

The Life of the Widowⁿ John Shelton
who departed at Fulneck June 30th 1773

He has left us the following in Writing: I was born in the Year 1703 in Lightliff in the Parish of Hallifax; my Father & Mother belonged to the Church of England. My Father died, when I was but a very little Boy; my Mother brought me up till I was 8 Years old as carefully as she could, ~~afterwards~~ afterwards I was put^d Apprentice to a Norwich Carrier, where I learned to be very wicked, but yet I had oft Convictions, that I lived in quite a wrong Way, yet that left me again. In my 25th Year I married. When M^r. Ingham began to preach about in ~~the County~~ Yorkshire, it came in my Mind to go to hear him; but the first Time I ~~got~~ received no Blessing from it. The next Night he was to preach at Smith house, ~~when~~ ^{but} I had no Thought of going till towards Night, when I had a long Struggle, whether I should go or not; but at last I resolved to go, whatever might come out of it, and that Night our Saviour got fast Hold of my Heart, so that I could after that have gone with M^r. Ingham thro^u the World; but yet I was at a Loss what would become of me for I was in such a ruin'd State, & never acquainted M^r. Ingham that I was so miserable. I went constantly to the Preaching, & strove to be as good as ever ^{in order to find Peace for my Heart.} I could, but all in vain, till about a Year after, when I got some Comfort; yet for all that I thought I was not sure of being happy. I went to speak with M^r. Ingham about going to the Sacrament in the Church of Engl^d, then he inquired how it was with me, & I told him my whole Mind, but he told me, it was not his Way to advise People to go to the Sacrament, left it however to me to do as I felt it in my Heart. So I went & received a Blessing thereby. When the Society was first begun¹⁷⁴¹, I was received into it. Then the B^d came to Smith house, & I

went to hear them constantly, & one Night, when the Meeting
was over B^r Horie took me into his Room, & asked me, how I
was with me, & I told him my whole Mind, & he spoke very
friendly with me, & told me, that I might go to all the Meetings
whenever I had an Opportunity, of which I was very glad.
One Evening I went to a Meeting at Smith house, & going as
I was going home quite by myself, I felt something speaking
to me at my Heart: Thy Sins are forgiven Thee - & ever since
I have been very happy. ^{March 29} 1746 my Wife went home, &
left me with 7 Child^r, 5 Sons & 2 Daughters, & 1 Daughter was
gone before her. I had a Desire to be rec^d into the Cong^g
& Nov: 13, 1750 I was received, which was a great Blessing to
my Heart. June 21st 1751 I rec^d the Sacrament with the B^r in the
first Time, which was such a Blessing to me, as I cannot
express with Words. So I have lived in the Nearest of our
Sav^r ever since. Thus for his own Words.

Nov: 27, 1758, removed to Fulneck, where he spent his Time
in a simple, childlike Manner, enjoying the Love & Peace of
God, & was beloved by his B^r. He entered his lot highly, to have
the Favour to live with a People of God, taking simply, every
Thing that occurred from the Hand of his ^{Lord}, with whom
his Heart had a true Consension. It was his great concern
& his constant Prayer to our Lord, that his Children might all
obtain the same Grace, & that those, who were connected with
the Cong^g might truly make a good use of it, & prosper before our
Lord, and this his Desire our Sav^r granted him in so far, that
he saw the greatest Number of them connected with the Cong^g,
for which he was very thankful & praised his Lord. Some
Months ago his Strength began to fail, & he thought immedie-
ly, that his Stay here would no more be long. Our Sav^r began
to take him into his School & to shew him, wherein he was
particular^{ly} deficient. For some Time something against
one of his B^r, with whom he lived, had crept into his Mind,
& it cost him something to see it in the true Light: but our Sav^r melted his Heart & gave
him Grace, to embrace the B^r with many Tears of Love to the no small Joy of those present.
From that Time the Peace of his Heart

& he said: Tho' he had
spent many Years in the
Cong^g, & lived in the Enjoy-
ment of the Love of God,
yet he found it a trying
Time for him to a School
for his Heart

& the ⁱⁿ his Heart pointed at it, & wanted him
 to acknowledge it & give it up, yet Selfrighteousness
 had so much Power, that he thought he could never forgive it.
 His Labourers had a hearty Band with him upon that Head, which
 made him so uneasy, that he could not sleep the whole Night -
 when some of his Sons saw him the next Day, a strange Work
 was perceived in his mind, & they were truly frightened at the
 Expressions he uttered upon that Occasion, & could not help shed-
 ding Tears. But it was amazing to see, how our Saviour changed
 his mind in an instant - he called immediately for the Brother
 fell about his Neck, kissed him with many Tears, ~~had disagreeable~~
 & pressed him to his Heart, which caused such an Emotion in
 the Bystanders, that they wept for Joy, & hardly being able to
 believe what they saw with their Eyes. From that Time such an
 Alteration was observed in him, as if he had ^{not} been the
 same Man. He loved the above B: with an unfeigned Love & could
 not bear, that any spoke a hard Word to him. His Peace of Heart -
 & his Joy in the Lord was visible in his countenance. He spoke
 solidly with some of his Children, partly ~~uttering~~ telling them
 where they were in the wrong & partly fearing, how it would go
 with one of them after his Departure. Once ~~when~~ being asked
 by his Labourers, how it he did, he said: I have nothing to do but to re-
 joice in our Saviour & to enjoy him. He is very near unto my Heart,
 whereby the Tears ran down. One Night our Saviour manifested
 his Love to his Heart in such a rich Measure, that he firmly
 believed, he should now be called home, & therefore caused his
 Labourers to be called, to whom he could not express sufficiently
 what our Saviour had given him to enjoy. But his Hour was not
 so near as he expected. His Sickness ~~increased~~ ^{increased}, which
 he bore with Patience & had a great Deal to suffer, which made
 him oft call upon the Lord soon to come & take him to himself.
 His Heart remain'd during all that Time cleaving to our Saviour
 & he said, the Peace of God never forsook him. Those B:s that
 visited him, felt exceedingly well in his Company. At last, on

He ~~above~~ on 30th of June at 8^h at Night came the wel
come Hour, when he enter'd into his eternal Rest, having
before obtained the Blessing of the Cong^g & his Choir; - ^{He} having
spent in this Vale of Tears 70 Years.