

Mary Anna Elizabeth Cordlingley

Transcription of obituary published in the Primitive Methodist Magazine

MRS. CORDINGLEY was the only daughter and youngest child of William and Anna Moore, of Motcombe, near Shaftesbury, Dorset. She was born October 13th, 1809, and afterwards baptized according to the rites of the Church of England, Mary Anna Elizabeth. Methodism had an ancient and respectable standing in Motcombe, and to its Sunday-school Miss Moore, along with her brothers William and John, were sent; probably this laid the foundation of their Methodism.

Miss Moore was early trained to habits of industry, early rising, and perfect propriety in all things; hence she was held in universal esteem by those who were favoured with her acquaintance.

Visiting Nunney, near Frome, she first heard of the Primitives, under the name ranter, but what this meant she could not tell, but seeing a number of children singing, she said to her cousin, Mrs. Rabbits, "Who are those children?" "Oh, they are ranter children, their parents are ranters, they sing and pray all the day long." "Oh, I thought they perhaps were some foreign people, but they are like ourselves." "Yes," said Mrs. R. "they are natives of the place, and Mr. _____ has fitted up a room to preach in, and there is a woman going to preach, and you shall go and hear her." At the time appointed she went; the solemnity of the preacher, her quaker dress, and the effect of the meeting, graciously influenced her mind.

Some time after this event, the Primitives made their way to Motcombe (spring of 1826). Mr. Drudge, a local preacher, was followed by Miss Ruth Watkins, and Mr. W. Paddison, and by the end of November following a host were converted to God, among them the brothers and cousins of Miss Moore. In such a glow of heavenly influences, and surrounded with such an atmosphere, it was not likely Miss Moore would be long behind. Her conversion was sudden, heavenly, happy, ecstatic; her cousin, Mr. Walter Bartley prayed as few do pray; Miss Moore believed with her heart unto righteousness, and made confession unto salvation. (Rom. x. 9.)

Twenty young females and upwards were led in class every Sabbath morning by a Wesleyan lady of experience, who left her own chapel to guide these young lambs in the way they should go, most of whom became efficient pillars to go out no more.

At the September quarter, 1827, Miss Moore was placed on the Motcombe circuit plan along with her friend Miss Perham. Soon after they preached at Sutton and Twyford to crowds of people with great effect; some bear a grateful remembrance of those services to this day. Miss Moore had then scarcely reached the eighteenth year of her age. Her brother John, who had become a travelling preacher, failing in health, she went to supply his place while he rested a little; during this period she attended the great and ever to be remembered missionary meeting, held at Wootton Bassett, on Good Friday, 1829, when it was determined to send missionaries into Berkshire, and its adjacent parts.

August 7th, 1830, she was sent by her own circuit as a missionary to Salisbury; her labours were great, and success considerable. Dr. Goode sent for her, he inquired into her conversion, views of the ministry and motives, and being satisfied he gave her instructions which were of service to her in after years. Mr. C. Broadway, who was an old Wesleyan local preacher, a native of Motcombe, and a distant relation to her father, received her with open arms, wept, called her "his dear little angel," assisted her to hammer out her texts as he called it, visited with her from door to door. He had erected for the Primitives a chapel at Martin, and as Mr. Jukes says of him in a memoir in the Primitive Methodist Magazine, "He gave much alms to the people and prayed to God alway." These were some of her bright, happy, and successful, days.

Ludlow was her next station, and including Leominster, Kidderminster, Bewdley forest, her journeys were often very long, and performed on foot. At Tillerstone hills she got lost, the fog was so great; arriving with great difficulty at a farm house, the dog ready to tear her down, the mistress of the house cried "Who's there?" and coming to the door to see, she said, "O, some Methodist thing, I suppose;" feeling nearly exhausted she wept, and enquired her way to Mr. Dolphin's, where she had to preach; the large congregation was waiting, and after a few minutes she commenced the service.

Her next station was Shefford, Berkshire, under the superintendency of Mr. John Ride; there were upwards of twenty preachers in various departments of that and the adjacent counties, but to relate the incidents and travels would make a large book.

View a solitary female travelling town and country through, preaching some five times on work days, and often three times on the Sabbaths, chiefly in the open air, visiting the poor in their dwellings, and sometimes the rich. Her dress is that of a quaker, she is under the middle size, healthy; her countenance beams with meekness and serenity, ruffians who literally tear off the coat laps of the men preachers allow her to pass, her very helplessness and innocence seem to awe their minds.

Another view. It is Sabbath morning, the clock has struck nine; she stands in Abingdon market place, a thousand people are before her, two or three police on each side of her. She makes her way to an adjacent village at half-past one, the gentry follow in their coaches, she preaches in the open air, makes her quarterly collection, at five o'clock preaches in another village, and when done retires with a few females to a distant village to rest.

In the midsummer of 1834 she became the wife of Richard Cordingley. After a short visit to her parents in Dorsetshire she came to reside at Oswestry. She preached in most of the villages of that extensive circuit,

Bromyard was her next station. Here she usually preached at 9 o'clock every Sabbath morning, weather permitting, led a class of some thirty members, visited and relieved the sick, taught a select class on work days, missioned in all the villages round, walked her journeys.

Madley, in home part of Cwm circuit, was her next station. Here she had sweet intercourse with Mr. W. Gilbert and family, Mrs. Lea, who was then living, and her family, and various other devoted souls.

At Alton, in Ramsor circuit, she commenced a new class and Sabbath school. In the "black country" her engagements were so numerous in preaching charity, anniversary and other special sermons, that her family have collected a volume of printed circulars of those services.

Presteign, Preece, a second and third visit into the "black country," then came her removal into Yorkshire. During her second year at Easingwold we had signal prosperity in the lowering of a chapel debt and in a revival of religion. At Middleton prosperity was again the rule, but health failed. Failing health setting in with both husband and wife, they both finally sat down at Lancaster. Being unable to walk, her friends at Middleham had provided a small hand carriage; in this she often rode, and even visited a number of friends in Lancaster. Gradually new friends appeared, Colonel Yeadle, Mr. T. Lane, Mrs. Sergeant Mills, Mrs. Quarm and family, and various others, kindly and repeatedly visited her. And in addition to our own ministers and members living near us, she had visits from J. Petty, T. Russell, M. Lupton, J. Guy and other brethren.

Her experience during her long affliction, but more especially during the latter part of it, was that of a real Christian, her own unworthiness, the fulness and freshness of the atonement in all its glories. She had at times temptations, she longed to be gone, asked why the chariot wheels delayed; in calmness she died, in the arms of her daughter Elizabeth, close beside her husband, at a quarter past six o'clock on the morning of Tuesday, April 7th, 1868, aged fifty-eight years.

References

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