

Rhos, North Wales, 1904, Part IV

By Tom Hill

Master Ministries International, Inc.

2700 Marfitt Road, #315
East Lansing, MI 48823-6338

Website: <http://www.masterministries.org/>

Online Sermons: <http://masterministries.sermonaudio.com>

(John Powell Parry was born in 1887 and was therefore seventeen years of age in 1904 when the revival came to Rhosllanerchrugog, a mining town three miles south of Wrexham in North Wales. The following account is taken from a recorded interview by Paul Cook of Hull with Powell Parry on 2 October 1974 in Plas Bennion, a small hamlet near Ruabon just south of Rhos. Powell Parry died on 27 June 1979 at the age of ninety-two.)

"As an example of this awareness of the presence of God, he recalls the story of an event during the summer of 1905. A Christian man arrived in Rhos with his two daughters from Barrow-in-Furness, in northwest Lancashire.

"He came to the 'big pew' in the Baptist Chapel and told his experience to the congregation, which included the teenage Powell Parry. This Lancastrian had read of the revival in his daily paper and one of his daughters had suggested they might go and visit the town to see for themselves what was happening.

"They caught the Sunday midnight slow train and arrived in Chester station at 6:00 a.m. Not knowing where to go from there, they enquired of a porter: 'How do we get to the place where the revival is?'

"They were told there would be a train at 8:00 a.m. to Wrexham and from there they could catch a local train to Rhos. 'But how will we know when we are near Wrexham?' they asked. 'Oh,' replied the porter, 'You'll feel it in the train.' And they did!

"There was an unmistakable expectancy in the air. Two miles outside Rhos they enquired again and were told, 'Go down that road and you will feel it down there.' It was 9:00 a.m. on a 'playing Monday' when the visitor and his two daughters arrived at the chapel to find it already full of worshippers who had been there since 7:00 a.m.

"There were no special meetings for young people; they all came to the adult meetings. Even children of six and eight years of age were talking about Jesus, even though they were not all converted, and teachers would weep as they overheard the children's conversations.

"The effects of this revival continued right up until the Great War in 1914. Prayer meetings were changed and revitalized, and the 'experience meeting,' where the Christians shared their testimony of God's goodness, proved a means of grace to many.

"Powell Parry identified a number of factors that began to quench the work of the Spirit following the war. Modernism came into the pulpits as 'educated' men came from the colleges infected with a critical view of the Bible. A new generation, back from the war, wanted this 'modern preaching.' Powell said plainly of one minister, 'He was a dud!' Modernism took the pulpit and emptied the chapels.

"At the same time social reform in the guise of 'practical Christianity', with its motto, 'Lift up the bottom dog, down with the idle rich' took the spiritual life out of the churches. And, sadly, the Christians did not realize what was happening. In Powell's view, following the Second World War Welsh Nationalism sealed the death of the revival.

"But for those who experienced this great outpouring of the Spirit - and revivals do not often survive beyond one generation - there is a real sense in which revival is never lost. John Powell Parry could claim seventy years later, at the age of eighty-six: 'I still have it now.'"

(This excerpt is taken from *Revival! A People Saturated With God*, by Brian Edwards (Evangelical Press: Darlington, EN; 1990) p. 246-247.)