

Rev. Thomas Worrall Rous

Transcription of obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by J.C. Mantrip

Thomas Worrall Rous was born at Westleton on the Wangford Circuit, November 28th, 1818, and died at Lowestoft on Tuesday, May 17th, 1910. He had thus completed his 91st year, and at the time of his death was the oldest minister of the Primitive Methodist Church.

His conversion took place when he was 18 years of age. Under the superintendency of the Rev. Richard Howchin the Wangford Circuit experienced a season of revival. The whole neighbourhood was moved. Some of the most abandoned characters were brought to God. The growing influence of this work of grace demanded new labourers, and Bro. Rous, full of zeal, found abundant scope for his enthusiasm. His work as a Local Preacher was so successful that in 1840 he received a call into the regular ministry, and was sent to the Kelsale Mission of his Home Circuit.

His educational equipment was meagre; and the arduous nature of pioneer work involved great physical strain; the remuneration of those days afforded scant opportunity for accumulating books; but all difficulties were met and mastered. For 38 years the work of the active ministry was acceptably pursued, and it speaks well for Bro. Rous that all his Circuits were in his native district, and that to some of these he was invited for a second term.

He had a magnificent voice, and his gift of song was used with effect in his services. His preaching was truly evangelical, and he was the means of bringing many hundreds into the Kingdom of God. The position our Church occupies in many parts of East Anglia to-day is due to the unselfish and untiring work of Bro. Rous and likeminded men and women.

Owing to physical weakness Mr. Rous was obliged to make application to the Conference of 1879 for superannuation. This was granted, and he came to live at Lowestoft, where he did much useful work until growing age made work impossible.

In his last illness he was cheerful, and even joyous; weary and eager to join the many friends who had preceded him into the heavenly land, but never repining. He thought much of his Church, and was most optimistic as to its future.

His Methodism revealed itself when on the day before his death he enquired if his class-money was paid. He entered into life with all his faculties alert. His last words were: "Heaven: home!"

At the funeral service the Rev. A.T. Wardle gave a beautifully appropriate address, and on the following Sunday at Hill Road Church a memorial service was held, at which the writer preached from 1 Cor. iii., 21, 22 "All things are yours; whether . . . life or death."

To quote the words of Rev. William Mincher in the Conference Memorial address, Thomas Worrall Rous responded to the call of wide and difficult circuits with unflinching faith, and was signally blessed in soul-winning.

References

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