

JOHN BARTLEY

John Bartley was born in Scorrier, near Redruth in Cornwall in the summer of 1857.

Trained at Didsbury College , he entered the Wesleyan Methodist Ministry in 1878, and married Eva Drew in Okehampton in 1882. Eva died in Warrington in 1896. They had no children.

John later remarried but no details have been found

To date what little information that has been found shows him to have been a wise counsellor, an able administrator and an earnest and thoughtful preacher.

He came to Maidenhead for three years in 1888

John died in 1938 in his 82nd year

The few newspaper extracts that have been found throw some light upon his ministry and character

THE REV J BARTLEY Farewell Words

Last night, the Rev J Bartley, who has just concluded three years' ministry in the Hartlepool Wesleyan Circuit, delivered his valedictory sermon in the Wesley Chapel, West Hartlepool.

During the three years that he had been amongst them, he said, he had paid in house-to-house ministrations 1,500 visits each year. Some of these visits had, he continued, been most painful because opportunity was afforded to him of speaking on every topic except that of personal religion. Again and again had he grinned and borne it, and had thought of the woman at Jacob's well, who was quite willing to discuss ecclesiastical matters with Jesus, but unwilling to discuss matters of personal conduct. And so the close had come. He should not see them again in their homes again. That they must excuse, for he could never go to a home and say "Good-bye". Let no one think it unkind of him if he stole away almost as it were before the dawn. He could not say "Good-bye".

- The church was filled.

(Hartlepool Northern Daily Mail - Monday 23 July 1894)

“SCOTTISH HERETICS” AS THEOLOGIANS.

At a public meeting in the Riverside Methodist Church, Blairgowrie, in connection with the settlement of the Rev J Bartley from Chesterfield, Rev David Arnot, South U. F. Church, Blairgowrie, said it was very interesting to see how they could learn from one another, because very curiously, while Methodists were feeling their way towards Presbyterianism, Presbyterians were feeling their way towards something like Methodism. He wondered what the result of that would be - some larger amalgamation he hoped (Applause). Presbyterians were certainly feeling that the system to which they had been accustomed needed some little modifications, but how were they to get the old wine into new bottles?. A Presbyterian minister had said that some ministers are lost because they never get a chance, and some congregations are ruined because they never get a change (Laughter) In Methodism they settled that difficulty in a very simple, and what seemed to him, a very autocratic way. Their ministers just went where they were sent.

Rev Mr Bartley said there were no theologians to touch the Scottish, and there were no theologians among the Scottish like the great “heretics”. He thanked God that 28 years ago there was placed in his hands, as by a mere accident, a volume on the nature of the Satonement by Dr Malcokm Campbell. His own judgement was that no man shed a richer flood of light on the life of our Lord than that writer. The great formative influence of his life came about from Dr Michael Cambell, Dr Robertson Smith and Professor Bruce. They were “heretics” but he was not a heretic (laughter). They were “heretics” in their generation; they are prophets in our generation. They taught us to see clearly that the ministry of Christ was a revelation of the inherent sonship of the human race. In the past we divided men into two categories - strangers to God and servants of God; but through the influence of the writers he had mentuioned he had learned to distinguish clearly a threefold category - the third being sons of God

(Edinburgh Evening News - Saturday 08 September 1906)

A NEW SUBJECT - Many preachers are anxious to have their preaching up-to-date, but certainly no preacher has had a more modern subject than that chosen by the Rev John Bartley at his evening service in the Riverside Methodist Church, Rattray, last night, when he preched on “Limericks”

(Dundee Courier - Monday 21 October 1907)

THE REV J BARTLEY
Death of a Well-known Wesleyan Minister

The funeral took place privately at Exeter on Friday of the Rev John Bartley, of Clyde House, Exeter, who died the previous day in his 82nd year.

A native of Scorrier, Cornwall, he was educated at St Agnes Wesleyan School, and in his early teens began to preach in his own village. He was trained at Didsbury College, and in 1928, at the early age of 21, entered the Wesleyan Methodist Ministry.

The Rev J Bartley travelled in the following circuits - Bury St Edmunds, St Columb, Marleborough, Chertsey, London (Kensington), Windsor, Hartlepool, St Helens, Birmingham (Wesley), Sheffield (Norfolk - Street), Chesterfield, Blairgowrie, Guysborough, Ravenstall, and Okehampton.

For the last 20 years he has been living in retirement in Exeter. As long as health permitted, he continued to preach and to lead a men's society class of the Mint Church.

Mr Bartley is affectionately remembered in his circuits as a wise counsellor and able administrator, and an earnest, thoughtful preacher. Of a scholarly bent, his reading ranged over a wide field, with especial attention to philosophy and Pauline literature. This was evidenced in sermons of careful exegesis and construction, lit up by illustrations from many sources. He loved the Bible and his preaching was never far from the sacred evangelic doctrines, while throughout his life he took an enthusiastic interest in missionary affairs. For several years Mr and Mrs Bartley have given a garden party annually at Clyde House on behalf of overseas work.

Of strong and virile character, Mr Bartley had a sympathetic nature and a gay humour. Children were especially drawn to him. For the last two years he has been in failing health, and has been lovingly tended by his wife, to whom the deepest sympathy is extended.

(Exeter and Plymouth Gazette - Friday 27 May 1938)