

**MEMOIR OF ROBERT WOODHALL,
Primitive Methodist Travelling Preacher.**

Dear Brother,—I sit down with feelings not easily to be expressed, to write a few remarks on the useful life, and happy death, of our late respected Brother Woodhall, who has sweetly fallen asleep in the arms of the Beloved.

Yours in Christ, G. Bagiey.

Robert Woodhall, son of Robert and Rebecca Woodhall, was born Feb. 5, 1802, at Selby, in Yorkshire. His pious parents took great care to teach him the fear of the Lord; and through their pious care he was brought to think seriously about his soul, and to weep before the Lord on account of his sins. But he did not close in with offered mercy until he was thirteen years of age. He then was deeply affected, under a sermon by a Mr. Aswell,, from “Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.” And in the prayer meeting after, while his pious father was offering him up to the Lord by faith and prayer, he felt that God for Christ’s sake had blotted out his sins. And he continued in the good way for some time. But at length, giving way to wild company, he fell into sin. But not being able to rest in that state, he again sought the Lord by repentance, faith, and prayer; and the Lord restored him his pardoning mercy and adopting love; and from that time to the day of his death, he continued to follow Christ his Head to heaven.

When about seventeen years of age, his mind was exercised about preaching. But, looking at the greatness of the work, and his own weakness, he strove against it. But the Lord continued to strive with him till he took up his cross; and after a time his name was put on the plan in the Brotherton branch of Hull circuit; and he continued to fill up the office of a local preacher, until he was called out to travel.

At the Conference held May 5, 1834, he was appointed to this, the Dariaston circuit; and my being appointed to this circuit a second year, gave me the opportunity of receiving him into his new circuit, June 28, 1834. He was at that time very ill, and unfit for labour. But being appointed to preach two of the charity sermons at Darlaston, on July the sixth, he on that day spoke twice; and on the Wednesday week following he went to Tipton, on important business; and this was the last time of his going out into the circuit.

Being in a decline, he continued to grow worse until September, 25, 1834, when he was confined to his bed; and on my return out of the circuit on the Saturday following, I found him very ill, but very happy. I said, “Brother Woodhall, you are very ill?” “I am,” was the reply. I said, “But I suppose all is right,” He answered, “I now find the truths I have preached to others are a support to myself. I feel Christ is precious, and his blood cleanseth from all sin.”

Sunday, Sept. 28, he was very ill, but very happy. Many of the friends visited him, and he preached Christ to all who came, exhorting all to cleave close to Christ.

Thursday, Oct. 2.—The members of the Circuit Committee visited him; and, after sweet and delightful conversation about God and heaven, Brother Plant prayed, the power of God came down, and Brother Woodhall shouted “Glory! Bless him, he is good.” And we were all refreshed.

Sunday, Oct. 5.—He being labouring under severe pain, I asked if all was right, and he replied, “Yes: I feel Christ is mine, and I am his.” To my enquiry on another occasion, he said, “I feel little but pain; but I trust in Christ, and he will take care of me. He is able to keep that which I have committed to his care.” And on one occasion, brother Bowen was sitting by his side, and his pain being very great, he cast his eyes toward heaven, as though he saw Jesus; and, pointing with his finger towards heaven, he said, “I think he is coming to fetch me. Bless him, I long to be with him.” On the Sunday but one before he died, after struggling a few minutes with pain, he broke out into a delightful strain of Glory, halleluia! praise him! Glory, halleluia! Salvation ! And so on, till his strength was exhausted. In the course of the week, as some of the friends were sitting by him, he said, “You will soon have to carry this bit of clay to yonder chapel yard. But while you are singing below, I shall be singing above, the song of Moses and the Lamb.”

About twenty-four hours before he died, after labouring a long time with pain, he broke out into a delightful strain of "Victory! Victory! Halleluia! Salvation! Glory! Victory! Victory! I have the victory through the blood of the' Lamb."

In this happy state, he put forth his hand and took a farewell leave of his wife, of one child, of his colleagues, and friends; and the advice given on that occasion I shall never forget:—"Bagley, my lad," he said, "be faithful, and preach Christ faithfully, and plainly, and God will bless you. Be willing' to suffer any thing, and every thing, for the cause of Christ, and he will help you through."

He continued labouring for his breath all the day, but remained happy. About a quarter of an hour before he departed, he was composed, as if going to sleep. I said "Brother Woodhall, you are very ill, but I think you will soon be gone." "O," said he, "that will be excellent." Shortly after, as I was wiping the sweat off his face, I heard him say, "Glory, glory, glory, glory!" four times; and then, without a struggle or groan, and with a sweet smile on his countenance, he fell asleep in the arms of the Beloved, October 20, 1834, in the thirty-second year of his age, leaving a wife and four children to lament their loss.

His body was carried by the local preachers and leaders, to our chapel yard in Wednesbury. His funeral was attended by about six hundred of the friends, Brother Britain officiated on the occasion, and the blessing of God rested upon us. His funeral sermons have been preached at most places in the circuit, to crowded congregations, and good has been done. Yours in the Lord, G. Bagley.

(Approved by the Circuit Committee.)

Remarks, taken chiefly from the Yearly Reports.

Brother Woodhall was converted to the Lord in the month of December, 1815, being then thirteen years and nine months old. He began to labour as a local preacher in the year 1818, and continued till September, 1822, when he was taken out by Brotherton circuit, to labour as a travelling preacher. And he travelled in Brotherton, Marshland, Louth, Hull, Brigg, Pocklington, Halifax, and Bradford circuits. He possessed good talents, was remarkably upright, and much beloved in the circuits.

References

Primitive Methodist Magazine 1835/180