

**THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF
ARCHBISHOP ULLATHORNE:
WITH SELECTIONS FROM
HIS LETTERS**

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The autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne: with selections from his letters by William Bernard Ullathorne

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WILLIAM BERNARD ULLATHORNE

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The Autobiography
OF
Archbishop Ullathorne

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THIRD EDITION

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P R E F A C E.

THE Autobiography of Archbishop Ullathorne was written in the year 1868, at the request of an intimate friend, and with no view of publication. It was revised by the writer towards the end of his life, when he both inserted some passages bearing reference to a later date, and omitted others which he appears to have considered less suitable for general readers. It is from this revised copy that the greater portion of the following pages has been prepared.

The Autobiography is not carried on later than the year 1850. Comparatively few letters have been preserved that would illustrate this earlier period of the Archbishop's life; but subsequent to that date a large number exist, from which a selection has been made so as in some manner to carry on the history to the end. In a letter addressed to the friend for whose perusal the original Autobiography was drawn up, the writer remarks: "Two objections to giving such a narrative have made me somewhat reluctant to comply with your request. One is the necessary egotism of such a narrative, and the other, the fact that the external and visible outlines which are all that I can touch on give no

fair representation of that veritable life which is wholly of the soul." In selecting the letters to be given to the public, which form the Second Part of this publication, and which will fill a separate Volume, it has been the desire of the Editors in some degree to supply the want here alluded to, by choosing those which present the reader with some of the stores of spiritual wisdom which enriched the mind of the writer, rather than such as would merely illustrate his public Episcopal career.

Unfortunately, the Archbishop did not live to complete the revision of his autobiography, the latter portion of which, as here published, has had to be drawn from the unrevised copy. Besides the Autobiography, he left a collection of anecdotes, written at rather a later period, which it was his intention to have woven into the narrative in their proper place, an intention he never had leisure to carry out. These, therefore, have now been either included in the body of the narrative or added as illustrative notes. A few passages in the Life have, for obvious reasons, been either omitted or briefly summarised, according to what would seem to have been the purpose of the writer; but all such abridgments are included within brackets.

ST. DOMINIC'S CONVENT, STONE,
September 10th, 1891.

A. T. D.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY
OF
ARCHBISHOP ULLATHORNE.

CHAPTER I.

BIRTH AND EARLY RECOLLECTIONS.

I WAS born at Pocklington, in Yorkshire, on the 7th of May in the year 1806, and was the eldest of ten children. My father was a grocer, draper, and spirit merchant, and did half the business of the town, supplying it with coal, before it had a canal, and, in the absence of a bank, discounting bills. His father had descended from gentle birth, but owing to a singular incident he became a shoemaker, and afterwards a farmer. For his father was a gentleman of landed estate in the West Riding of Yorkshire, which estate he acquired through his marriage with Miss Binks, to whom it came as heiress of Mr. Binks, who had married Miss More, a lineal descendant of Sir Thomas More, the Chancellor and Martyr, and the sister of Mrs. Waterton, who is commemorated by her grandson, the celebrated traveller and naturalist of Waterton Hall, in his autobiography.

The estate was forfeited through the insurrection of 1745 in favour of the claims of the Stuarts, after which my grandfather and his brother Francis were taken in charge

by Dr. Lawrence, of York. The two boys, however, were so terrified at the discovery of a skeleton in a cupboard in their bedroom that they both ran away. My grandfather apprenticed himself to a shoemaker, his brother fled to London, and there engaged himself to a chemist, and thus the turn in the fortunes of the family was completed.

My dear mother was a native of Spilsby, in Lincolnshire, of which county her father was Chief Constable. Sir John Franklin, the Arctic navigator, was her cousin, and next-door neighbour in their youthful days. She well remembered Sir Joseph Banks, of Captain Cook's exploring expedition, under whose influence young Franklin went to sea.

My father met my mother in London, where they were both engaged in Townshend's great drapery business in Holborn; he converted her to the faith and then married her, after which they commenced business in Pocklington on their own account. As my father was a popular character, and my mother was greatly esteemed and respected for her gentle kindness and her good sense, their children were much noticed and every house was open to them.

I was sent to learn my first letters from a Miss Plummer, the daughter of a Protestant clergyman, who lived to a very advanced age. At home, I learnt to say my prayers at my mother's knee; and although she was engaged all day in business, yet, with the aid of a confidential servant, devoted up to old age to the family, she contrived to keep us in good order and discipline. Indeed, a grave look from her was always a sufficient correction. My imagination as a child was extremely vivid, and communicated a sense of life to much that I looked upon in nature. I can recollect being led, by the hand as a little child, past a garden covered with snow, through which a group of snowdrops and crocuses peered out, and they seemed to me to be living creatures coming up in their innocence from the

earth. The corn in the fields was to me a great mystery, especially when it turned from green to brown; and when cut and gathered into sheaves, I thought they had killed the corn to make bread of it. Another childish experience that set my mind a wondering, was the exercising of the militia on the public green, in those warlike times. To see all those red-coated, black-gaitered men with feathers in their hats, moving, like one will in all their bodies, at the voice of a man with a different shaped hat, was the cause to me of many surmises. The nurse used to subdue us into good behaviour by the threat that Buonaparte was coming; and I used to picture him as a little man with a big cocked hat and a great sword in his hand, going in his solitary strength and sternness from house to house, killing all the people. Now and then a sailor would pass through the place, deprived of a leg or an arm, holding in his one hand or dragging on wheels a little ship, and singing with brazen lungs about "We boarded the Frenchman," which led to talk among our elders about the wars, and set the children's minds on their first wonderings about the great world abroad.

How shall I recall the joys of my first remembered Christmas—joys, not of the eye or the palate, but of the imagination? The being awakened in the night to hear the playing and singing of the waits. Rude enough they might seem to other ears, but to the child, awakened out of sleep, it was little less than celestial harmony. The young imagination, in its glow, peopled all the heavens with beautiful angels, flying happily among the falling flakes of snow, and singing the invitation: "Christians awake, salute the happy morn, whercon the Saviour of mankind was born." On the next day came the expected visitor, old Nanny Cabbage, in her red cloak and black bonnet, and, though a Protestant, producing from under her cloak her little houselcin, with its holly, its two red

apples stuck on pegs, and between them the Child Jesus in His cradle, when, courtesying to the family, she sang the "Seven Joys of Mary," to the delight of the children. Relic this of the old Catholic times, which I fear has passed away with many other traditions. Things like these were educating me, if we attend to the sense of the word, much more than Miss Plummer's lessons in reading and spelling.

After being rigged in a suit of boys' clothes, the great transition of childhood, my father took me with him to York, where the walk by his side through the Cathedral* gave me such an impression of awe and grandeur, such a sense of religion, that for many a long day my imagination fed itself upon that wonderful recollection. I was told, of course, that the marvellous structure had been the work of Catholics long ago. It did not so much astonish me as elevate me by its sublimity. The city walls and Clifford's Tower perplexed my young mind as to their use and object; but after two or three explanations had failed I was told that, "if Buonaparte came, they would get in there and fight him out," and this satisfied me. I can recall, as though it were yesterday, the tender tones in which all my questions were answered. The father seemed to feel what was passing in the mind of the child on that first great day of its development. York Minster was visible, as a great and con-

* He had, however, been already used to gaze at the Minster from a distance. "Easter Sunday afternoon," he writes, "was a great festival at Pocklington from an old tradition. A large number of all classes of the population, men, women, and children, went up to Spring Hill, Chapel Hill, or Primrose Hill, for it was called by all these names, and gave a distant view of York Minster. There, by the ruins of the old chapel and at the clear spring sat half Pocklington, the children with sweets in their bottles, and the grown people with wine and spirits in theirs, tempering them with water from the spring, picking violets and primroses, and enjoying themselves with great freedom. I have no doubt this chapel was a place of pilgrimage in the olden days." In another letter he says: "It was Mr. Holmes, the solicitor, a great friend of my father, who first introduced me to the "Arabian Nights." I visited his son some years ago, and took my last leave of old Pocklington, with a look at York Minster from Primrose Hill."