

**THE LIFE OF RICHARD  
ROLPH, THE BLIND  
PEASANT OF LAKENHEATH,  
COMPOSED BY HIMSELF**

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The life of Richard Rolph, the blind peasant of Lakenheath, composed by himself by Richard Rolph

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**RICHARD ROLPH**

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PEASANT OF LAKENHEATH,  
COMPOSED BY HIMSELF**





*Richard Rolph.*

THE  
LIFE  
OF  
RICHARD ROLPH,  
THE  
BLIND PEASANT OF LAKENHEATH,  
NEAR MILDENHALL, SUFFOLK.

COMPOSED BY HIMSELF

Fourth Edition.

ENTERED STATIONERS' HALL.

1841.

BURY ST. EDMUND'S:  
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR BY R. J. PECHAY.

MDCCLXLI.

631.

## ADVERTISEMENT.

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I am a humble Peasant-Author, and feel no vanity in telling my friends and the public what I have been, what I have suffered, and what I have enjoyed. I was strongly urged to publish this book, and assisted by kind friends, who prepared it for the press, I have sold THREE Editions.

To all who have patronized me, I feel myself under obligation, but especially to several Ministers of the Gospel, who have interested themselves in the sale of my book, and have thus afforded me comfort under a distressing privation.

Grateful for past kindness to me, as an afflicted child of Providence, I humbly and respectfully solicit public patronage and encouragement to this FOURTH Edition, that the dreary dispensation of *total darkness*, may be mitigated and cheered, by continued sympathy and benevolence.

Lakenheath, 1841.

R. R.

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Having known this "afflicted child of Providence," from his earliest years to the present time, and feeling desirous—as every christian must feel—to minister to his relief and comfort, I have at his urgent request, revised these pages, in the humble hope, that by the blessing of God, they may be productive of benefit to him and to the reader.

J. GATHERCOLE,

June, 1841.

Bury St. Edmund's.

## RECOMMENDATION.

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Vicarage House, Kings Langley, Herts.

Nov. 20, 1840.

RICHARD ROLPH,

I am very glad that you have written to me, and thank you for your very interesting publications, which not only do you great credit, but are likewise calculated to do a great deal of good. I will most readily consent to my name being added to your list of subscribers, (Rev. J. W. Butt, M. A. Vicar of Lakenheath,) Ten Copies. And if you can point out any other way, in which I can serve you, if in my power, I will do it. I earnestly pray the blessing of God, upon you, and your family, and am

Your Friend and Well-wisher,

J. W. BUTT.

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Richard Rolph, the author of this work, is well known to me, and is, (as is his father, Andrew Rolph,) a most respectable man; he is deserving in every way of the sympathy and encouragement of the well disposed, and this will at any time be testified by me, or my relation, Mr. Thomas Parrott, of Lakenheath.

W. P. CARTER,

Barrister,

4, Langford Place, St John's Wood,

London.



From information which I have received concerning Richard Holph, I have reason to believe that he is one of the "household of faith," and that he has a wife and five children, depending for subsistence in a great measure upon the sale of these little books, I therefore add my name by way of recommendation, and shall be amply repaid if I can be instrumental in benefiting him by so doing.

J. F. SPARKE,

Baptist Minister,

Botesdale,

Suffolk.

May 13th, 1841.

The Rev. J. Cooke, Rev. J. Drake, and J. Fyson, Esq., Thetford; Rev. R. Bryant, Huntington; Rev. J. Ray, Cambridge; B. Primrose Esq., Mildenhall; Messrs. Pepworth, Brandon; Walden, Feltwell; Flatman, Downham; Bootman, Lynn; and J. Gathercole, Bury St. Edmund's, will give similar testimony if required.

Other recommendations may be seen in the Author's "Poetical Discourse."

THE  
LIFE OF RICHARD ROLPH.

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I was born at the village of Lakenheath, about six miles from Mildenhall, in the County of Suffolk, on the 8th of March, 1801.

My parents were poor but industrious, and early taught me to attend the House of God. Of the earliest part of my infancy, I have but little to say, that is interesting and worthy of record. At seven years of age, I was sent to a charity school; but being obliged to do something for my own subsistence, I was soon of necessity, taken away from it, and consequently learned but little.

About this time a Wesleyan Sunday School, being established in the village, I attended, and made a little progress in reading; but as I continued there a few months only, I learned but little. While under the care and instructions of my school teachers, some faint rays of heavenly light shone upon me, but they were  
“as a morning cloud, and as the early dew,

which soon goeth away,"—scarcely seen till they had vanished. Evil companions, corrupt society, and a depraved nature, held me in deepest darkness. At this period my daily occupation was chiefly with the bricklayers, whose business I had the opportunity of learning to some advantage. At seventeen years of age, I received Journeyman's wages from my Master, and having a good supply of money, began to seek pleasure at every opportunity. Alas! how foolish and full of vanity are many of our actions. Dissipation was my joy. I fancied the cup I drank was pure and sweet. Charming seemed the prospect of carnal happiness that opened on my view. I thought not of the transitoriness of sublunary things. I loved and pursued the vanities of the world, as if they would endure for ever. I never troubled myself with the thought that for all my misdoings, I should have to give an account at that awful day, when God will judge the world in righteousness. At this time I learned to play the flute. I frequently attended music-rooms, where I enjoyed, as I fancied, the most gratifying felicity, especially at Fordham, where I practised with Mr. Bishop, his son William, and others.

In August, 1821, disease began to manifest itself in my eyes, which ended in *Gutta Serena*. When at work for Sir H. E. Bunbury, Bart., on a building near Coppilaw, in the parish of Mildenhall, I was taken from the scaffold nearly blind. This severe calamity threw a dark, dark shade over my visionary prospects of pleasure. Dense clouds seemed to be gathering around me, that gave an aspect of horror to my future life. No words, no pen, can do justice to the