

## **Tom Sykes**

### **Transcription of Obituary in Minutes of Methodist Conference**

Born at Wetwang, on the Yorkshire Wolds, in 1874. Though he had little schooling he early showed a passion for reading, and was soon called upon to preach. After serving some time as a lay pastor at Pocklington, he was called into the Primitive Methodist Ministry, and entered Hartley College in 1895.

He spent the first ten years of his ministry in Hull, where he served on three circuits, and was then called to Newcastle-upon-Tyne. After that, he became the secretary of the Brotherhood Movement, and for nine years he was preaching and speaking on its behalf in many parts of the country.

For the rest of his ministry he was taken up with evangelical campaigns under the Home Mission Department.

He continued to preach and lecture after his retirement, and during the second World War lectured to soldiers and civilians under the aegis of Hull University and the Ministry of Information.

He was a prince of preachers, and was gifted with a rich baritone voice which he used to expound great themes. His sermons were warmly evangelical, but he was never tawdry or sentimental. He proclaimed the great truths of the gospel with a clarity that sprang from a well-stored mind as well as a burning personal conviction ; for he was a great reader, and he had an astonishing library of theology, philosophy, criticism, and general literature.

A few days before he died, when he had become very frail, he said : I feel ashamed. This is the first day since I was twenty that I have not had a book in my hand." He wrote two books himself, and conducted preaching and lecturing campaigns in Canada and the United States.

He died on 6 January 1962 on the eve of his eighty-eighth birthday and in the sixty fourth year of his ministry.

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### **References**

*Methodist Minutes* 1962/201

Transcribed by Christopher Hancock