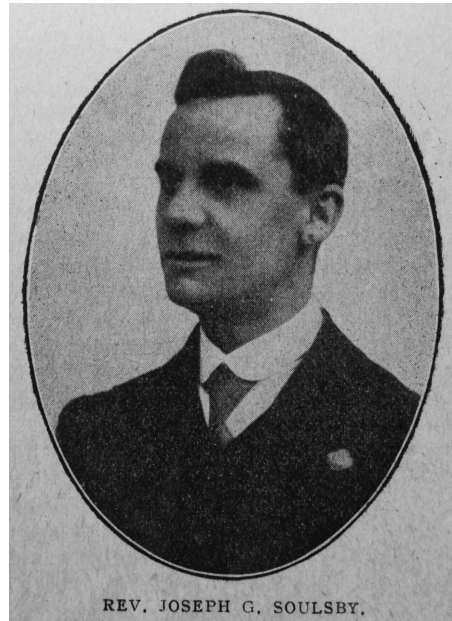


Joseph G Soulsby

Transcription of 'Sketch' In the Christian Messenger by J.G Bowran

A Pit-lad.

We have never seen any statement as to how many pit-boys have become Primitive Methodist ministers, but the number must be large. As we write we have many of these in mind, but in particular the Rev. Joseph G. Soulsby. Our Church may well be proud of such a man as he. Born at Boldon Colliery, in the South Shields Circuit, on March 11th, 1877, his boyhood years were spent at the Sheriff Hill Elementary School, near Gateshead. The master, Henry Melrose, took a discerning and keen interest in him. We know his mother and father, and are not one whit surprised at the handsome tribute he pays to their character and influence.



Conversion.

Most people can state the date of their conversion. Our friend in a way has some difficulty in being precise. We glory in his indecision. From the beginning he was under Christian influence, and never knew anything but the love of Christ. Still, he has a grand landmark for the definite beginning of his Christian career. When twelve years of age he left school, and began work at the pit. The same night, of his own accord, he went to the class-meeting at Low Fell. He had been to the class-meeting many times before, but that night, in his own consciousness he had given himself to God. The family had removed to Stanley, in the county of Durham, and here the Rev. William Gellay was exercising his remarkable ministry, and the impressionable lad came under his spell. In his eighteenth year our friend was a preacher on full plan.

The Student.

When twenty years of age he went to the college in Manchester, and indeed through all these years he has been a student. We know how hard he read in his days of probation. We also know that, if anything, he has worked harder than ever as a student during his active ministry.

His Ministry.

For nine months he was assistant at Middlesbrough to the late Rev. R. Hind, and for five years also he was our colleague. In all ways he proved himself an efficient and successful minister. His wife was a Middlesbrough lady, gifted in music and in other ways, and she has proved an admirable helpmeet in his work. Quite a unique experience he had during his years at Gateshead and Chester-le-Street, where he was colleague with the Rev. J. S. Nightingale. The arrangement was perfect, and chosen friends they are. At the present time Mr. Soulsby is the superintendent of the Seaton Delaval Circuit. In addition to his regular work he is chaplain for the eighteen-year-old soldiers who are being trained in the vicinity. Our friend has all the gifts that command success.

References

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