

## **Matilda Corbett, nee Archer**

### **Transcription of obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by W.R.**

Matilda Corbett. Mrs. Corbett, daughter of James and Matilda Archer, was born in London, in the year 1815, but in early life she removed with her parents to Birmingham. Her parents, rightly appreciating the value and importance of Sabbath-schools, as being calculated to promote the moral and spiritual interests of their offspring, sent her to one as soon as they conveniently could. And in the Sabbath-school, under the conversation of a pious teacher, "the day-spring from on high" visited her; the true state of her heart was disclosed to her; she felt wretched and miserable; but could not appropriate the merits of the atonement to her individual case. Her father, who was then a follower of the Lamb, had in his dwelling an altar consecrated to the service of Jehovah, around which, at stated times, the family was summoned to join in prayer and praise. In this delightful employment, our lamented sister would willingly unite; and one night, while thus engaged, the Holy Ghost descended powerfully, and she wrestled earnestly with God for deliverance; and after a hard and long struggle, assisted by the prayers of her father, she found peace through believing,

At the age of fourteen she became one of the lambs of Christ, and began to follow him as the Good Shepherd. She then united with the Wesleyans, and, by a holy walk, kept a conscience void of offence, both towards God and man. Her whole deportment adorned her profession; the light of her religion was pure and diffusive; and such as the enemies of the cross could not gainsay. She attended all the means of grace she could, by which she kept up the life of God in her soul.

The death of her mother, though it distressed her greatly, was also sanctified to her good. "In the affliction and removal of her whom I loved," said she, "I saw the hand of God, and it drove me nearer and oftener to Christ." After her mother's death she then became a teacher in the Sabbath-school in which she had been a scholar; but from a circumstance which transpired soon after, she was induced to attend the ministry of the Primitive Methodists, and was enamoured with their simplicity and zeal.

In the year 1834 she united with them, and maintained a consistency of deportment until the time of her decease, ever ready to engage in the cause of Christ. In the first year of her membership with our people, she was appointed a teacher and prayer-leader; and she had the satisfaction of knowing that her labour was not in vain. Some who were then instructed by her, regard her as the instrument of their salvation.

In the following year she was appointed to the office of a local-preacher, to which she reluctantly yielded (after much prayer and many entreaties). After a few months had elapsed, she was called out to travel by the Darlaston circuit, - in which she continued for nearly twelve months. Thence she was removed to the Kidderminster circuit, and afterwards to Burland, Ludlow, and Ramsor, successively. As a preacher, she was acceptable and useful; in every circuit she had seals to her ministry, and souls for her hire, which will be the crown of her rejoicing in the day of Christ.

In 1841, she was united in marriage to Mr. E. Corbett, who now deeply deplores his loss, and locating in this neighbourhood, she united with our society in Wednesbury, - with whom she

remained till death, a period of nine years; during which time she enjoyed the confidence and esteem of her leader, and of every member of society. If absent from her place in the sanctuary they were always satisfied of its necessity. It was her delight to meet with the people of God, and often would she exclaim, "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!" In her, many Christian excellences eminently shone forth; her strong faith, glowing zeal, deep humility, love of peace, perfect sincerity, earnest desire for the salvation of souls, and love to Christ, were worthy of admiration.

For nearly ten years she laboured in Darlaston circuit, with unabated zeal, as a local-preacher, and with some success; and when disengaged, she gave her services to the surrounding circuits. In this work of love, it is generally thought she sacrificed her life. During last winter, she engaged to preach occasional sermons in the Birmingham circuit; and in returning home, the weather being very inclement, she caught cold; her lungs became ulcerated, and a consumption ensued. But the Lord was with her therein. A friend said to her, "Well, Matilda, do you find the gospel you have so often recommended to others, sufficient to support you?" And earnestly she replied, "I find it to be the power of God to salvation." At another time being asked, "Do you enjoy the peace which Christ promised to his followers?" She replied,

"Not a cloud doth arise to darken the skies,  
Nor hide for a moment my Lord from my eyes."

On May 26th, 1851, giving an account of her experience, forebodings, and temptations, she said, "I am very ill; probably not far from another world; but I have settled matters with Heaven. I am a defective creature; I ought to have loved and served God more, but I am happy; a sense of sins forgiven makes me happy; God is my Father; I am His child; still, in the future, there is something that humbles me, and too often depresses my spirit. There is the severance of associations, and Edward (her husband), what will he do when I am gone?" Then making a pause, as if for a moment to hold converse with God, she broke silence, by saying, "The will of the Lord be done;" adding, "I have been sorely tempted, but have had grace proportioned to my day, and out of all there has been a way for my escape."

On May 30th, she was considerably improved in appearance, owing, as she believed, to a difference of treatment, and said, "If it be the will of the Lord he can raise me up again: but his will be done; he is chastising me for my past neglect, and if I am raised up again, I trust I shall be more useful." After encouraging her to trust in the promises of God, her visitants knelt down, prayed with her, and the Holy Ghost descended upon them in an extraordinary manner.

As she was drawing near the confines of eternity, a friend inquired as to the state of her mind, and she exclaimed, "I am on the Rock! Christ is mine." As the body wasted, her prospects brightened; her anchor was cast within the vail, and, in the midst of dissolution she whispered, "All is well." Thus died our dear sister, in the hope of the gospel, on August 3rd, 1851. May we follow her, as she followed Christ.

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## References

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