



Salvation Army Bandmaster Coat Crests

Wesleyan Methodist to Salvation Army

I am currently transcribing the unpublished diaries of Charles William Fry (1838-1882) who was originally from Alderbury and, in 1878, became the Salvation Army's first bandmaster with his three sons as the first bandsmen. Prior to joining the Salvation Army, Charles was a prominent local preacher in the Salisbury Wesleyan Circuit and there are two entries from his diaries that may be of particular interest to anyone with ancestors at Winterslow, Wiltshire.

The first entry, dated 13th March 1859, would appear to relate to George Dear who was buried at Winterslow on 18th March 1859 aged 15.

"Winterslow. I visited a lad here near death who had been converted the winter before. I never saw such a sight before. I asked him "Is all well." He answered "Glorious." "Is there any darkness in the valley?" and his voice sank and he whispered in my ear "Not a shade All light," and he smiled and said "There's my home. " He died gloriously happy in the following week. At his parents' request I preached his funeral sermon the following Sunday, in the evening. The chapel was crowded. I preached from 1 Thessalonians IV. 15-20. Glorious time. Tears flowing in abundance."

The second entry is dated 25th March 1860 and almost certainly refers to Rebecca Whitlock who was buried on 19th March 1860 aged 37.

"Winterslow. Afternoon "Remember from whence thou hast fallen and repent." Evening Funeral sermon for Sister Whitlock who died the previous Wednesday very happy in the Lord at Salisbury Infirmary. She had been converted about two years before her death. She met with a sad accident falling from a cart. She broke her thigh and was immediately taken to the Salisbury Infirmary where she remained six weeks with a fractured bone. They used every means but to no purpose. All the time her pain was very great but her trust in Christ was firm. No further means could now be applied unless she consented to have her leg taken off. This was consented to and the night previous to the operation she sang with her beautiful voice "O happy day that fixed my choice," with her hands uplifted, her eyes shining, her countenance beaming with her heart full with such a feeling that all the people in the Ward were melted into tears. She lived four days weeks afterwards, suffering a great deal, but rejoicing in God her Saviour till March 14th 1860 when she died in triumph. As it was her wish I preached her funeral sermon from the text "For we know that if this earthly house of our tabernacle is dissolved we have a house above, a building not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

The only slight query is that "Sister Whitlock" died "the previous Wednesday" to 25th March 1860 which would be 21st March. However, 21st could have been described as "last Wednesday", therefore making 14th March "the previous Wednesday" which is the date given in the diary for her death.