

**THREE APOSTLES OF  
QUAKERISM:  
POPULAR SKETCHES OF  
FOX, PENN & BARCLAY**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649505364

Three Apostles of Quakerism: Popular Sketches of Fox, Penn & Barclay by B. Rhodes

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**B. RHODES**

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THREE  
APOSTLES OF QUAKERISM,

POPULAR SKETCHES OF  
FOX, PENN AND BARCLAY,

By B. RHODES,  
Author of "JOHN BRIGHT, Statesman and Orator," &c.

WITH INTRODUCTION BY J. STOUGHTON, D.D.,  
AUTHOR OF "ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY OF ENGLAND,"  
"LIFE OF WILLIAM PENN," &c., &c.

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"They pleaded only for broad, unfettered, spiritual Christianity."—  
*J. J. Gurney. Memoirs, vol. ii, p. 27.*

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PHILADELPHIA:  
HENRY LONGSTRETH,  
No. 728 SANSON STREET.  
1868.

C8344.29.124



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## INTRODUCTION.

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I HAVE been requested by the Author of this Volume to write a few introductory lines; with that request I cheerfully comply. Having read the proof sheets, I can testify to the diligence, care, and ability, with which the work has been executed. The perusal has been to me very interesting and very pleasant; and I have felt much satisfaction at finding that the historical conclusions here presented are, in general, coincident with my own.

It might be supposed that a book of this limited size, and intended for popular circulation, would be based chiefly, if not entirely, on the larger and best known biographies and histories relative to the men and the period described. But this is by no means the case. I find in these pages numerous signs of original research, and abundant evidence that the writer has formed an independent judgment of the questions coming before him in his enquiries. He has had access to some unpublished correspondence, of which he has made good use. Fourteen letters, not printed before, are laid under contribution, and they add much to the value of the volume.

Mr. Rhodes has evidently much sympathy with the life and labours of the early Quakers; and not being a member of that Society, he is free to judge impartially of certain points in their singular history. That judgment he has wisely exercised. I am fully persuaded in my own mind

that Quakerism was a salutary reaction against the formalities, and the hard theological systematising of the age; that it called attention to forgotten truths; and that its excitements, though clouded by some smoke, yet burnt with fire from heaven; also I quite concur with the writer in thinking that the Society of Friends have still a place for good amongst religious agencies at work in this nineteenth century. May they have grace successfully to accomplish their mission!

I may add, that whilst all three of these biographical sketches are valuable contributions to our ecclesiastical literature, the last, which treats of Robert Barclay, is the fullest, most original, and best of all.

JOHN STOUGHTON.



## P R E F A C E.

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The demand of this busy age is for small books, containing the pith and marrow of important subjects. As regards my subject, I have endeavoured to meet this demand. I hope that the volume supplies at once sketches of three leaders in early Quaker history, and an informal manual of the rise and tenets of the Society.

A few years ago, I was led to re-examine the journal of George Fox, and I was surprised to find him an evangelist of a rare order, with a heart burning and throbbing with pity for sinners and with zeal for the Master. His ardent nature was laid hold of by the gospel in its fulness, and the result was a spirituality at once delicate and strong.

The same features attracted me in William Penn. He also had many of the gifts of the evangelist. He could collect and hold a crowd almost as well as Fox, and preach them as full a gospel. If other schemes had not claimed so large a share of his life, I think he might have done an evangelistic work equal to that done by George Fox.

Robert Barclay deserves to be highly honoured as one who truly devoted his all to Christ. And he had much to devote—an honoured name and titled connections, rare intellectual gifts and great acquirements, social position and wealth. Yet if I understand his life aright, there was no half-heartedness in his decision. But I miss in him that glowing and vigorous assertion of gospel truths which delights us in the pages of Fox and Penn. The pungent and arousing appeals which stud like gems the writings of his two brethren are not to be found in his pages. Silent waiting on God is urged, entire self-surrender to God on the

part of the Christian is insisted on with great earnestness. But the reader will look in vain, even in passages which seem to invite them, for earnest calls to repentance or to diligent service of the gospel of Christ.

The Quakerism of the eighteenth century followed Barclay. The work of Fox was dropped. No one continued his vigorous aggression, but repression of activity was advocated openly. To this I venture to trace the decline of the Society in those days. In the Quakerism of to-day, I think I see Fox's spirit, and I would fain help the healthy reaction, however feebly, by these sketches. I hope they will also introduce to some Christians of other denominations three beautiful examples of spiritual-mindedness.

In the preparation of the sketches of Penn and Barclay, I have had access to numerous unpublished letters in the keeping of a member of the Barclay family. For these I desire to express my warmest thanks. I have used them sparingly. A list of those from which I give extracts will be found on the next page. To the best of my knowledge these extracts have not been printed before.

It is not probable that I shall continue the series of sketches to which this trio forms an appropriate introduction. But I am glad thus to acknowledge my indebtedness to a Society to which I owe more than I can ever repay. None of its members long more fervently than I do that the spirit and labours of its first days may distinguish it again.

Batheaston,  
near Bath.

## LIST OF LETTERS

(HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED).

*From which extracts are given in this volume.*

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<i>From</i> Geo. Fox to Robert Barclay, dated 16. x. 1675, quoted pp. 84, 113	
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R. Barclay's "Vindication" quoted pp. 91, 120, 137, 138.