

**ROBERT RAIKES: JOURNALIST  
AND PHILANTHROPIST, A  
HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN OF  
SUNDAY-SCHOOLS**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649003341

Robert Raikes: journalist and philanthropist, a history of the origin of Sunday-schools by Alfred Gregory

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)

**ALFRED GREGORY**

**ROBERT RAIKES: JOURNALIST  
AND PHILANTHROPIST, A  
HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN OF  
SUNDAY-SCHOOLS**





ROBERT KAINES.

# ROBERT RAIKES:

Journalist and Philanthropist.

*A HISTORY OF THE ORIGIN OF SUNDAY-  
SCHOOLS.*

BY  
ALFRED GREGORY.



HALES' HOUSE IN WIDDOWBURY.

*NINTH THOUSAND.*

London:  
HODDER AND STOUGHTON,  
27, PATERNOSTER ROW.

—  
MDCCCLXXXI.



---

Hasell, Watson, & Viney, Printers, London & Aylesbury.

## CHAPTER I.

### BIRTHPLACE AND PARENTAGE.

"A preaching friar settles himself in every village, and builds a pulpit, which he calls Newspaper."—CARLYLE.

GLOUCESTER, in the early part of the eighteenth century, was not the handsome, well-kept city it is now. It was then unpaved, undrained, unsavoury, and, by necessary consequence, unhealthy and incommodious. The houses were for the most part low, irregular, and projecting. Instead of the numerous ships which now crowd the docks, an occasional vessel from Portugal or France deposited a few casks at the quay, and a wherry to Worcester went twice a week. As to locomotion, even the "Flying Coaches" which subsequently carried adventurous passengers to London in the course of two or three days, had not then commenced their journeys. Nor was the moral or social aspect of affairs more pleasing. The streets swarmed with rogues and vagabonds,



who were flogged through the city weekly by scores. Religion was at a low ebb. The Church seemed asleep. John and Charles Wesley had not begun their evangelizing labours, and Whitefield was known in his native city of Gloucester only as a dirty little rascal who robbed his mother's till and tried to quiet his conscience by giving part of the plunder to the poor. Wholesale executions for comparatively venial offences were the panacea of the Government for all crimes; and these same executions, with bull-baiting and cock-fighting, formed the favourite entertainments of the mob. Sunday-schools there were none, and poor schools were only just being thought of. All over the kingdom popular ignorance and prevalent vice went hand in hand. Gloucester, with all its badness, was no whit worse than the rest of the country. "Darkness covered the earth, and gross darkness the people."

Yet as early as 1722 a gleam of light began to show itself in Gloucester. On the 9th April in that year appeared the first number of the *Gloucester Journal*, ninth in order of time among provincial papers, and in size scarcely larger than a sheet of foolscap. Its founder was a printer, named Robert Raikes, the son of a clergyman of the same name

who lived at Holderness, in Yorkshire. "Raikes the printer," as he was called, was a man of great enterprise and perseverance, and he managed his literary venture so successfully that it soon obtained an extensive circulation throughout Gloucestershire and the surrounding counties. A curious testimony to this fact is recorded in one of the early numbers, as follows:—

"A demure old farmer applied to the printer of the *Gloucester Journal*, and with great gravity of face told him that he feared the mealmen and bakers seldom read their Bibles, but as he knew they always read the newspapers, he desired a corner of his paper for the following texts: 'Just balances, just weights, a just ephah, and a just hin shall ye have' (Lev. xix. 36); 'Divers weights, and divers measures, both of them are alike abomination to the Lord' (Prov. xx. 10)."

Great as was its ultimate success, Raikes' paper was not established without a hard struggle. Besides being, like every other contemporary production of the press, heavily handicapped with Parliamentary imposts—such as the duty on paper and the tax on advertisements—the *Gloucester Journal* experienced a special difficulty in the shape of an encounter with the House of Commons. The

story of that encounter will be found duly recorded in the journals of the House for 1728 and 1729. It seems that early in 1728 Mr. Raikes was bold enough to publish in his newspaper a report of certain proceedings in the House of Commons, supplied to him by Mr. Cave, of London, the celebrated founder of the *Gentleman's Magazine*. As Parliamentary reporting was at that time strictly forbidden, Raikes' temerity got him into trouble. The publication in the *Gloucester Journal* was declared to be "a breach of privilege," and Raikes himself was ordered to appear at the bar of the House for punishment. The record of his appearance on April 8th, 1728, reads thus: "Robert Raikes, in custody of the Sergeant-at-Arms, attending this House, was (according to Order) brought to the Bar; where he, upon his knees, received a Reprimand from Mr. Speaker, and was ordered to be discharged out of Custody, paying his fees." This warning did not prevent him offending again in a similar way the following year, and again he was ordered to appear at the bar. Instead of going he sent a petition, setting forth that he was ill of a fever and unable to travel, and pleading that the report complained of had been published without his knowledge, and contrary to his express