

## Rev. Ephraim Blake

### Transcription of Obituary in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by J.L.

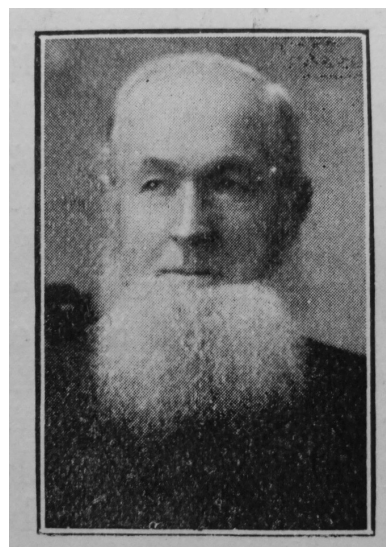
The Rev. Ephraim Blake was born of humble parentage, at Bury St. Edmunds, on October 12th, 1822. He lived to the ripe old age of eighty-four years. Converted through Primitive Methodist agency at the age of fifteen, he at once became a member of our church, then a teacher in the Sunday School, and at the age of twenty-one we find him exercising his gifts as a local preacher with considerable success in the villages of the Brandon Circuit, of which Bury was a branch.

Of education he received but little and that chiefly at the hands of his father who taught his children to read and write during the long evenings of winter. After his conversion he gave himself to reading and sought to prepare himself for Christian usefulness. At the end of the year 1845 the Ipswich Station obtained sanction to call out a young man and made application to Bury St. Edmunds for a suitable person. Mr. Blake was recommended. He responded with fear and trembling and commenced his ministry on February 8th, 1846.

We are carried back sixty years as we see this young man starting off to walk the twenty-four miles from Bury to Ipswich with a carpet bag upon his shoulder. For his first Sunday's work he had to take boat to Harwich, walk to Kirby Cross, where he preached in the morning, on to Holland Green for the afternoon and then to Walton-on-Naze for the evening. He returned to Kirby on the Monday and relates a pleasing incident and one that explains largely the success of our fathers. He had to take tea with one Nelson Sallows – "a man who lived next door to heaven." He reached the cottage and found the door half-open. Listening, he heard the good man praying that God would bless the efforts of the young man whom He had sent to labour amongst them.

From Ipswich he passed to Fakenham, Aylsham, where he found his wife Elizabeth Abbs, with whom he lived most happily for over fifty years, Norwich, Cambridge, Wangford, Fakenham, Ipswich, Dorking, Yarmouth, Bury, Wattcn, Wisbech, Lowestoft, Norwich, Dereham, and Ely, where he found it needful to superannuate. All these Stations were in the old Norwich District and of wide extent. His active ministry covered a period of forty-three years. They were filled with abundant labour and success. He did a full share in chapel building and debt reduction. But his heart, mind and strength were spent, in seeking the salvation of sinners and the edification of saints. After his superannuation in 1889 he retired to Yarmouth where he rendered splendid service to that circuit and town, winning the respect and confidence of all. His wife predeceased him by two years, and this event no doubt hastened his end. Left alone he was like the "old man waiting for an inevitable arrival, listening all the while for the sound of the chariot wheels." After the death of Mrs. Blake he lived with his daughter, Mrs. E. Flaxman, who ministered to him with loving hands. After only a short illness he passed quietly away on November 17th, 1906, his last word, "Home."

Of a pleasant and genial disposition, with a smile and kindly word for everybody, and never put out, he made few, if any, enemies. His early years of privation and toil did not sour him. Pure in mind and motive he "wore the white flower of a blameless life." He was trusted because trustworthy. He diligently cultivated his powers and kept pace with the times, but preferred the quiet paths of



homely service. He was ever young to the last. Gifted with a mellow, musical voice, he was fervent and evangelical as a preacher and won many souls to Christ. Behind everything was prayerfulness, and his supreme consciousness was the presence of God. To his children he was embodied goodness, and his life was one of complete consecration and sweet content. His memory is fragrant on even his earliest stations. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. A.E. Calvert, assisted by Revs. G. Rudram, A.T. Wardle, F.C. France, J.H. Rose, J. Carter, and W.L. Spooner, who gave a beautiful address. Many other ministers were present. Rev. A.E. Calvert conducted a Memorial service in the Temple on Sunday, December 2nd, 1906.

For all Thy servants, who from their labours rest,  
Who Thee by faith before the world confessed,  
Thy name, O Jesus, be for ever blest,  
Hallelujah.

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## References

*Primitive Methodist Magazine* 1907/822