

**GEORGE FOX INTERPRETED:  
THE RELIGION,  
REVELATIONS, MOTIVES AND  
MISSION OF GEORGE FOX**

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George Fox Interpreted: The Religion, Revelations, Motives and Mission of George Fox by  
Thomas Ellwood Longshore

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**THOMAS ELLWOOD LONGSHORE**

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GEORGE FOX INTERPRETED.

THE RELIGION, REVELATIONS, MOTIVES  
AND MISSION OF

GEORGE FOX,

*"The First and Chief Elder among the People called Quakers,"*

INTERPRETED IN THE LIGHT OF THE NINETEENTH  
CENTURY, AND APPLIED TO THE PRESENT  
CONDITION OF THE CHURCH.

INSCRIBED TO THE DIFFERENT BRANCHES OF THE  
SOCIETY OF FRIENDS.

BY

THOMAS ELLWOOD LONGSHORE.

*"Ye shall know the Truth, and the Truth shall make you free."*

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1881.

## PREFACE.

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HAVING read the Journal of George Fox in childhood, the impression it made has never been obliterated. Of course but little of it was understood. The simple, solemn style, and the reverent, devotional spirit manifested by the author, was what produced the effect. The literal sense that the language seemed to convey of his being directed by a personal God, ever present as his guide, made his character that of superhuman. I think these early lessons and impressions have had much to do in giving a direction to my turn of thought through subsequent life. Though I have seldom opened his Journal during half a century, with a view of reading or understanding better, I never was satisfied that I understood it all. Beside my own reading, I had heard so much reference to him as an extraordinary man, by those of superior wisdom and judgment, that I resolved in my maturer years to re-peruse the Journal, to study and understand the author, if possible. The following pages contain, in an imperfect manner of delineation, the results that were irresistibly forced on my mind. I believe the time is not far distant, when by the aid of scientific light, the past will be better interpreted, and George Fox and his mission, will be understood and accepted in the exalted and sublime view represented in the outline here presented. To those who claim to be

the adherents to his faith and spirit as Friends, in any of the divisions of that name, I particularly commend a careful reading of this essay. Not that I believe this age is prepared to receive it unanimously; yet I am entirely willing to rest in and confide it to the future, not doubting its verdict.

To-day we are honoring Fox with our lips, while in modern parlance our hearts may be far away from doing him justice for qualities that are not meritorious now in religious circles, because they are not popular. The heretics of one century are the canonized saints of another. It should be the part of the living to be faithful, even to acts of unwelcome justice, and trust not in man for praise or approbation.

The reader will perceive that I have made but few quotations from the Journal, except the words he uses in describing his mission. These are so direct, forcible and expressive, I have used them freely and frequently, for the purpose of interpreting his conduct and language in many parts of his Journal, where his motives were more obscurely expressed or must be implied from his general reasonings. My aim has been to understand the equivocal in his life and writings by the aid of the unequivocal, the positive, bold and direct expressions of his thoughts, and so make him logical, rational and consistent, and truly a great man.

I have summoned but few corroborative authorities to sustain my positions; such quotations would only increase the bulk of matter without adding to it any special value, but simply give the speculative opinions of others.

It is not so much what people think or believe con-

cerning him, as it is to know what were his own thoughts, collected from his own writing, concerning his motives, his mission, his faith and conduct. Our business is to get a true view of his merits, to venerate and admire him for what he was, and not for what others claim for him without understanding him. There are many more peculiarities represented in the language he used, and in some of his actions, that may seem at variance with the conclusions established and sustained, but they can all be accounted for and explained by the general principles that animated him; and by the reasonings and inferences which reveal to us the motives and objects that absorbed most of his energies. We must remember he was neither a scholar nor courtier, nor cultured in style or etiquette, and it would be unjust to hold him to a rigid consistency in all he said or did, under the trials and in the vicissitudes he was so often placed. It is remarkable, marvelous, that he acquitted himself so well, and left so little occasion for the critic or caviler, to fault him in the great work he accomplished.

For a concise work containing the history of the scriptures and the church, gathered from ancient ecclesiastical writers, in defence of the reasoning and conclusions contained in this essay for the origin of the system of doctrines called evangelical, and much other valuable information in reference to the origin of Christianity, the reader is referred to a volume entitled "Indices Historical and Rational. By David Newport, a member of the Society of Friends, printed by J. B. Lippincott & Co., Phila. Pa."



For a more full account of the historical facts, legends or oriental religious beliefs and mythological doctrines referred to, see Bouzique's "History of Christianity;" Newman's "Supernatural Religion;" "Progress of Religious Ideas," by L. M. Child; Graves' "Sixteen Crucified Saviors;" Draper's "Intellectual Development of Europe;" "History of the Christian Religion to A. D. 200," by Charles B. Waite, A. M., and "Higgins' Anacalypsis." And for confirmation of the views advanced of what is true Christianity, a spiritual religion and the convictions of the more enlightened early Friends, see Fox's Journal, Barclay's Apology, and the writings of William Penn

T. E. L.

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