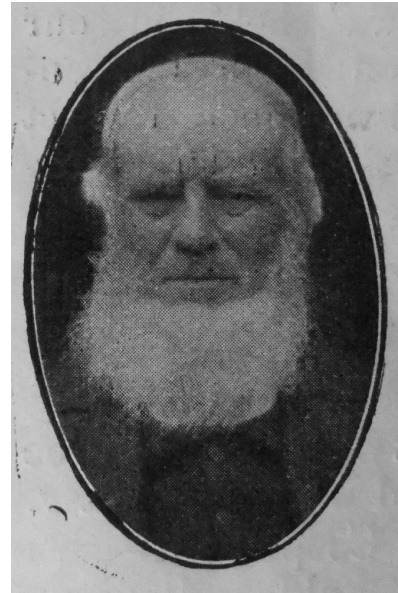


Rev Charles Smallman

Transcription of obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by Thomas Clamp

On March 8th the life of the Rev. Charles Smallman was brought to a peaceful close at Little Hereford, near Ludlow, at the age of eighty-six. A native of Shifnal, he received a good education for his station in life, and developed a physical stamina which served him well in the hardships of our earlier ministry. As a boy he was religiously inclined, and before he heard of Primitive Methodism was a "constant and interested reader of the Bible." In his fourteenth year the Wrockwardine Wood Circuit began services in a cottage near his home, and he was induced to attend. The first of our preachers he heard was a Mr. George Peake, brother to the grandfather of Dr. A.S. Peake. When a class was formed in the preaching cottage Mr. Smallman joined it, and began a church membership which lasted seventy-two years. At the age of seventeen he became a local preacher, and two years later his native circuit called him into the itinerant ministry. His active ministry of thirty-seven years all took place within the limits of the old Tunstall District, and included a number of its most important circuits. He seems never to have resided outside its boundary.



He passed through all the District offices, and but for his physical breakdown there seemed to be a future of connexional import before him. When the jubilee of our church was celebrated he was superintending Congleton Circuit, in which Mow Cop is situated, and had much to do in organising the Jubilee Camp Meeting. Two years after this the Conference elected him its secretary, with the saintly Philip Pugh, another Salopian and an intimate friend, as President.

The Conference Address to which these two men set their names forms vigorous and stimulating reading. The evils they decry, the endowments they crave, and the changes they desiderate in the jubilee year, show the far-sighted character of the men as viewed from the standpoint of the Centenary year.

As a preacher he was intensely practical. Well read, abreast of his times on public questions, observant of human life, and naturally methodical, his discourses usually made their mark. As a young man he was specially gifted at Camp Meeting work and did plenty of it, and knew the joy of in-gathering.

Physically strong he walked vast distances. After labouring his first year in the Wellington Branch of his native circuit he was next appointed to Weobley Branch. When the time came to change he rose at three in the morning and walked to Ludlow, then took coach to Leominster, then walked to Weobley, which must have entailed fifty miles' walking in one day.

He developed the business faculty as his ministry advanced. Courage, tact, self-possession, and knowledge of connexional law and custom helped in this.

A sudden turn was given when an internal complaint demanded a serious surgical operation, and superannuation was forced upon him. He was, however, able to take up local work, and the churches near him benefited. His services were much sought for and highly valued. He kept an open house for ministers and others, and was characteristically hearty in his hospitality.

He was twice married. In the first instance to a Miss Taylor, of Dilwyn, in the Leominster Circuit, and in the second, to a Miss Taylor, of Whitton, in the Leintwardine Circuit - similar in name but unrelated. Both died before him, as did others of his family, while several survive to mourn him.

Age was attended by infirmities. Foremost among these was partial deafness. Then the limbs which had served so well failed. Reason still held its throne, and his voice all its sweetness and characteristic ring. A fall in his bedroom hastened the end. For eight weeks his life was a calm eventide, then his sun set to this world, and he ascended to the perfect day.

References

Primitive Methodist Magazine