

## **Rev. Thomas Hobson**

### **Transcription of Obituary In the Primitive Methodist Magazine by Nathaniel Watts**

ANOTHER of the early ministers of our beloved Connexion has been promoted to the higher service in the heaven of God. The Rev. Thomas Hobson was born in the town of Louth, Lincolnshire, on July 1st, 1814, and passed away from this world at Stroud on May 9th, 1901, in the eighty-seventh year of his age. Of his early we know very little, as he has not left behind him any intelligence of them, but we know he was born of godly parentage who were Primitive Methodists. His father took Thomas at an early age to our chapel in Louth Sunday after Sunday; but dying when his son was only about five years of age, Thomas was left entirely to the care of his mother, who was a very saintly woman and an intelligent class leader in connection with our society in Louth. She looked well after the spiritual interests of her family, training up her children in the way they should go, and when Thomas was between fifteen and sixteen years of age, he gave his



heart to the Lord in our chapel in the town of his birth, and soon after this blessed event had taken place, he united with the church there. He was of a very active and energetic nature, and he at once began work in the vineyard of the Lord. He became a teacher in the Sabbath School, and then, when only eighteen years of age, he was authorised by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting to accompany a local preacher to his appointments and take part in the services. He soon proved himself to be called of God for the work of the ministry, and, while still a youth, surprised his audiences by his thoughtful, earnest and impressive discourses. His ministrations as a local preacher were so satisfactory that in his twentieth year he was called into the itinerant ministry, and commenced the work of a Primitive Methodist travelling preacher in the Boston Circuit in the year 1833, and was pledged by that Circuit in the same year. He remained in this Circuit one year. His next Circuit was Minster; here he stayed two years, then Sheffield one year, Oldham one year, Blackburn two years, Pillawell four years, Luton four years, Bath five years, Stroud four years, Hereford four years, Pontypool two years, Bristol three years, Chippenham two years, Swansea three years, Hereford (second time) two years, Chippenham (second time) four years, and Stroud (second time) two years. For forty-six years he laboured most successfully and earnestly, and in all his Circuits he effected improvements, and left them better financially and with good increases of members in each case. He superintended the erection of fifteen chapels, two schoolrooms, and one minister's house, and in some instances prepared the plans and specifications and collected a considerable portion of the requisite funds. He was a very hardworking minister and a capable superintendent, watching over the interests of the societies with great solicitude. As a preacher, he was very attractive. He was a complete master of illustration and rhetoric, and was very popular in his palmy days, and much sought after for anniversaries and special services. He produced a deep impression upon the thousands of persons assembled in the Metropolitan Tabernacle once, upon the occasion of the great missionary meeting, when he gave one of his thrilling and eloquent addresses. This address is still in print, and shows that

Mr. Hobson was no ordinary man, but an eloquent minister of the truth. He possessed more than the average of mental ability, and, besides all his other gifts and talents, he was a man of deep spirituality of soul, and lived in close communion with God, and was the means of the conversion of hundreds of souls. He was blessed with a strong constitution, had a mind to work, and was very quick in his movements, full of energy and ambition for the prosperity of his Circuits. He was well read in Methodist theology, and not behind in other branches of literature; and during the time that the Rev. W. Antliff was Connexional editor, he requested Mr. Hobson to contribute a paper for the large magazine, one of a series of articles on the doctrines of our Connexion, which ran through the year's issue. Mr. Hobson's subject was "Justification by Faith," and was a very masterly production. Mr. Hobson laboured in his beloved work as an active minister beyond the average time of ministerial life, but after forty-six years of toil his strength began to fail and at the Conference of 1879 he applied for superannuation, which was granted, and he settled in Stroud, his last Circuit, and where the remains of his wife rest in peace in the graveyard connected with our chapel. After his superannuation he, for some, years, preached, led classes and visited amongst the people, and was a great help to the Society in Stroud. As long as he was able, he attended the services at the chapel. He delighted to be there, and used to go sometimes when it would have been wiser for him to have remained at home. His last visit to the chapel was to officiate at a wedding in his eighty-third year, and it was with very great difficulty that his friends got him home. He was never able to go out again, and had to remain a prisoner in his home, which was a great trial to him, with his restless, active temperament, but he found that the religion he had recommended to others was to him a sustaining power and a great help to him during the years of enforced inactivity. He always evinced great interest in the affairs of the Circuit and Connexion, and greatly rejoiced whenever he was told of progress being made, souls being saved and good of any kind being done. His eyes would sparkle, he would clasp his hands together and, looking up to heaven, would say "Praise the Lord, glory be to His name." It was a great pleasure to him when the Circuit minister called upon him. He would talk of old times and scenes that he had passed through, until he seemed, for the time being, young again, and then he would say, "It's all over with me, I can't do as I did once," and at times he seemed to feel cast down because his work was done. He did not desire rest, but work. This energetic spirit was in him until the last week or so of his life, and if he could have done so, he would have gone forth to work for the Master. His confidence in God was strong right up to the last. Only a day or two before his death the writer of this sketch was visiting him and said that Jesus was the best friend he had, and though very weak, he made his room ring with shouts of "Glory, praise the Lord, He is precious to me." The last day or two of his life were spent in a comatose state, and it was only at short intervals that he was at all conscious of anything around him, and when the end came he quietly passed from us to be for ever with the Lord, in the eighty-seventh year of his age. He had outlived all his relatives, and there was none of his kin left to close his eyes in death, or follow him to the grave; but a few faithful friends attended to his last needs and cared for him with great solicitude, but it did seem lonely for no relative to be with him at the last. We laid him to rest in the burying ground of Slad Congregational Church, amidst most beautiful scenery. He was borne to the grave by four local preachers, the burial service being conducted by Revs. S. Mincher (who represented the Bristol district) and N. Watts, Circuit Minister

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## References

*Primitive Methodist Magazine* 1902/63