

**THE LIVES OF JOHN DONNE,
HENRY WOTTON, RICHARD
HOOKER, GEORGE HERBERT
AND ROBERT SANDERSON**

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The Lives of John Donne, Henry Wotton, Richard Hooker, George Herbert and Robert Sanderson by Izaak Walton

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IZAAK WALTON

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IZAAK WALTON'S
LIVES

OF

JOHN DONNE

HENRY WOTTON

RICHARD HOOKER and

GEORGE HERBERT

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY HENRY MORLEY

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INTRODUCTION.

IZAACK WALTON was born at Stafford in the year 1593—when Shakespeare had newly begun to write plays all his own—and he died in the year 1683, aged ninety-one. He began life soon after he came of age in one of the little seamster or draper's shops on the Exchange, seven and a half feet long by five feet wide, from which, in Dekker's "Shoemaker's Holiday," "sweet, beauteous Jane" tempted the enamoured Hamon, saying—

Sir, what is't you buy?

What is it you lack, sir? Calico or lawn,

Fine caubric shirts or henc's? What will you buy?

In 1624, at the age of thirty-one, Izaak Walton moved into Fleet Street, where his shop was on the north side, two doors west of the end of Chancery Lane. He moved afterwards to the seventh house round the corner on the west side of the Lane. He went to church at St. Paul's, where Donne (who died in 1631) had been made Dean in 1623, and

he found a friend in the poet-preacher, who first quickened his religious life. In 1626—the year of Francis Bacon's death—Izaak Walton married at Canterbury Rachel Floud, who was descended on the mother's side from Archbishop Cranmer. Fourteen years afterwards that first wife died, having given to her gentle husband seven children, who all died when young. In business Walton prospered, and on holidays he went as an angler to the river Lee.

The year of his first wife's death (1640) was that of the publication of a volume of Donne's Sermons, to which Walton prefixed the *Life of Donne*, which will be found in this volume. Walton's age was forty-seven in that year 1640, which was closely followed by the greater troubles between King and Parliament that grew to Civil War. The Civil War began in 1642, and in the following year Izaak Walton, aged fifty, gave up the business by which he had earned enough to live in peace. He was a firm friend to Church and King, and loved the poets, and he was a contemplative man not only when he went a-fishing.

In 1646 Izaak Walton married again, his second wife being the sister of Thomas Ken, then a boy nine years old, afterwards one of the Seven Bishops who were sent to the Tower for resisting James the Second's claim to a dispensing power, who is remembered also by some gentle verses, among which

are the familiar Morning and Evening Hymns. Anne Ken, the sister who became the second wife of Izaak Walton, gave him sixteen more years of happiness in married life, beginning when his age was fifty-three, and ending when he was just reaching the age of threescore and ten. It was in the seventh year of this second marriage, when his age was sixty, that Izaak Walton published the first edition of his "Complete Angler." There remained after the death of his second wife still twenty years of life before him, and he had also the solace left him of a son who bore his father's name, and a daughter who was named after her mother, Anne.

The second of the "Lives" published by Izaak Walton was that of Richard Hooker, prefixed to an edition of his works in 1666—year of the Fire of London; the third was that of Sir Henry Wotton, prefixed to the "*Reliquiæ Wottonianæ*" in 1670. In the same year, 1670, appeared Walton's Life of George Herbert with his Letters, and also the first collection of the four Lives into a volume, illustrated with portraits of the men described. That is the volume here reprinted. Within nine years of its first publication it had reached a fifth edition, and it has since maintained its position as a living book. A fifth Life, that of Dr. Robert Sanderson, Bishop of Lincoln, was not published until eight years later, in 1678, when the biographer had reached the age of

eighty-five. Izaak Walton was for some time domesticated with George Morley, Bishop of Winchester, and in the house of his son-in-law, Dr. Hawkins, Prebendary of Winchester Cathedral, he died at Winchester, on the 15th of December 1683.

Walton's "Lives" are of men who were very near to him and whose lives touched his own. He was a child when Hooker died, but the George Cranmer of whom he tells as Hooker's pupil, was uncle to Walton's first wife; Donne had from the pulpit of St. Paul's first stirred in him the depths of spiritual life, and had looked in on him when he kept shop near the corner of Chancery Lane. Walton was forty-six when Sir Henry Wotton died, while, as for George Herbert, Izaak Walton and he were both born in the same year; though one died in the earlier half of the reign of Charles the First, the other lived on through the Commonwealth and through the reign of Charles the Second and into the reign of James the Second, dying in the year of the executions of Lord Russell and Algernon Sidney.

H. M.

February 1888.

TO THE
RIGHT HONOURABLE AND REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,
GEORGE, LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER,
And Prelate of the Most Noble Order of the Garter.

MY LORD,—

I DID some years past present you with a plain relation of the Life of Mr. Richard Hooker, that humble man to whose memory princes and the most learned of this nation have paid a reverence at the mention of his name. And now, with Mr. Hooker's, I present you also the Life of that pattern of primitive piety, Mr. George Herbert; and with his the Life of Dr. Donne, and your friend Sir Henry Wotton, all reprinted. The two first were written under your roof; for which reason, if they were worth it, you might justly challenge a Dedication. And, indeed, so you might of Dr. Donne's, and Sir Henry Wotton's; because, if I had been fit for this undertaking, it would not have been by acquired learning or study, but by the advantage of forty years' friendship, and thereby, with hearing and discoursing with your Lordship, that hath enabled me to make the relation of these Lives passable—if they prove so—in an eloquent and captious age.

And indeed, my Lord, though these relations be well-meant sacrifices to the memory of these worthy men, yet I have so little confidence in my performance that I beg

pardon for superscribing your name to them ; and desire all that know your Lordship to apprehend this not as a Dedication—at least by which you receive any addition of honour—but rather as an humble and more public acknowledgment of your long-continued and your now daily favours to,

My Lord,

Your most affectionate

and most humble servant,

IZAACK WALTON.