

Rev. John Farr

Transcription of Obituary in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by John Hall

The Rev. John Farr was born and reared at Owston Ferry, Lincolnshire, which is within sight of Bawtry and Austerfield, the early home of the Pilgrim Fathers, and four miles from Epworth, so that he was cradled amid Puritan and Methodist influence. But he was also reared a Primitive Methodist at Owston Ferry, in the Scotter Circuit where to be a Primitive Methodist, in consequence of a narrow and intolerant Anglicanism with its many charities, has always meant taking up a cross. Early in life John Farr surrendered himself to Christ through Primitive Methodist influence and ever remained loyal to our Church. Curiously enough, he was taken into the ministry without ever being a regular local preacher. But from the long journeys of so wide a circuit as Scotter, he had from boyhood known what it meant to be a travelling preacher.



By the Conference of 1859, he was stationed as probationer at Peterborough, with the late Rev. Jesse Ashworth as his superintendent. Here very considerable success attended his labours. He subsequently travelled in the following stations: Paisley, Penrith, Richmond (Yorks.), Holborn Hill, Barrow-in-Furness, Liskeard, Torquay (six years), Glasgow, Holborn Hill a second time, Littleborough, Bramley, Glossop, Wisbech, and Dartford, where he remained six years. Throughout the forty-six years of his active ministry his motto was "For Christ and the Church;" his chief aim to lead men to Christ, to edify the Church, and promote its material interests.

He was a plodding student, a good preacher, a prudent superintendent and generous to a fault. A letter once came into his hands which spoke of him as a good preacher - not a flash-in-the-pan for a quarter or so and then done, but a good, sound, Gospel minister; homiletic in style and with always something to say worth listening to; a most painstaking business man and blameless in character. These characteristics Mr. Farr maintained to the end.

At Dartford, where he laboured with success for six years, he broke down in health and was obliged to superannuate. He located in 1902 at Gainsborough, where his health improving, he was employed as a supernumerary. Again his health failed and he removed to his native village, Owston Ferry, where he preached occasionally with great acceptance. On Sunday, June 24th, he preached in the morning but was unable to take the evening service. On July 6th, he commended his wife and family to the care of God, and said, "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit," and shortly afterwards passed away. His somewhat unexpected death was due to heart-failure.

A large crowd gathered at the funeral, which was conducted by Rev. H. Semper, superintendent of the Scotter Circuit, and Rev. John Hall, superintendent of the Gainsborough Circuit. The former conducted a memorial service at Owston Ferry, the latter at Gainsborough. At both places the Dead March was played. Brother Farr leaves a widow and five daughters, one unmarried, to mourn his loss. He was, by these and a wide circle of friends, greatly beloved and as deeply lamented.

References

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