

The Wall Memorials of Battersea Chapel.

BATTERSEA CHAPEL—the oldest nonconformist chapel in the borough¹—is rich in mural tablets and brasses, memorials of worthies who served the church in their day and generation. Almost every panel or wall space has its monument. Even in the vestry—the “long vestry”—at the western end of the building are to be seen no fewer than three.

To scrutinise the first of these we shall need a pair of steps, unless we are prepared to balance ourselves precariously on the iron coke-stove, which roaringly pretends to heat the room in the winter. This memorial is a stone slab let into the wall and has an inscription which reads thus :

SACRED

to the memory of

MOSES COCKRAM

who for nearly 50 years was the clerk of
this Chapel

He fell asleep in Jesus January 25th. 1841 aged 83

Servant of Christ, well done
Praise still be thine employ
And while eternal ages run
Rest in thy Master's joy.

Little seems to be known of this worthy, who must have been serving in the capacity of “clerk” several years before the formation of the Church.

The next in order of antiquity, as far as the vestry memorials are concerned, is one which commemorates the short pastorate of the Rev. Enoch Crook. This is also of stone and bears the following inscription cut in block capitals :

¹ *Battersea Chapel, 1797-1897.* Frank Holderness Gale.

The Baptist Quarterly

In memory of
 The Revd. Enoch Crook
 Two years and a half pastor of this church
 and twelve years pastor
 of the Baptist Church at Crewkerne
 obit 28th. June 1837 aetat 39
 Beloved by all and much lamented
 by his widow and the church.

The third tablet in this portion of the chapel is of brass, protected from corrosion by a framed facing of glass and is of more recent date. The wording on this runs as follows :

Samuel Thomas Turtle
 Born September 11 1851 Died October
 29 1903. For 22 years the devoted
 leader of the Young Men's Bible Class.

The Friend of man the Friend of Truth
 The Friend of age and Guide of youth.
 Few hearts like his with virtue warmed
 Few heads with knowledge so informed.

This Brass was erected
 by the Past and Present Members
 of the Bible Class Jan. 1904.

Hanging over a doorway in the large hall of the Sunday School on the other side of the road ("the large hall across the way" as the frequent announcement by the Church Secretary has it) is a large framed photograph of this beloved Bible Class leader. Appropriately enough, a corresponding portrait of another renowned Baptist personality—Mr. Arthur Newton—hangs in a similar position in the School over a parallel doorway.

Passing now into the main portion of the Chapel we take our stand beneath the clock, and looking toward the fine illuminated rose window, face the tall pulpit. In the middle wall space on the left-hand side is a monument of marble commemorating one who for many years gave his name to the Chapel. Even to-day, after the lapse of many years, reference to Soule's Chapel is occasionally heard. Let the memorial speak for itself. This is what it says :

In
 memory of the
 Revd. Israel May Soule
 36 years Minister of
 Battersea Chapel.

This Tablet
 is erected as a tribute to one
 who, by his high Christian character,
 public spirit and sympathy
 with every good work
 endeared himself to a wide circle of friends.
 This building in which this memorial stands,
 the British Schools enlarged and improved
 by his exertions,
 together with the result of his varied
 labours for the welfare of others,
 remain enduring monuments of his zeal,
 disinterestedness and liberality.
 An able, earnest, and faithful preacher of
 "THE GLORIOUS GOSPEL,"
 a wise, tender, and devoted pastor,
 his memory will long be cherished
 by an affectionate church
 and congregation.

Having served his generation by the will of God,
 first at Lewes, and afterwards at Battersea,
 he "fell on sleep" Novr. 8th. 1873
 in the 67th. year of his age
 and the 43rd. of his ministry.

"Whose faith follow."

Let into the right-hand wall, in a space exactly opposite that occupied by the Soule memorial, is one which perpetuates a name famous throughout all lands where the Bible is read in the native tongue. The Rev. Joseph Hughes—"the Baptist who started the Bible Society"—has a monument of stone shaped

like the head of a sarcophagus, and surmounted by an urn carved in bold relief. The inscription reads thus :

Sacred to the memory of
The Revd. Joseph Hughes A.M.
of the University of Aberdeen, 37 years Pastor of this church :
Projector of the British and Foreign Bible Society,
and one of its Secretaries from its commencement until his
decease.

As a man, distinguished by solid judgment and suavity of
manners ;

As a Christian, consistent, conscientious and eminently liberal ;

As a preacher, persuasive, affectionate, and useful ;

Happily mingling sound doctrine and practical exhortation.

In his office of Secretary

Uniting unwearied activity with the nicest discretion.

He died the 3rd. of October 1833, in the 64th. year of his age
and his remains were interred in Bunhill Fields.

This memorial is raised by his people, in token of their respect
and affection, and to perpetuate the remembrance
of his many Christian excellencies.

He was a burning and a shining light.

There are no monuments in the Chapel to the memory of Joseph and Eliza Benwell. Yet the church is itself their memorial, for to them it owes its establishment as a church. There are, however, two memorials—one on each side of Soule's—representing their son-in-law, Henry Tritton and his wife (their daughter) Amelia Tritton.

Henry Tritton's memorial is of carved marble, mounted on a backing of slate, like that of Joseph Hughes. There is in strong relief a tall sculptured urn, and it is worthy of note that at the base of the monument there are carved armorial bearings : a shield surmounted by a lamb. The terseness of the wording shews a lamentable absense of a sense of gratitude to one who, as F. H. Gale records "evidently succeeded his father-in-law, Mr. Benwell, as the financial good angel of the little church." Nor was this the only service he rendered, for he followed Mr. Benwell in the office of deacon, and it is through his pen that noteworthy facts of the history of Battersea Chapel have been

preserved. Perhaps the simple dignity of the inscription is sufficient. This is all it says :

In memory of
 Henry Tritton Esqr.
 second son of the late
 John Henton Tritton Esqr.
 and many years a resident
 of this parish.
 He departed this life
 on the 20th. day of April 1838
 aged 48 years
 and his remains are interred
 in a vault near this place.

“The righteous hath hope in his death.”

All trace of the vault has long since disappeared. His widow's memorial—she outlived him some seventeen years—is on the other side of Israel May Soule's. The inscription is enveloped by a substantial framework, the whole being of carved marble, and reads as follows :

Sacred
 to the memory of
 Amelia.
 Wife of the late
 Henry Tritton, Esq.
 and third daughter of
 Joseph Benwell, Esq.
 deceased.
 She departed this life
 March 28th. 1855
 Aged 64 years.

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.

There are members in the church to-day who still speak with affection and esteem of the personality and qualities of the Rev. William Hamilton. To his memory there is a brass tablet protected by glass and encased in a framework of wood. It will be seen that the Scriptural text has been misquoted.

The Baptist Quarterly

To the Glory of God
and in loving memory of the
Rev. William Hamilton
for seventeen years Pastor of
this Church, and for nine years a
member of the London School Board.
Born 14, February 1852
Died 30, October, 1902.

This Tablet is erected as a
tribute to his faithful and
zealous labours as a Minister
of the Gospel, and in grateful
recognition of his selfsacrificing
and devoted service on behalf
of the Children.

“A good soldier of the Lord Jesus Christ”
II Tim. 2. 3.

One other memorial remains to be mentioned. Made
throughout of carved oak, all in one piece, it is now some score
of years old. It is headed

Pro
Patria

In ever grateful memory
of the men of Battersea
Chapel who fell in the
Great War 1914-1918

(seventeen names are given)

They fought and died
in freedom's cause.

On the 11th November each year this poignant memory in
wood is enveloped by loving hands in a frame of white
chrysanthemum blossoms.

J. P. EDE.