

## WILLIAM GREEN SPENCER

**William was born Dec 1889 Sutton in Ashfield, Nottingham.**

**the Son of William Sunlay Spencer, Primitive Methodist Minister, and Ann Elizabeth (Green)**

**His mother died aged 38 in March 1896 and his father remarried, Sarah Ellen Bell, in Sep 1897**

**William entered the ministry in 1912.**

**His sister, Nellie, married John Archibald Tingle, Primitive Methodist Minister, in Sept 1916**

**He was much loved and respected**

**He was sadly killed by enemy action while fire watching on the 7th May 1941**

**The following newspaper extracts give some indication of his opinions and abilities.**

**William's talents for music and entertainment were quite exceptional !**

### DRAYTON PARSLOW

Musical successes. The pupils of Mr A Holdom F.L.C.M. of Drayton Parslow, have been very successful. The Rev W G Spencer, late of Woburn Sands was examined in London on December 18th 1913. and was awarded the Diploma of Associate of the College A.L.C.M.. for piano playing. which entitles him to wear the cap and gown of the College. ....

.(Bucks Herald February 7 1914)

### A MUSICAL MINISTER

Special interest attached to the visit to the Commercial-road Primitive Methodist Church of the Rev. W. G. Spencer, A.L.C.M. There were good congregations at both services on Sunday, when the rev. gentleman preached most interesting sermons. both of which were greatly appreciated.

On Monday evening the School-room was packed to its full holding capacity, when the Rev. W. G. Spencer gave a most enjoyable recital of music, song, and story. It is a curious fact that comparatively few ministers appear to be musical, or at any rate few display musical talent in public.

It was, therefore, an unusual pleasure to hear a minister who was such a versatile entertainer. Not only did the Rev, Spencer play such formidable compositions as Rachmaninoff's "Prelude" (though the piano was not ideal for such a performance!) and sing some rollicking songs which were all enthusiastically applauded, but he also contributed some amusing recitations, clever improvisations of how some of the poets would have treated the subject of the "Jack and Jill" rhyme, and kept the audience in continual roars of merriment by his anecdotes and funny stories.

The performance went with a swing from start to finish, and was voted excellent by everyone.

(Grantham Journal 15 September 1923)

**PLYMSTOCK LEGION**  
**Attend Church Service At Oreston Plymstock**

British Legion attended in good numbers a church parade yesterday at Oreston Methodist Church. The legionaries headed by Capt. E Farrer Viner, followed the standard into the church, and received a very hearty welcome from Rev. W. G. Spencer, who spoke of the high ideals for which the Legion stood, and commended them for having as their slogan "Not self, but service".

The service was unique in the fact that a baby was christened, and three of the Sunday-school scholars were awarded prizes for essays written on the subject of "Temperance".

Mr. Spencer preached an eloquent sermon, speaking on the great need for an exhibition of practical religion in the national daily life. He said there never could be real peace in the world until the nations acknowledged God and ignored the vapourings of Mussolini and Hitler and other so-called dictators. It would be only possible to get real lasting peace when all nations imbibed and practised the teachings of Jesus Christ

The service closed with the singing of the National Anthem.

(Western Morning News Monday December 20th 1937)

**METHODISTS' PARTY**  
Scholars of Tamerton Foliot entertained

Tamerton Foliot Methodist Sunday-school's annual party was held last night, when members of the Sunday-school, with their parents and friends, were provided with tea. Rev. W E Woodall, of King street Methodist Church, opened the meeting with prayer, and introduced Rev W G. Spencer, of Oreston, who entertained with solos, blackboard drawings, recitations, and humorous speeches.

Mrs Woodall distributed books and oranges to the scholars. A collection for the National Children's Home amounted to a guinea.

(Western Morning News Dec 30 1937)

**QUARTERLY MEETING**

At the suggestion of Rev: W. G. Spencer, the following resolution was carried unanimously:

*"That this quarterly meeting views with alarm the present situation in Central Europe. It therefore calls upon the Methodist people to pray unceasingly for a peaceful solution and urges the Government to continue to explore every avenue that promises to lead to a peace based upon justice and righteousness."*

(Western Morning News Saturday 17 September 1938)

COMMERCIAL ROAD P.M. CHURCH  
Special visit of Rev W G Spencer A.L.C.M.  
Tomorrow (Sunday) 10.45 and 6 o'clock  
Monday at 7.30 Grand CONCERT RECITAL  
of music, song & story. Admission 6d.  
(Grantham Journal September 8 1923)

PORTLAND PLACE  
PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH

Band of Hope Anniversary  
Preacher 10.30 and 6.00  
Rev W G Spencer  
Special Children's Service  
Monday Tea at 4.30 p.m.  
Rev W G Spencer will give a  
HUMOROUS & DRAMATIC RECITAL  
(Lincolnshire Echo 28 February 1931)

COMPTON METHODIST CHURCH

Tomorrow (Wednesday)  
October 13th 1937  
Teaching Service 4.30 p.m.  
Rev D W Lowe D.D.  
Public Tea 5.30 p.m.  
GREAT RALLY 7 p.m. Chairman J J H Moses esq  
Novelty Programme by Rev W G Spencer A.L.C.M.  
(Tuesday 12 October 1937)



Opening of new school hall Turnchapel Methodist Church Wednesday 8 June 1938

**ORESTON TRIBUTE TO MINISTER  
FUNERAL OF REV. W. G. SPENCER**

*“He was essentially a pastor. He knew his people and loved them, and they loved him. He was always among the folk, never happier than when rendering some service”.*

This striking tribute was paid at the funeral at Oreston on Monday of Rev. W. G. Spencer. Methodist minister, by Dr. A. W. Lewis, superintendent minister of King-street Circuit. Mr. Spencer was killed by enemy action recently. He was pastor of the Methodist Churches at Oreston, Brixton, Pomphlett, and Elburton, and well known for his musical recitals. Ministers and laymen of all denominations thronged the church to pay tribute to the memory of Mr. Spencer, whom Dr. Lewis described with impressive simplicity as “*my good friend*.” There was a large number of women in the congregation. Assisting Dr. Lewis in the conduct of the service were Revs. E. H. Rowe, H. V. Sprosun, W. E. Chivers, and F. A. Elickling. Mr. A. R. Pappin was at the organ. Immediate mourners were Mrs. W. S. Spencer, mother; Rev and Mrs. J. A. Tingle Wrentham (brother in law and sister). Mrs. I. Hogging, aunt; Mr. W. A. Tingle, R.A.F., nephew; and Mr. W. E. Priest. Bearers were Messrs. R. W. Brown, W. Harper, H. Tall, W. J. Cox, G. Pillage, and J. Hicks. All sections of the community were represented in the great crowd of general mourners, and many clustered round door-ways after the church had been packed.

**REPRESENTATIVES OF CHURCHES.**

In addition to members of the congregations, Mr. Spencer's churches were represented by the following:—Oreston, Messrs J. Sullen and H. Jaris (society stewards), Messrs. W. H. Worthy and R. W. Brown (trustees), Dr. F. Boyle and Mr. A. S. James (Sunday-school, Brixton), Mr. J. Blake; Pomphlett, Messrs. H. J. Tall and W. J. Cox; Elburton, Miss E. M. Moore and Mr. W. J. Trout. Rev. W. D. Campbell (president) represented Plymouth Free Church Council, and Rev. R. G. Joint (St. Matthew's, Elburton) the Anglican Church. Many individual Churches were represented. Dr. Lewis, in his address, said: “*Mr. Spencer was taken from us by what we call enemy action, but the enemy has not the last word or the last deed. 'Enemy action' does not exhaust the significance of what has happened. God enters into these situations, tragic as they may be, and transfigures them. There is another action - divine activity - What happened through enemy action by the act of God means something else - calling a faithful servant from service here to service there. He was a faithful minister, and served through nearly 20 years in various circuits in the country.*”

He came here nearly four years ago, and was invited to serve for six years. That is evidence of the way he was regarded by his people. Dr. Lewis referred to Mr. Spencer's versatile and generous service as an entertainer, and added: “*His last activity before going out to his death was framing resolutions to be presented to the Methodist Synod. You know what he did in raids. He did not stay at his fireside, but went out from shelter to shelter and led the people in song and cheered them. He sacrificed his leisure and gave himself unreservedly to the people. That is the Christian life. Some set great value on academic qualifications, but these are no good without generosity, hospitality, and kindness*”.

**POST OF DUTY.**

*“Mr. Spencer died at the post of duty, serving the people he loved. That is not the end, but the beginning of something else. His work will live. His loss makes a tremendous breach in the happy fellowship of the ministers. He was the life and soul of our meetings, and we shall miss him greatly”.*

Wreaths were sent by the following:—Mother and sisters, Anne and Nellie, Will Priest and Archie; Gwen Priest; Beatrice, Horace, and Mary Nottingham; Cyril, London; Mrs. E. H. Rowe, Erica, and Pauline; Mr. and Mrs. Ash; Mr. and Mrs. Simmonds; Colleagues in the ministry; Circuit stewards, King-street Trinity; Oreston Methodist Society; Mr. and Mrs. J. Sullen and Kath; Pomphlett Methodist Church; Mr. and Mrs. J. C. Fellow; Mr. and Mrs. H. R. Ellis; Friends at the Sunnyside Shelter; Mrs. Mitchell; Mr. and Mrs. T. S. Courts and Was F. Corms; Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Ridge; Mr. and Mrs. W. C. G. Ward; Oreston Methodist Sisterhood; Mr. and Mrs. C. C. L. Elford; Turrtchapel Methodist Sisterhood; Teachers and scholars, Turn-chapel Methodist Sunday-school; Dr. and Mrs. Royle, Margaret, Billy, David; Methodist Church, Brixton; Mr. and Mrs. R. T. May; Oreston Band of Hope; June and Jennifer Rhodes; No. 5, Honcray; Capt. Bill Tope; Mr. and Mrs. England and Sons; Mr. and Mrs. Worthy; the Misses Moore; Methodist Church, Elburton; Pomphlett Sunday-school; Oreston Sunday-school; Local Preachers King-street Trinity Circuit; Mrs. Glasson; Trustees Oreston Methodist Church; W. and D. and Eric Congdon; and Billie and May. Funeral arrangements were carried out by Mr. T. S. Cooms, Oreston.

(Western Morning News May 14 1941)

**GRAVE DEDICATED**  
**Oreston Tribute To Late Minister**

An unusual ceremony for a Methodist Church was a service of dedication at Oreston on Saturday afternoon of the grave of Rev. W. G. Spencer, who was the minister when he was killed by enemy action while fire-watching on May 7, 1941.

The service in the church, which was almost filled, among those present being Mr. Spencer's mother, was conducted by Rev. H. Stanley Collins, and the grave, with head-stone and kerb of Cornish granite, and having on it a sheaf of flowers, inscribed, "With fragrant and loving memories, from his mother and sisters", was dedicated by Rev. Harold V. Sproson.

In a memorial address Rev. D. W. Lewis spoke of Mr. Spencer's extraordinary versatility and resourcefulness, his gifts of speech and song, his keen sense of humour, his intense interest in young people, his zeal for social betterment and temperance, the cheeriness of his disposition, and the sunshine he radiated.

(Western Morning News Monday July 27 1942)