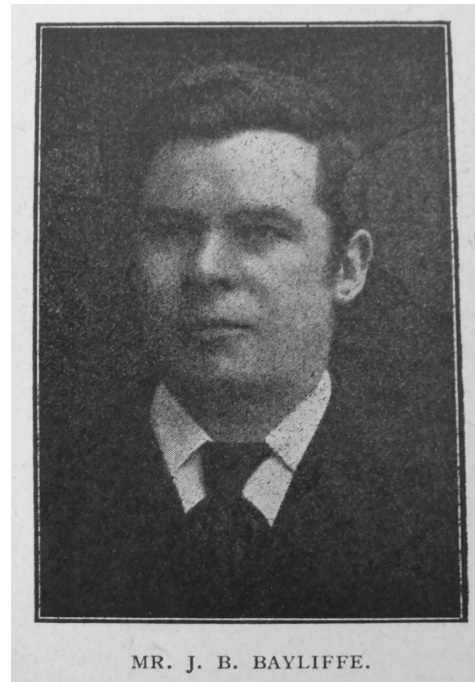


“Our Brave Bayliffe”
Sketch in Primitive Methodist Magazine by Joseph Odell

To my family, at home and abroad, he is known as “Beloved Bayliffe.” It has been ours to know him well and gratefully for nearly thirty years.

In his earlier days he finely and fully represented the “Evangelist’s Home.” We then shared the prophecy of those successful years of a very laborious and ever-ripening life. In those memorable years he was best seen at his loved work on The Horse Fair, Bristol Street, Birmingham. Rustic, nobly real, and showing it, he held men there, as by a grip divine! His method was not the accidental thing of taste and style. It was the man himself. With travail he wrestled with the humans around him. Men gathered, moved near, and could not leave the spot. Most of them were leaving work; but ah! How they were held! With their empty baskets under their arms, begrimed faces, and oft with the weariness and hunger of a heavy day hanging to them, and home awaiting them with welcome; but “Bayliffe got them,” so they said, and he held them for his Lord! With soiled faces and traces of tears they sat in dear old Gooch Street Chapel – some of them to find their Saviour and begin life again, as we knew and recorded. This was “the Evangelist”! He knew his work.



To the high honour of our brother it ought to be recorded: *He could not be seduced!* Temptations were plentiful. Circuits would “pledge him.” Deputations came. He was to be *made a minister*; “pledge, circuit-house, etc.” They required him. Of course, they always require converters. He was as an Elijah - “God is my strength; I am a converter.”

It was not weariness which overcame him, or “high falutin” about the ministry; his intensive life and expressive work gave him many converts. Eminently successful - on and on! It was my privilege to make a loan of him to the saintly Frank Crossley, of Star Hall fame. Mr. Crossley sent the monthly report of his work, on the front page of which I read again and again: “Mr. Bayliffe is the only man I have known who grows more modest as he becomes more successful.” Fruit – bearing beautified him. The laden tree - fruit-bearing, rich and luscious for sweetening and strengthening others, was rarest and most replenishing when nearest the ground. Writing as one who knew Mr. Bayliffe quite intimately, and gave him comradeship in service, my friend, Mr. Frank Crossley, now in triumph with our Lord, interpreted Mr. Bayliffe.

Mr. Bayliffe's marriage amongst his own people and in a Primitive Methodist chapel was all the man! His bride was worthy of him. While Mr. Bayliffe survives there is no back number in evangelism as he knows it and practises it.

Reference

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