

**WILLIAM  
WILBERFORCE**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649114023

William Wilberforce by John Stoughton

Except for use in any review, the reproduction or utilisation of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the permission of the publisher, Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd, PO Box 1576 Collingwood, Victoria 3066 Australia.

All rights reserved.

Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.  
Cover @ 2017

This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form or binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser.

[www.triestepublishing.com](http://www.triestepublishing.com)

**JOHN STOUGHTON**

**WILLIAM  
WILBERFORCE**



JOHN BYLES  
"The Man"  
EALING.

*WILLIAM WILBERFORCE.*

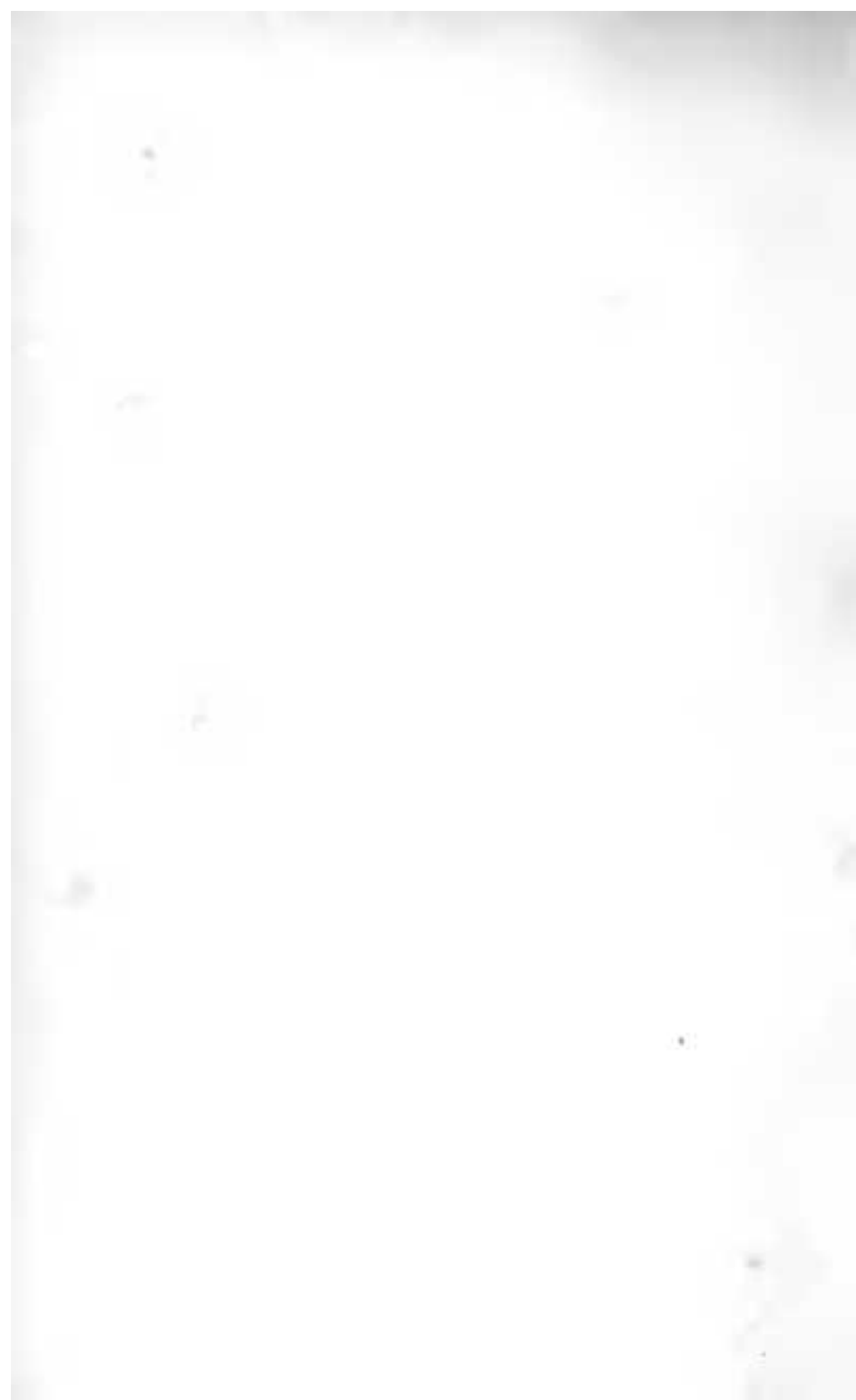
FAIRY FLOTHES, THE GRESHAM PRESS, CHELWORTH AND LONDON.

DF  
500  
V. 64.587

## CONTENTS.

---

	PAGE
CHAPTER I.	
EARLY DAYS . . . . .	9
CHAPTER II.	
POLITICAL CAREER . . . . .	25
CHAPTER III.	
ANTI-SLAVERY CRUSADE . . . . .	65
CHAPTER IV.	
GENERAL BENEFICENCE . . . . .	87
CHAPTER V.	
RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE AND SYMPATHY . . . . .	107
CHAPTER VI.	
AUTHORSHIP . . . . .	135
CHAPTER VII.	
DOMESTIC AND SOCIAL LIFE . . . . .	151
CHAPTER VIII.	
LAST DAYS . . . . .	202





## CHAPTER I.

### *EARLY DAYS.*

**K**INGSTON-UPON-HULL may be justly proud of its famous men. From Sir William de la Pole—one of its early native merchant princes, at a time when the port supplied several large ships for wars with France—there sprung the ducal family of Suffolk. Sir John Lawson, the Commonwealth Admiral, who so often beat the armaments of Holland, is reckoned amongst the free-born denizens of the town. But more illustrious than either of these is the name of Andrew Marvell, whose father was master of the grammar school, and who in the corrupt reign of Charles II. distinguished himself by his incorruptible patriotism even more than by his political satire. A fourth, whose name is more familiar now than any of the previous three, was in the last century added to those of earlier worthies: and whilst inferior to the first with regard to rank, unlike the second in point of valour, and destitute of the peculiar literary genius ascribed to the third, he surpassed them all by the charms of his

eloquence, the achievements of his statesmanship, the virtues of his life, and the manifold benefits which he conferred upon mankind.

William Wilberforce was grandson of a namesake who twice served as Mayor of Hull. In 1771, after being alderman for nearly half a century, he desired, on the ground of old age, to "resign his gown, that he might pass the remainder of his days in a relaxation from all public business." The son of that alderman was named Robert, a prosperous merchant who lived in High Street. The house is still pointed out, though greatly altered in appearance from what it was. It is described, in a history of Hull, as a quaint red brick Dutch-looking structure, with a tower in front of the building, the panelled rooms with ornamental ceilings having been converted into offices, whilst the massive staircase remained in its original state. We learn that since then, a fine old mantel-piece was removed by Bishop Wilberforce to adorn his own residence as a relic of his ancestors.

William Wilberforce the philanthropist, son of that Robert, was born in his father's house on St. Bartholomew's day, August 24, 1759, the last year but one of the reign of George II. Only two or three weeks before, news had reached home of the taking of Quebec and the death of General Wolfe—when, it is said of the English people, "they despaired, they triumphed, and they wept." The child was weak and puny, and after he had become a man he used to say, if he had been born in less civilised times, it would have been thought impossible for him to live. Yet the vital force, hidden within so delicate a frame,

triumphed over physical debility, as it did through a long life; and, as a boy, he was known amongst his playmates for extraordinary sprightliness, and amongst his school-fellows for quickness in learning and power of elocution.

About 1766 he attended the grammar school of Hull—a venerable institution, whose Elizabethan architecture still adorns the town, where, more than a century earlier, Marvell, the head master, had drilled his own son in the rudiments of Latin. Joseph Milner, the historian of the Christian Church, soon after Wilberforce's admission as a pupil, succeeded to the mastership, and, being a friend of the family, must have taken an interest in his education.

Robert Wilberforce, the father, died in 1768, and the boy was left to the care of an uncle William, living at Wimbledon in Surrey, an aristocratic neighbourhood, with remains of Roman barrows on the common—destined to be known as a place for fighting duels before it attained its present celebrity for volunteer encampments. Besides Wimbledon Park, the seat of the Duke of Somerset, several mansions skirted the furze-covered heath, and in one of them resided Wilberforce's uncle, where the boy, then about nine years old, would enjoy fresh air and pleasant scenery, and would improve his health and raise his spirits. Mrs. William Wilberforce was a lady who had come under the power of the Whitefield movement, which had wonderfully revived Evangelical religion in this country; and it would appear that this aunt of his was disposed to strict sectarianism, for Wilberforce long afterwards said, that "if he had stayed with his uncle he should probably have been a despised, bigoted Metho-