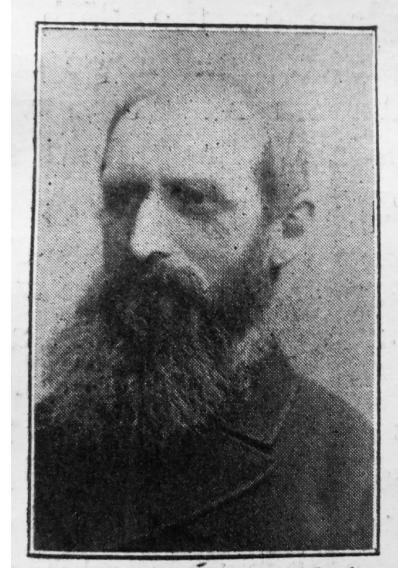


Joseph Morton

Transcription of Obituary in the Primitive Methodist Magazine by T. Kynaston

The Rev. Joseph Morton was born at Hunslet Hall near Leeds, on June 25th, 1827. During his early boyhood his parents removed to Huddersfield, and thence to Manchester where the family attached themselves to the New Jersey Street Society, and it was while a scholar in the Sunday School that Joseph came to a decision for Christ.

The family left Manchester, and returned to Leeds, where they attended the Quarry Hill Chapel. Here Joseph Morton became a local preacher, and his first efforts were so full of promise that in a very short time he received a call to enter the ministry. After much anxious thought he decided not to accept it. The call, however, came again, and with great fear and joy he determined to give his whole life to the service of the Master. Even after he had accepted the call to the ministry his mind was perplexed with doubt as to whether he was fitted for so great a work. He made it a subject of special prayer and pleaded with God to give him some unmistakable token and assurance of His acceptance.



One Sunday evening when he was preaching a rich baptism of spiritual power came upon the preacher and the congregation and many converts were won for Christ. This set his mind at rest, and he went forth to his high calling conscious that his life was being ordered by the Lord. He entered the regular ministry in 1854.

At the close of his probation he was united in marriage to Miss Jane Harrison, only daughter of Mr. Robert Harrison, of Castle Farm, Fealby, Lincolnshire. In Miss Harrison he found a true helpmeet, who for nearly half a century has shared his joys and sorrows, inspiring him with hope and courage. Mrs. Morton has ever taken the keenest interest in her husband's work and contributed in no small degree to the success which has marked his long and fruitful ministry. His ministerial labours were divided amongst the following circuits: -Preston, New Mills, Manchester 2nd, Knowlwood, St. Helens, Douglas, Darwen, where he successfully carried through the erection of the Redearth Road Chapel, a fine edifice costing some £4,000. Then Runcorn, Warrington, Deal, Dawley, Pembroke Dock, Brynmawr and Crydbrook, in the forest of Dean, in all of which he has left behind a dear and honoured memory.

Many of his circuits were heavy and laborious and sometimes taxed his physical strength, almost to the breaking point, but his zeal for God and his passionate love for the work carried him through a long and eventful life.

Mr. Morton was a capable administrator, a good preacher, an untiring worker, a devoted servant of the Church, and one of those well-balanced all-round men, to whom Primitive Methodism owes so

much. Those who knew him best love to remember his breadth of view, his catholic spirit, and his generous disposition.

The Rev. J. Middleton, one of his colleagues, writes:- "His readiness to render a kindness, his courage in the face of difficulties, and his devotion to duty were strongly marked features of his character."

The Rev. W. Overton, a later colleague, writes of him, "He was the very soul of honour, a faithful friend, a real Christian and one whom I came to regard with the greatest admiration and respect."

At an early age he became an ardent Temperance worker and when in Huddersfield was known as "Young Total." He inherited much from his father, Mr. David Morton - a boot and shoe manufacturer by trade - who was also an active and zealous chartist, and young Joseph soon developed a lively interest in social and political questions. This interest he maintained to the last, and even in old age and feebleness he attended the magistrates court as a Passive Resister, and protested against the iniquitous Education Act of 1902.

He superannuated in 1894, after travelling forty years. For three years he undertook the oversight of a Mission at Barry Dock, in Cardiff 2nd Circuit, and finally he settled at Egremont, where a quiet and peaceful evening brought a life which had endured much privation and suffering to a close. In the full assurance of faith our brother passed to the higher service of heaven, on Monday, August 14th, aged seventy-eight years.

The interment took place on the following Friday in the Liscard Cemetery, in the presence of a large number of relations and friends. Representatives were present from the General Committee, the District Committee, and from the Liverpool and Birkenhead Circuits. The funeral service was conducted by the Rev. J. Mayles, and an appreciative address was delivered by the venerable Joseph Graham, an old friend and comrade of the deceased.

References

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