

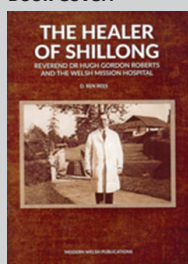
# Lasting fruit of integral mission in India of 100 years ago



## Book title:

The healer of Shillong:  
Reverend Dr Hugh Gordon  
Roberts and the Welsh  
mission hospital

## Book Cover:



## Author:

D. Benjamin Rees

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## Review Title:

Lasting fruit of integral mission  
in India of 100 years ago

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This piece of the history of missions of a Calvinistic missionary in a remote part of India, is an inspiring example of the integration of word and deed in the extension of the kingdom of God. The perseverance and tenacity in the face of hardship and many challenges that Dr Hugh Gordon Roberts and his wife had to deal with, is a testimony of the long-lasting fruit of people who have been touched by the religious revival in Wales in 1905.

This history of the work of Reverend Dr Hugh Gordon Roberts and the Welsh mission hospital in Shillong, is a gripping story to read. However, it also provides an insight in the typical struggles and joys of a dedicated medical missionary, his wife and colleagues, as well as the vision and mission policies of the Welsh Presbyterian Missionary organisation.

Hugh Gordon Roberts was born in 1885 in Liverpool, England, the son of David Roberts, a much respected elder in the Catherine Street Presbyterian Church of Wales, or as it was known in those days, the Calvinistic Methodist Church.

Gordon had his first tertiary level training at the prestigious and private educational establishment called Liverpool College and then became trained as a chartered accountant. During the Welsh Religious Revival in 1905, he was deeply touched by a sermon of the evangelist Evan Roberts on the theme: 'How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?'

He then enrolled as a student at the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Liverpool where he qualified in 1912 as a Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery. After he got married in 1913 to Miss Catherine (Katie) Jones, who was a qualified nurse, they sailed to Calcutta on a long and difficult road to the Khasi Jaintia Hills in India as missionaries. In accordance to the denomination's emphasis on evangelisation as the central priority in missions, he was also ordained as a Minister of Religion.

The book then describes the hard work they did and tiresome negotiations to establish the Welsh Mission Hospital in Shillong in 1922. It is also interesting to read how they not only had to treat a wide variety of medical conditions, but also had to deal with superstition.

The Dr H. Gordon Roberts Hospital will be celebrating its century of medical service in 2022. Some of the proceeds of this book will go towards an appeal of the Presbyterian Church of Wales to support the addressing of current day challenges of the hospital that is now run by the Presbyterian Church of North-East India. Its motto is: 'In his Name to heal, to teach and to preach'.

The author, Dr Benjamin Rees, is one of the foremost historians who wrote about the missionaries from Wales that ministered in India from 1840 till 1970. He carefully studied the relevant archives and documents to provide a clear picture of the historical facts and also provided interesting photos and pictures that portrays the reality of the impact of this mission work.

The book will be valuable as prescribed material in the study of the history of missions. It will also serve as inspirational reading for any Christian to learn more of God's grace in the perseverance of missionaries and of missional churches being faithful in thrusting out and supporting well trained missionaries to be channels of God's compassion. They served the suffering people of India.

The book is a valuable contribution to the growing global interest in integral mission that maintains the central message of the gospel. At the same time, it provides a foretaste of God's eschatological new creation with the return of Christ when He is going to wipe away every tear from our eyes; because there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying, because there shall be no more pain. The book is one example of how holistic and integral missions now already radiate something of God's great future to the world.

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