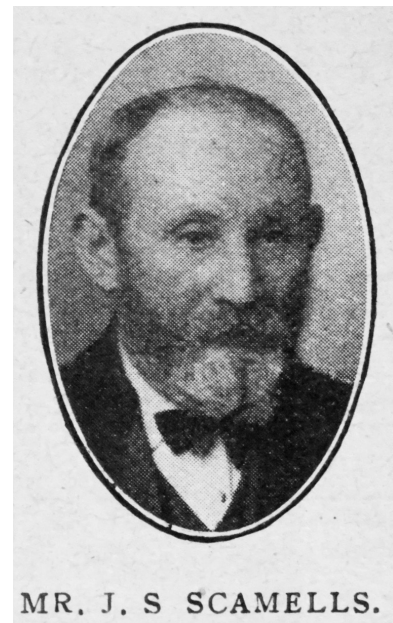


Transcription of a sketch in the Christian Messenger by Rev. R. Walton

It is not often we meet a person who has a three-fold Jubilee celebration at the same time. Mr. J. S. Scamells, of the Rhymney Valley Circuit, South Wales district, is one to whom such celebration may be credited. Fifty years of married life, fifty years a Sunday School teacher, and fifty years a local preacher is his record. The "well done" may be said of him, and that not because of the number of years alone, but because of his efficient character in relation to each. As husband and father he bears an unspotted reputation, and it was with unmingled gladness that he and his dearest friends celebrated his Jubilee. Though in his seventy-first year, he is hale and hearty, works in the pit every day, and, to human appearance, has many years to live. May that be realised is the prayerful wish of his friends. He is well known, highly respected and trusted by the people. The present generation has grown up around him, and, looking upon him as one of themselves, he is accosted and approached in the spirit of kinship.



He was born at Frome in Somerset, but left there at the age of sixteen and came to South Wales. The change of scenery was a bit disappointing to him, and at times home sickness urged him to return, but better wages proved the stronger inducement, and the yearning for his "native heath" gradually abated, and he settled to his new surroundings. Though unconverted, he was induced to become a teacher in the Sunday School. He often wondered if he had done right; an unconverted teacher seemed an undesirable thing. Fortunately he stuck to his post, and settled the point by joining the church. Other calls for service came to him, and as he had a love for reading, and gave evidences of speaking ability by his addresses in the school, he was asked, and consented to try to preach, and was placed on the plan as local preacher by the Rev. Jabez Oliver, Circuit Minister. By this time he had taken to himself a wife, Miss Britton. His home was at Brynmawr, and during the first eight years of his married life, a class meeting was held in his house at 8.30 a.m., and Sunday School at 9.30.

He attended the first Missionary meeting in the Tredegar Circuit – it was at Abertillery, in a club room over a public house – and he speaks in joyous excitement as he tells of the wonderful growth of the cause since then, and how that the little one has become so great, that it possesses one of the largest chapels in the district, and over three hundred members. There has been growth all round, for what was then Tredegar Circuit has been divided into six, and all six are thriving, and of good prospect.

He has taken his share in that growth and can relate some strange stories in connection with it. Long journeys over the mountains, tired limbs, wet skins, hungry stomachs and a bit of persecution, were the portion of the preachers. But nothing daunted, they plodded on, and counted themselves honoured by Christ in whose name they toiled and suffered.

He is one of four persons who began "the cause" at Cwm; the services were first held in a cottage, next in the mouth of an old mine level, which was made as comfortable as conditions would allow, next in a chapel, and he had the honoured privilege of preaching twice on one of the Sundays of the opening services. A staunch abstainer, he has done a great deal in Temperance work and the Band of Hope movement.

During the last twenty-seven years he has resided in New Tredegar, and has filled the positions of class leader, superintendent of Sunday School, Circuit steward, local preacher, is a trustee for three chapels, and has represented his Circuit in the District Synod and been to Conference. He is a good man, fills his official positions with dignity, and does splendid service in his own and other churches.

References

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Note: This Sketch relates to Mr. W.J. Scammels Not Mr J.S. Scammels.