

## Moses Bourne of Overseal

### Transcription of article published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by a Fellow Soldier

It was a prophetic instinct which named him Moses. He is indeed a leader of the people. He was cast in a large mould. In body, brain, and heart he is a strong, great man.

“Well by his visage you might know  
He was a stalwart knight, and keen.”

Whether consciously or not, Moses Bourne has translated into his own personality the meaning of Lowell’s poem,

“The Beggar—

“A little of thy steadfastness,  
Rounded with leafy gracefulness,  
Old oak give me.  
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Some of thy stern, unyielding might,  
Enduring still through day and night  
Rude tempest-shock and withering blight,  
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Give me, old granite gray.  
A little of thy merriment,  
Of thy sparkling, light content,  
Give me, my cheerful brook.  
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Heaven help me, how could I forget  
To beg of thee, dear violet!  
Some of thy modesty,  
That blossoms here as well, unseen,  
As if before the world, thou’dst been.”

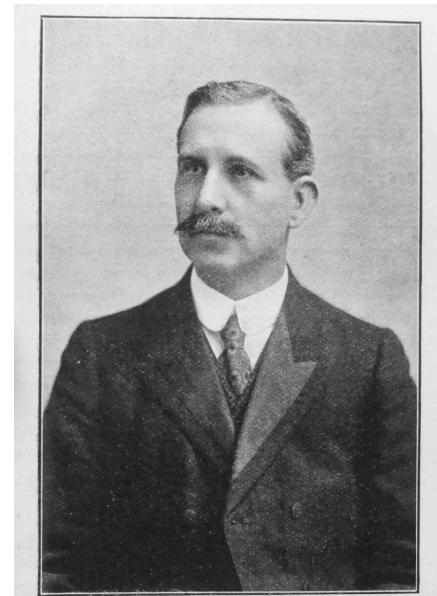
There is the man! “Unyielding might,” “leafy gracefulness,” “merriment,” “fragrance” and “modesty.” A personality in which are blended “strength and beauty.” Lily-work ornaments and crowns massive strength.

Moses Bourne springs from a stalwart stock. More than a century ago his ancestors removed from Staffordshire into South Derbyshire, where many branches of the family still flourish. Their Staffordshire origin suggests the question:— Do they and the great Hugh Bourne spring from the same family stock? They do not know. If moral affinity counts, it supplies presumptive evidence of relationship. The subject is worthy of a careful investigation. All along the line the Bourne’s have been men of grit, go, and character. For a whole century some of them have held positions of trust and responsibility in the commercial enterprises with which Moses is now prominently associated. These positions have been won by worth and retained by integrity.

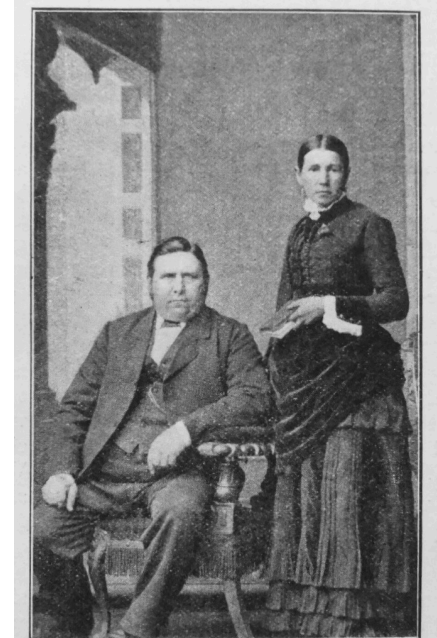
The father of Moses commenced work early as a pit-lad, and passed through all the experiences of a working collier. During the winter months, for many years; he only saw daylight, and his children awake, on the Sabbath. During the week he had to be content with a candlelight view of his off-spring as they lay asleep. He eventually took his certificate as colliery manager, and was entrusted with the control of the mine in which he had toiled as boy and man. During his twenty-nine years of management of the Moira and Church Gresley mines, such were his skill, diligence and care, that not a single fatal accident occurred in the whole time. At the end of fifty-two years of faithful service he was pensioned off, and both he and his good wife received handsome gifts from both their employers and employees. He finished his earthly course with joy eleven years ago.

In the introduction of Primitive Methodism into the locality the Bournes took a conspicuous share. The grandfather and the father of Moses both opened their homes to the preachers. Four generations of the family have been or are actively and loyally associated with our Church. Among the most vivid and fragrant memories of the boyhood of Moses are his recollections of the visits of such men as Revs. Robert Parkes, R. Robinson, C.H. Boden, and others to his father's house. While of the goodness and nobility of his parents, and of their unswerving loyalty to Primitive Methodism he speaks with unstinted praise.

"As the twig is bent the tree's inclined" is an adage full of truth so far as Moses Bourne is concerned. He was converted when fourteen years of age. Two years later he began to preach. His close friend, Mr. H.R. Mansfield, was converted and began to preach about the same time, and a great amount of good work stands to the credit of these twin-souls. To Moses Bourne preaching is a supreme delight. He preaches because he must preach. The call was so clear and authoritative that he could not mistake it, and he dare not disregard it. It is no uncommon thing for him to preach on thirteen Sundays per quarter; and during the winter months he has taken evangelistic services for weeks together in churches near home. When men and women are being converted Moses lives in a heaven of delight. Of this joy he has had a large share. Though his are in great demand in regions far beyond his own Circuit, nine Sundays per quarter are reserved for places within easy reach of his home, and four are given to more distinct fields. His Sunday morning Bible Class, consisting of fifty men, lies near his heart, and to its interests he gives of his best. His preaching parish includes places so far away as Newcastle-on-Tyne, Manchester, Hull, Sheffield, and Grimsby, and he not infrequently travels all Sunday night so as to be at business on Monday morning. He is popular and highly appreciated wherever he goes, but at home he is intensely loved and implicitly trusted.

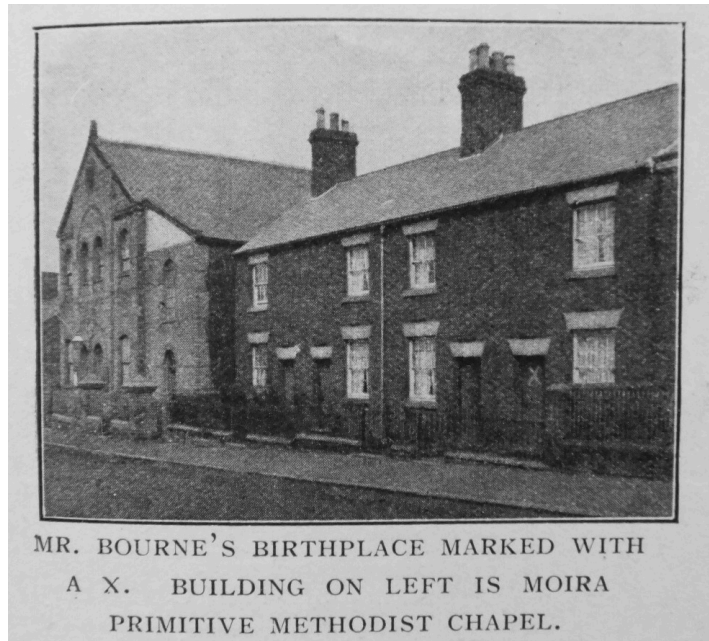


MR. MOSES BOURNE.



MR. BOURNE'S FATHER AND MOTHER.

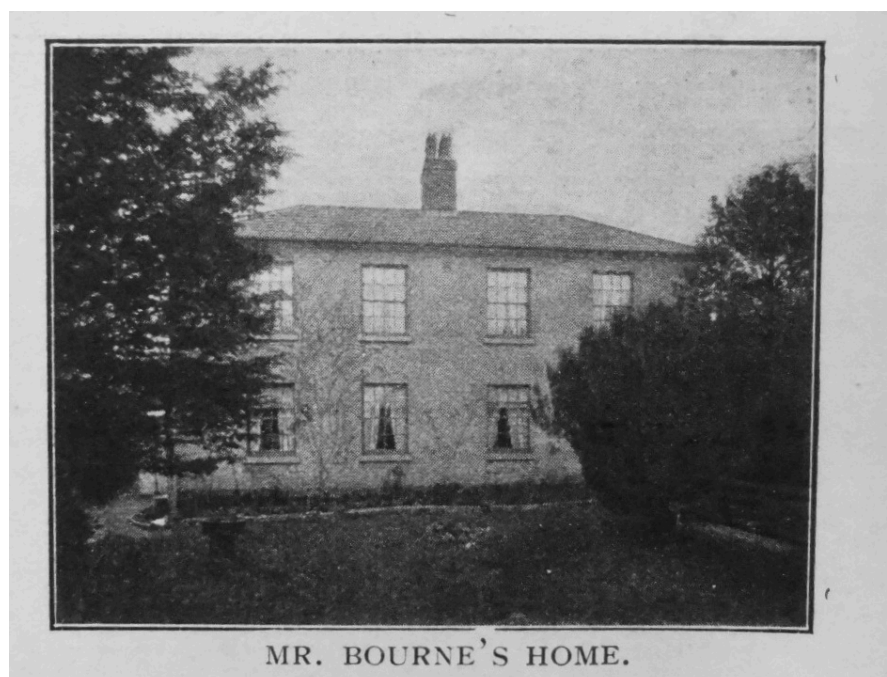
As preacher and platform speaker he ranks with our best. He possesses a gentlemanly presence, a well-stored mind, a good memory, a musical voice, great facility of expression and a stout, warm heart. His voice has been heard at the Metropolitan Missionary Meeting, at the last great Centenary Camp Meeting on Mow Cop, and in many of our largest churches. The preaching passion is dominant. The books which crowd his study shelves are a standing witness to the fact. All reading and observation are subservient to the ministry of the word, and all texts lead to the Cross.



He has read widely and well, in history, poetry, biography and theology, but he clings tenaciously to the evangelical gospel. Sin and salvation are to him tremendous facts, and he preaches them in season and out of season. His contributions to our magazines have been both numerous and excellent. Mr. Bourne is a "Connexional" man. He has long been a member of all the Committees of his District, and he is also a member of the General Committee, and of the Local Preachers' Training Council. For eight years he has been the Steward of the Church Gresley Circuit. District Meetings and annual Conferences do not see much of him. That, however, is not because his brethren do not elect him to attend, but because business obligations stand in the way. For seventeen years he has acted as Secretary to the Moira Colliery Company, the Donisthorpe Colliery Company, and the Donington Sanitary Pipe and FireBrick Company. Such responsibilities prevent long absences from home.

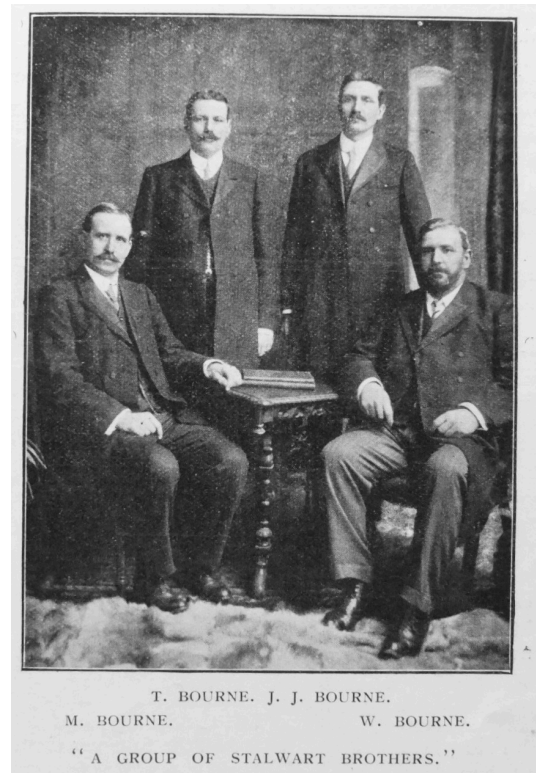
Yet this stalwart finds time to render a great deal of civic service. The following are a few of the positions Mr. Bourne fills at the present time:

— Chairman of School Managers in the Ashby Woulds District, and also of the Overseal area in Derbyshire; Governor of the Ashby-de-la-Zouch Grammar School; member of the Ashby Woulds Urban Council; Secretary of the local institute, and Treasurer of the Local Nursing Association. To these he has added the Secretaryship of the



Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society. Residing, as Mr. Bourne does, on the borders of two Parliamentary Divisions a double portion of political campaigning falls to his lot. In the Bosworth and South Derbyshire constituencies he has rendered the Liberal cause yeoman service, often speaking at two or three meetings per night. In County Council affairs he is not inactive. In 1910 a seat was won from the Conservatives after twenty-one years' possession. The successful candidate wrote to Mr. Bourne at the close of the battle:— "I take no credit to myself, the credit lies with my workers, and among all the workers *you stand foremost.*"

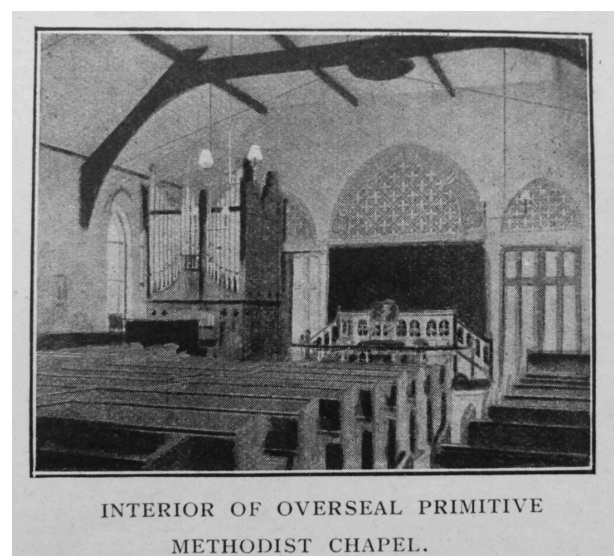
It is difficult to estimate the full value of such a strong personality as this to the cause of education, religious liberty, social reform, and moral advance. The amount of work Mr. Bourne succeeds in doing justifies the remark we often hear:— "If you want anything done ask a busy man to do it."



Connexional loyalty is writ large upon the heart of Mr. Bourne. By training, conviction, conversion, and observation he is a Primitive Methodist through and through. Our polity, doctrines, methods of work, and forms of worship commend themselves to his judgment. He reveres the memory of the men and women who laid the foundations of our Zion. He preaches with fine effect on the passage, "Walk about Zion, and go round about her; tell the towers thereof; mark well her bulwarks, and consider her palaces." He has obeyed the text in respect of our Zion, and has reached the conclusion that Primitive Methodism is one of the fairest creations of Divine grace, and that we have a special work to do in our own way. The glamour of the idea of organic union has not cast its spell over him as it has over many.

It is refreshing to recall that Mr. Bourne is in the full vigour of life. When, in the space of a few months, such champions as Messrs. T. Lawrence, W. Beckworth, J. Harrison, and John Jones have left the field of battle, it is something to know that these ascended veterans have worthy successors, and that the mantle of Elijah has not fallen to the ground, but that others are carrying on the good work "in the spirit and power of Elijah."

Moses Bourne is not the only survivor of a noble race. He has three brothers and three sisters—all in the Church Gresley Circuit, who are doing good service for the Church of Christ



and Primitive Methodism. One brother is Treasurer of the Castle Gresley Trust, and took a very active part in securing the new and beautiful church. Another is Secretary of the Church Gresley Trust, and an active worker in the Sunday School. Another is closely associated with the same church, and also serves on the Swadlincote Urban Council. The sisters also are wholehearted Primitives. Quite a number of children are being reared according to the best traditions of the family. Thus generation succeeds generation, and the holy succession is maintained. May it long continue.



Of Mrs. Bourne it is impossible to speak too highly. In intellectual tastes and attainments, and in spiritual sympathies she is an ideal helpmeet and companion. She not only does not complain at her husband's frequent absences from home, but she encourages him to do all he can in "furtherance of the Gospel." Mrs. Bourne is indeed an angel in the home.

In appraising the worth and work of her husband much of their value must be set down to her credit. To the peacefulness and felicity of his home life Mr. Bourne delights to pay his grateful tribute. Certainly Mrs. Bourne's gentleness, devotion, and sympathetic co-operation have helped to make her husband great.

We hope the day will come when some measure of release from the claims of commercial life will be given to this lover of souls and of the Church, so that a still larger portion of his time and his princely gifts may be devoted to the work which lies nearest his heart—the hastening of the coming of the Kingdom of God in the souls and lives of men. To know such a man is a privilege, while to possess his friendship is a priceless boon.

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#### References

*Primitive Methodist Magazine* 1912/550