

## Rev. David Kyles

### Transcription of obituary published in the Minutes of Conference by J.A. West

In the death of DAVID KYLES the Connexion has lost one of its most promising sons, and one of the brightest and most loveable spirits it has been my lot to meet. Born in North Shields in 1872, he was, from his infancy, connected with Saville-street church, and at an early age, as the result of the religious surroundings of his home, and especially the influence of his mother, to whom he was deeply devoted, he surrendered himself to Christ during some special services which were being held. That surrender was with him no nominal thing, but deeply influenced, and moulded the whole of his future career, touching an already fine nature to nobler aspiration and attainment. The circuit, recognising in him the possibility of great usefulness and of a wider sphere of service, recommended him for the plan in 1891, and in the course of a little time, under the guidance and direction of the Rev. H. Yooll, to whom he frequently acknowledged his indebtedness, he began to prepare for the ministry.

He entered the Manchester College in 1895, and unanimous testimony is borne to the winsomeness and charm of his nature as well as to his success and attainments as a student by the then principal, Rev. J. Watson, D.D., the College secretary, Rev. J. Welford, and by those who were his fellow-students. In 1897 he was stationed in the Stanley circuit at Annfield Plain. From the beginning he won the hearts of the people, and by his sympathy and genial friendliness secured for himself an unbounded love. I have never come across a similar instance where a young minister has made such a deep impression upon a district, and won the affectionate regard, not only of the people in the circuit, but of those not connected with any church at all, some of whom predicted that our young brother would have made a name in the Connexion if he had lived.

As a preacher and platform speaker he was aided by a commanding and handsome presence, and in each capacity had attained to no mean position, whilst his abilities commanded the admiration of the whole circuit. We all looked forward to long years of service for him, and he himself anticipated with joy the work which lay before him in the full ministry. But that full ministry he was never destined to reach, for at the beginning of the last year of his probation he laid down his work here to enter the more immediate service of the Master's presence.

He left Stanley to go home to Newport (Mon.), for a holiday, to all appearance in the fullest health and strength, but whilst there he was seized with an illness which necessitated the performance of an operation. This took place on Thursday, August 9th, and after the operation he gradually sank, and passed peacefully away on Sunday morning, August 12th. To his friends he said: 'Whether life or death, I am ready. I feel the presence of God so near. If the Lord spare me, I will go back to preach the Word with greater zeal; if not; I am ready to go to Him.'

When the news was telegraphed to Stanley and Annfield Plain, the whole circuit was plunged into the deepest consternation and sorrow, and though time has worn away somewhat the freshness of the grief, yet to-day he is deeply mourned and his loss is sorely felt.

The Rev. J. Dodd, his close friend and companion during his college term and the short period of his ministry, speaks of him as follows:—'In David Kyles there was a remarkable combination of qualities. He was many-sided, and reminded one of Henry Drummond. As a thinker and preacher he always commanded respect. He was a great reader, but always endeavoured to form an independent conclusion. He was not

afraid to grapple with intellectual or religious difficulties, and his opinions were ever characterised by common-sense. But he resembled Drummond most of all in his affectionate and magnetic disposition.

Naturally men felt at home in his presence. He was a general favourite. When in college he was the confidant of almost every other student, and when he became a minister his people placed the same trust in him. It is as a true friend and a wise counsellor that he is missed the most by his numerous acquaintances. As a minister his supreme desire was to win souls. This desire became more intense every year of his short ministry. During the last few months of this life his sermons altered somewhat in character; they became thoroughly evangelical, and contained many direct and searching appeals. There was an increased earnestness and passion in his preaching, and seldom did he preach without seeing some immediate success. Last July he expressed to me his great hope that the Simultaneous Mission would bring thousands into the fold of Christ. He also announced his intention to do his utmost in his own district to further the success of the Mission. But his intentions were not to be realised. God called him hence. Though he himself is no longer with us, the memory of his noble character and useful life will still remain as a powerful influence with those that knew him. May God graciously bless and comfort his relatives and sorrowing friends, and cheer them with the hope of union beyond the present life.

---

#### References

*PM Minutes* 1901/24