America'.

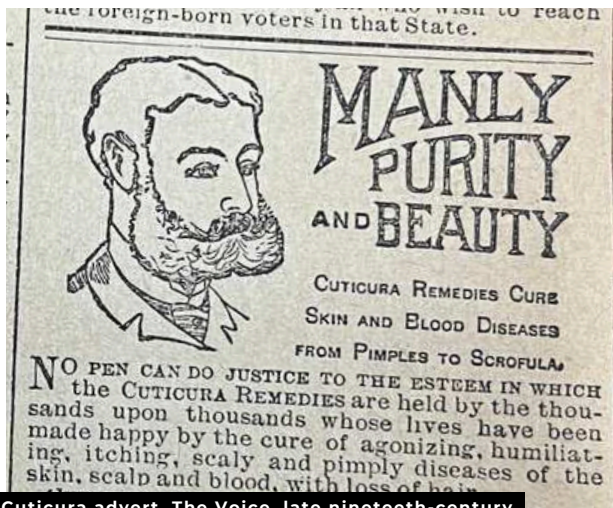


Newspaper adverts, 1888



## Miracles and Miracle Cures

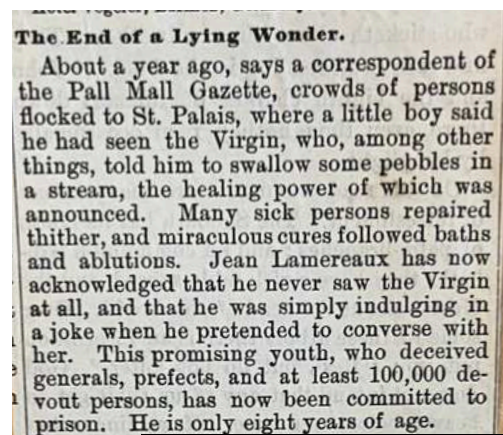
A medicine curing everything from the common cold to scrofula would today be met with incredulity, but, as is well-known, such “snake oil” cures were, ironically, something of an epidemic in nineteenth-century America.



Luckily, the above cure, a combination of cod liver oil and calcium salts, would likely do the patient little harm — but we do not recommend trying it at home!

Another, similar advert proclaims the virtues of Cuticura medicated soap, a product still sold today with little difference to its Victorian formulation, albeit without claims to ‘cure [...] everything from pimples to scrofula.’ It also makes no claim to improving one’s manly beauty [11].

Reports of Marian apparitions have existed since the early church, but one clipping casts a critical eye in its story of ‘lying wonder’ Jean Lamereaux, committed to prison at the tender age of eight for his misleading of worshippers. With no other trace of this of this story in contemporary papers to be found, the plight of Jean and the pebble-eating pilgrims, may well be merely a cautionary tale.



One man’s pious reading habits have inadvertently preserved a vivid picture of his social context. So beware what you leave behind in your library books, in case somebody writes an article about you in 150 years time!

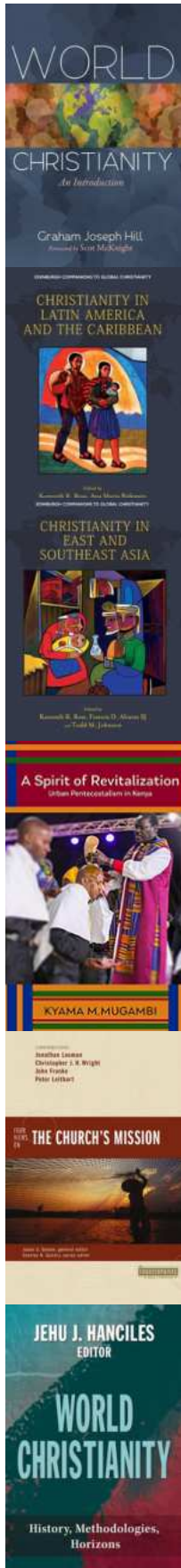
Grace Collingwood and Jane Sinnett-Smith

### References

1. Wetmore, James Carnahan, *The Wetmore Family of America, and its Collateral Branches: with genealogical, biographical, and historical notices* (Munsell & Rowland), p. 2
2. ‘William Wolcott Wetmore’, We Relate [https://www.werelate.org/wiki/Person:William\\_Wetmore\\_%281%29](https://www.werelate.org/wiki/Person:William_Wetmore_%281%29) [accessed 17 February 2025]
3. ‘The Independent’, The Online Books Page <https://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/serial?id=independentus1848> [accessed 17 February 2025]
4. Filler, Louis, ‘Liberalism, Anti-Slavery, and the Founders of the Independent’, *The New England Quarterly* 27.3 (1954), pp. 291–306 (p. 293)
5. ‘The Interior’, HathiTrust <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/008603039?type%5B%5D=title&lookfor%5B%5D=the%20interior&filter%5B%5D=format%3ASerial&ft=ft> [accessed 17 February 2025]
6. ‘The Voice’, Library of Congress <https://www.loc.gov/item/sn83045441/> [accessed 17 February 2025]
7. ‘The Sunday-School Times’, Library of Congress [https://archive.org/details/pub\\_sunday-school-times](https://archive.org/details/pub_sunday-school-times) [accessed 17 February 2025]
8. ‘The Quiver’, The Online Books Page <https://onlinebooks.library.upenn.edu/webbin/serial?id=thequiver> [accessed 17 February 2025]
9. Nowell-Smith, Simon and Arthur L. Hayward, *The House of Cassell 1848-1958* (Cassell and Company, 1958), p. 61.
10. ‘Early Advertising of the West, 1867-1918’, University of Washington University Libraries <https://content.lib.washington.edu/advertweb/index.html> [accessed 17 February 2025]
11. ‘Cuticura’ <https://www.cuticura.co.uk/products/mildly-medicated/cuticura-mildly-medicated-bar-soap> [accessed 17 February 2025]



Ruth MacLean, CCCW Librarian, highlights six recent CCCW acquisitions.



**Hill, Graham Joseph, *World Christianity: An Introduction* (2024)**

In this accessible introduction to World Christianity, Hill engages with over 100 Majority World and First Nations Christian leaders to learn what they can teach the West about mission, leadership, hospitality, creation care, education, worship, and more. He challenges the Western church to move away from Euro- and Americentric views of church and mission, and calls for the church to engage with crucial paradigm shifts in world Christianity.

**Edinburgh Companions to Global Christianity: *East and Southeast Asia*, and *Latin America in the Caribbean* (2020/2024)**

This important series explores Christianity in different regions of the 21st century world, bringing together commentary and interpretation and original analyses by mostly indigenous scholars. Both volumes provide demographic information, assess major traditions, movements, and current trends, examining themes such as faith and culture, worship and spirituality, theology, social and political engagement, mission and evangelism, religious freedom, gender, interfaith relations, migration, the environment, colonial and postcolonial context, indigenous peoples, persecution, and martyrdom.

**Mugambi, Kyama M, *A Spirit of Revitalization: Urban Pentecostalism in Kenya* (2020)**

Perhaps more than anywhere else, Africa has generated unique expressions of Christianity that have overtaken older forms represented by historic missionary efforts. Individual accounts of urban Kenya's Pentecostal movement shed light on rich and diverse commonalities among generations of the country's Christian communities. Comparative analysis shows how Pentecostal approaches to orality, kinship, and integrated spirituality inform Kenyans' reimagination of Christianity.

**Jason S. Sexton and others, *Four Views on the Church's Mission* (2017)**

Four evangelicals contribute to the ongoing debate on church mission. Jonathan Leeman proffers the most conservative position 'Soteriological mission', and Christopher J. H. Wright, John R. Franke, and Peter J. Leithart offer their views of 'Participatory Mission', 'Contextual Mission', and 'Ecumenical-Political Mission' respectively.

**Jehu J. Hanciles, *World Christianity: History, Methodologies, Horizons* (2021)**

With original essays by leading experts, this volume critically reassesses the study of world Christianity, connecting historical developments to current debates and new trajectories. Contributors include Dale T. Irvin; Dana L. Robert; Paul Kollman; Kwok Pui-lan; and Gemma Tulud Cruz.



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# February Library Team Updates

## New CTF Libraries Guide

We have created a new [Guide](#) to all ten CTF libraries.

If you've ever looked for a peaceful study space, wanted to visit a particular House's library, or wondered how many libraries you have access to, this guide has the answers!

The new [CTF Libraries Guide](#) includes:

- Opening hours
- Library locations and maps
- Contact details
- Specialist holdings
- Access information
- Updated information on course-specific e-resources available to students.

[Read the Guide here](#)

## What else we've been up to this month...

- Meeting with students starting dissertations and major projects for research tools refreshers
- Cataloguing new print and ebooks
- Answering student enquiries about accessing e-resources
- Updating reading lists for Lent and Easter term
- Stock-checking print journal and book collections

Cambridge  
Theological  
Federation  
Libraries

**A Guide**



Westcott House in the February mist

Thank you for reading!

<b>Contact us:</b>	<a href="mailto:library@theofed.cam.ac.uk">library@theofed.cam.ac.uk</a>
<b>Or browse all library resources:</b>	<a href="#">Library and Digital Resources on Hedwig</a>

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