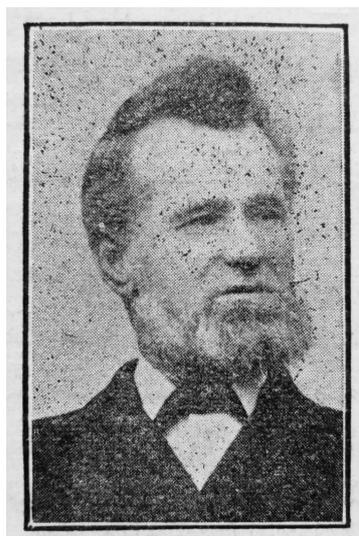


## William Evans (2)

### Transcription of Obituary in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by John Henry Hurst

By the death of the Rev. W. Evans (2) our Church lost a minister of a type most useful, the strenuous, faithful circuit minister. After rendering thirty-nine years' service, Mr. Evans was superannuated by the Conference of 1904, and it was hoped the quiet rest, and the renewal of friendships in an old circuit (Clay Cross) would build up his health again. This, however, was not to be, the languor increased, but no special danger was apprehended, until Monday, August 8th, when strength collapsed, and on the following day he passed to the rest of the eternal home.



Born at Shrewsbury, July 4th, 1843, his father and mother, though not church members, were of religious disposition, and strove to develop the spiritual life of their children. The boy was sent to the Sunday School, and when sixteen years old was won for God at mission services conducted by Miss Bennett of Chester. He soon gave evidence of spiritual power, and was called to preach. Systematic study was undertaken under the guidance and encouraging counsel of the Rev. J. Shepherd (now of Clay Cross) who was then stationed at Shrewsbury. Three years were spent in preparation, and then he entered the ministry. The first appointment was to the Maldon Mission, under the superintendency of the Rev. J. Guy. The next Conference stationed him at Newark. Here and on Lincoln First and Ilkeston Circuits he spent his probation, studying hard and passing his examinations with marked acceptance.

Ripley, Sheffield First, Loughborough, Wirksworth, Hinckley, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Horncastle, Louth, Clay Cross, Kimberley, Chesterfield Third, Ripley (a second time), and Lichfield completed the list of his circuits. In each he gave of his best, and the work prospered. He superintended the erection of many properties, the fine suite of school premises at Whittington Moor (Chesterfield Third) being the last of these undertakings. The wider work of District and Church Courts had little attraction for him, and he steadfastly refused official positions. Keenly interested in all the movements which made for the good of the Church, he gave his strength for their advancement in his own circuits, and bent his energies to the local work with the uniform result of circuit prosperity and development. He was shrewd in judgment, careful in detail, methodical in work, and persistent in the outworking of his projects. Hence material interests were carefully watched, and considerable progress made in reducing debts, consolidating the varied trust and school interests, and building new structures; whilst the spiritual life was quickened and nurtured. In no case was this more conspicuous than during the four years spent on the Clay Cross Circuit, and the influence he exerted there will long abide, and the memory of his ministry remain as a stimulus to holy life and service. The Quarterly Meeting of this circuit in the resolution of appreciation (through its secretary, the Rev. M. Dobinson), said of Mr. Evans: "Through his ministrations we became richer in spiritual life, and wiser in the ways of God. He possessed Christ in no small degree, and by his sanctified manhood he added much to the kingdom of his Christ, to which he gave his life and all. He was a minister of no common order. As a Christian he was an example to all, and his honest, noble manliness ever became an incentive to

seek the nobler life.”

Intellectually, he was strong and robust, logic and mental philosophy along with Biblical exegesis, being his favourite studies. All his reading and thought were made to bend towards what he felt to be the supreme end of his ministry, the proclamation of the evangel of Jesus. Preaching was his forte, and in the pulpit he was at his best. Preparation most careful and elaborate was made for the effective delivery of his message, and to the very end every sermon was written out in full. No wonder that many of his sermons, with their pointed forceful illustrations, live in the memory of his hearers. His strong sense of right and justice, his quick sympathy with the needy and oppressed, his certitude of God, and his fearlessness, gave point in his life to the word he spoke. His visits to the homes of his people, especially in times of difficulty and sorrow, were warmly welcomed for their helpfulness and counsel; whilst in him local preachers had a firm friend and willing guide.

On superannuation he settled at Clay Cross, and many anticipated a renewal of his services, and profound regret was expressed at his unexpected decease. The end found him ready and confident and he peacefully passed away. The funeral took place at Clay Cross Cemetery, on Friday, August 12th. The Rev. J. Shepherd conducted the service, and gave an impressive address in our own Church, the Revs. T.K. Upright, S. Barker, and M. Dobinson also taking part in the service. Miss Bryan presided at the organ and rendered the “Dead March,” and representatives from Ripley, Hinckley, Alfreton, Chesterfield Third, and the Clay Cross Circuits were also present.

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## References

*Primitive Methodist Magazine* 1906/826