

Jenkinson Haxby

Transcription of Obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by Henry Oliver

The Filey Circuit has sustained a great loss in the departure of Mr. Haxby. He held a unique position in both church and circuit, was intimately known, deeply respected, and greatly beloved.

Brother Haxby was born at Filey, April 6th, 1827, and died November 14th, 1908. His parents belonged to the fishing class of Filey. He followed the same occupation for half a century, sharing the dangers, the hardships, and risks of such a calling. He was in many a storm and saw comrades go down in the "deep waters" to rise no more. He ever acknowledged with deep gratitude the good hand of his God in preserving him. He applied himself assiduously to his work.

Mixing it with common sense and prayer, he realised a fair degree of prosperity, so that for the last quarter of a century he was able to cease from the rough life of the fisherman and live in leisure from business, devoting his time and energy to the temporal and spiritual interests of the Church. From early youth he had been religiously inclined, going when a boy to the Wesleyan Church. He was a Primitive Methodist class leader at seventeen, and one he remained to the end of his life. In this work he found much joy and success. He possessed special qualifications for the office, namely simplicity, spirituality, and great faith in the class as a means of grace. Rev. F.J. Heape writing, says, "He was a model class leader, discovered, and used the gifts of his members, and would have forty or fifty testify in the hour."

Our brother was a local preacher of long-standing who began when Filey was part of the Scarborough Circuit, hence journeys long and the work hard, but he reflected on those days with much joy, and was never wearied of speaking of his association with some of the Connexional fathers such as Revs. W. Harland, James Mules, and others.

The last twenty-five years of his life he was the recognised conductor of the far-famed band of Filey fishermen, which has done such splendid evangelistic work in Yorkshire and other counties, and witnessed the conversion of hundreds to Christ. This work fascinated him and became a passion, and no doubt he ventured too much in this beloved work and hastened the end.

The Conference held in Hull, 1902, placed him on the Deed Poll, and for this honour he was grateful to the last, and was always anxious to attend the Annual Assembly and do his duty.

In the later years of his life he rendered probably the greatest service for his Master when for love's sake he became the "family visitor" for Filey, welcomed in the homes of all. Well fitted for this work both by nature and grace, gentle and quiet in movement, rich and deep in religious experience he moved among the suffering people as a "true comforter." It will never be known how much help to the needy, joy to the sorrowing, and comfort to the dying he brought.

Whilst our brother was an intensely spiritually minded man he also had the greatest interest in the temporal affairs of the church. He found the money for the deposit to purchase the land on which our beautiful church was erected in 1870. He was an original and a very active and interested trustee to the last.

His end came suddenly and unexpectedly, for during the months of summer he was active and looked well. We had hopes for a more lengthened stay, but he took a chill and overwrought his strength when out with the band, and life's day closed quickly. There was only a week's lingering. Neither medical skill nor gentle nursing could hold him back. "He crossed to the other side" to meet old comrades and his Master. All was well. He had often said he wanted to be "nicely packed up." So he was. He said he had seen the Celestial City, and had an "abundant entrance."

The funeral was perhaps the largest seen in Filey. Business was suspended. Blinds drawn down in respect. Friends came from far and near. The General Committee was represented by W. Beckworth, Esq., and the district by Rev. R.W. Keightly. Service was conducted first in our church, and then in the parish church; the vicar, curate, Revs. H. Oliver, E. Smith, and I. Potts taking part. Devout men carried him to burial. We sang, according to the custom at a fisherman's funeral, "There is a land of pure delight," and Rev. F.E. Heape gave a touching address at the grave. "We sorrow not as those which have no hope." Our brother "shall rise again."

He leaves an aged widow who mourns his removal, but patiently waits for the reunion on the other side.

References

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