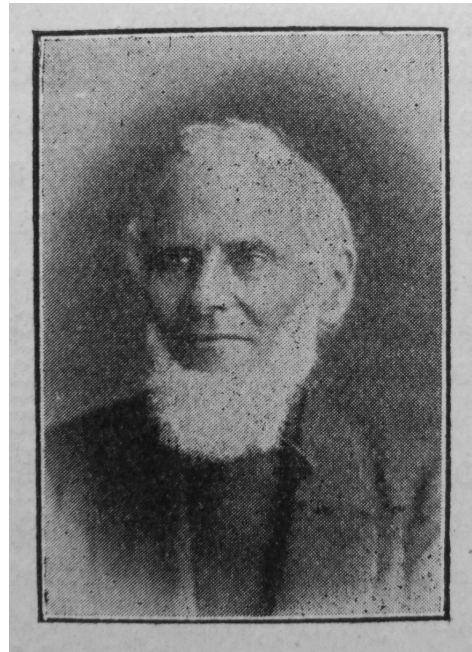


Rev. Thomas Baron

Transcription of Obituary in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by J.H.S. (James Hutchinson Saxton)

This honoured servant of Jesus Christ entered the perfect life on Tuesday, October 27th, 1903, at the ripe age of seventy-nine. He was born at Silsden and was the child of godly parents. He obtained a good elementary education in the secular schools of the neighbourhood, one of his teachers being the father of the Rev. J. Flesher, and was a scholar for some time in the Anglican Sunday School. He was converted at the age of fifteen, the Rev. James Macpherson being one of the preachers on that occasion. He joined the church, became a worker, and entered into the enterprise of early Primitive Methodism. For a short time he was engaged in the Book-room at Bemersley and lived with Hugh and James Bourne. In May, 1845, he went to Pateley Bridge to supply for the Rev. J. Watson, who was in feeble health, and he also removed with him in the following July to Thirsk, where he stayed a year. He began



his ministry at Ripon in 1846, his stipend being £16 per annum. He also travelled in the following stations:- Belper, Earl Shilton (now Hinckley), East Bridgford (a Nottingham branch), Sleaford, Uttoxeter (a Burton branch), Leicester I., Mansfield, Bottesford, Derby (Abbey St.), Rotherham, Horncastle, Loughborough, Leicester II., Newark, Burton, Keighley I., Hastings, and Hayward's Heath. He superannuated in 1889 and removed to Wigston Magna in the Leicester Second circuit, where he spent the remainder of his days, labouring with zeal and acceptance to the very end.

Mr Baron was one of the most strenuous workers our Church has had. Although somewhat frail in build, he enjoyed good health and laid all his powers upon the altar of sacrifice. In his earlier days he shared the toils of some of our mightiest fathers. Charles Lace, Samuel Antliff, William Jefferson, Robert Robinson and others were his comrades in arms.

When circuits were feeble, salaries small, and journeys long, our friend was among the foremost. Sacrifice with him was a common-place, and struggle part of the programme of every-day life. As private papers show, many chapels were built, crushing debts reduced, and some circuits apparently saved from bankruptcy by his toil. Need always appealed to him; the feeblest place or the outpost of a circuit was sure by reason of its helplessness to have his special help. As an illustration of his large and eager nature we may point to his efforts on behalf of the Newark station during his superannuation. A crisis had been reached in the history of several country chapels, and the brethren asked Mr. Baron to help. And how royal was his response! He journeyed in every direction and had the unspeakable joy of raising a large sum for the perishing cause. It is impossible to place on record the ceaseless efforts and the abiding good wrought for the Kingdom and Primitive Methodism by our sainted friend.

Mr. Baron possessed many special gifts. His intellect was both clear and strong, and by ceaseless study he made himself a workman without need of shame. He possessed a keen and abiding interest in all the great religious questions and movements of the day. This was frequently witnessed in those ministerial associations which he delighted to attend.



He was the soul of conscientiousness. To him duty was king, and one might as soon expect the equator to snap as expect Mr. Baron to yield when he felt he was in the right. He was absolutely loyal to the truth as God revealed it to him, and preached to others that which he profoundly believed. His benevolence was remarkable; giving was an enthusiasm, and his only sorrow was that he had not more to give.

We are glad to record that our friend was busy in the vineyard till he heard the Master's voice at the gate. He had had sunset sorrows; the death of his son in the midst of noble usefulness, and the passing of his wife, who was a person of remarkable character and an invaluable help-mate to her husband; these had left his eventide somewhat lonely; but he shared to the full the Christian hope, and looked with undimmed vision to the goal. We rejoice in the noble life and thank God for the peaceful end, - the end that is a beginning.

References

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