

# Tribute to Mr AMS Gooding

## (1915 - 1999)

It was with a deep sense of loss that we received the news of the homecall of our esteemed, beloved brother. He had been unwell for some time but very recently, seemed to be improving. The Lord took him during the early hours of 3rd May after a brief relapse and now he is amongst those who "sleep in Jesus" (1 Thess 4:14).

Mr Gooding was brought up in a godly family in Suffolk, East Anglia. He was saved at 14, and a little later baptised and received into fellowship. From that early time he treasured the truth of gathering to the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. At the age of 16 he was particularly challenged by the reading of Romans 12:1 and as a result committed his life afresh to the Lord. His subsequent devotion to Christ continued through the remaining 68 years of his life. His interest in the Word of God soon became evident resulting in much local preaching and teaching; he first spoke at a conference when just 18 years old. The long hours of diligent study in those early days prepared him well for the wider sphere of service which God had for him.

In 1941, after a period of spiritual exercise and subsequent guidance from God, our brother moved to Kilmarnock, Scotland to commence employment at John Ritchie Ltd. Shortly after, he was married to his wife Hilda, who survives him. She has been a loving and faithful helpmeet over the years, taking a major part in rearing the family of three sons and one daughter, all in assembly fellowship and married with families of their own. He remained at Ritchie's for 33 years until commended to the work of the Lord in September 1974. He started in the print room as a compositor, eventually becoming Managing Director. He also became a Trustee of the Lord's Work Trust. During those years Mr Gooding made a tremendous contribution to the work of Ritchies. He not only did much of the preparation of the *Believer's Magazine*, but also made valuable contribution to the spiritual content.

Brother Gooding was not only a committed servant at work. He fully entered into the privileges and

responsibilities of local assembly life. At first he was in fellowship in the small assembly at Kilmaurs which later closed, but for most of his life he gathered with the saints at Elim Hall, Kilmarnock. There his godly influence and life were highly appreciated. He became a faithful shepherd and wise counsellor. He was also an able and effective preacher of the gospel. For many summers he preached in tent meetings locally and in the surrounding areas, often with brother Jack Hunter. They had the joy of seeing much fruit and many are in assembly fellowship today who were saved at that time. His commendation to the grace of God was from the assembly at Elim Hall.

But AMS Gooding was best known for his teaching of the Scriptures. For many years while in secular employment, he travelled throughout the UK in his ministry. He was not a "one string" man. He was acquainted with the whole spectrum of divine truth and had a pleasant yet authoritative manner in his public ministry, which could be easily understood and retained. Yet he was also at home handling the deep things of God in Bible readings, which he regularly conducted in places such as Lurgan, Larne, Eastbourne, Kilravock and many other parts of the UK. He was also, when necessary, an able defender of the faith. His articles



reviewing some of the reports of the Swanwick Conferences will long be remembered by those who read them! In his later years he made many visits to North America for ministry, as well as one visit to South Africa.

Our brother succeeded the late William Bunting as Editor of the magazine *Assembly Testimony*. His writings on *The Epistles of John* in the Ritchie series *What the Bible Teaches* is a substantial contribution to that series and the book *The 13 Judges* is a transcription from tapes of his ministry. In recent years Mr Gooding had increasing visual deterioration and found this a severe trial. He was a man of God and will be greatly missed.