

# Bro. Robert Roberts Re-Visited







# Birthplace

## Aberdeen, Scotland 8<sup>th</sup> April 1839



# Influences in early childhood

- His father was a seaman, much away from home.
- His mother was a hard working Baptist of severe moral and religious principles.
- He was not sheltered from the harsh realities of life.
- At an early age he learned to “put away childish things” and prepare for work.

# Earning a living

- (11) Left school, worked in a Rope cellar maintaining a record of products sold.
- Assistant in grocer's shop
- Printer - lithographic department, letter-press
- (13) Unemployed - strong inclination to follow example of two brothers to go to sea
- Apprenticed to a Druggist, at which time he learned shorthand.
- Journalist - first in Aberdeen, then Edinburgh (18), then Huddersfield

## Earning a living (contd)

- (22) Phrenologist - shorthand writer
- (22) Journalist - Huddersfield
- (23) Journalist - *Birmingham Daily Post*
- (26) Bankruptcy Court - official shorthand writer
- (30) Editor of *The Christadelphian* in Birmingham



## His first contact with the Truth



- At the age of 10 he was taken to hear an address on baptism by a visitor to Aberdeen, the speaker was Dr. Thomas.

Chapel where Dr Thomas spoke



# The steps to his conversion

- Three years later, circumstances caused his mind to take a definite turn in the direction of religion.
- At this time he discovered the *Herald of the Kingdom* and became a voracious reader of it and the Bible.
- A short while later he was presented with a copy of *Elpis Israel*. After reading it he concluded “that popular theology was a hideous caricature of divine truth, and that the system of things contended for by Dr. Thomas was according to a full and correct understanding of the whole Scriptures of Moses, the prophets and the apostles”. He resolved to have nothing more to do with the church.

# Breaking from the Baptists



**Baptist Chapel, John Street, Aberdeen**

# Immersion into Christ



**River Dee outside of Aberdeen**

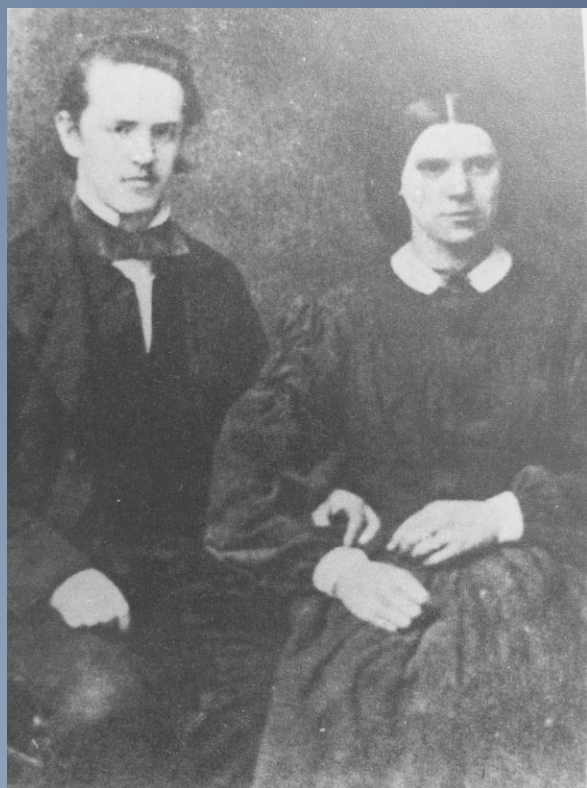


# His development in the Truth

- From the age of 13 he read seven chapters of the Bible every day.
- At 16 his perceived need for methodical study caused him to produce a reading chart that became the *Bible Reader's Companion*.
- By the age of 23, his name was known worldwide by all who accepted the same faith.



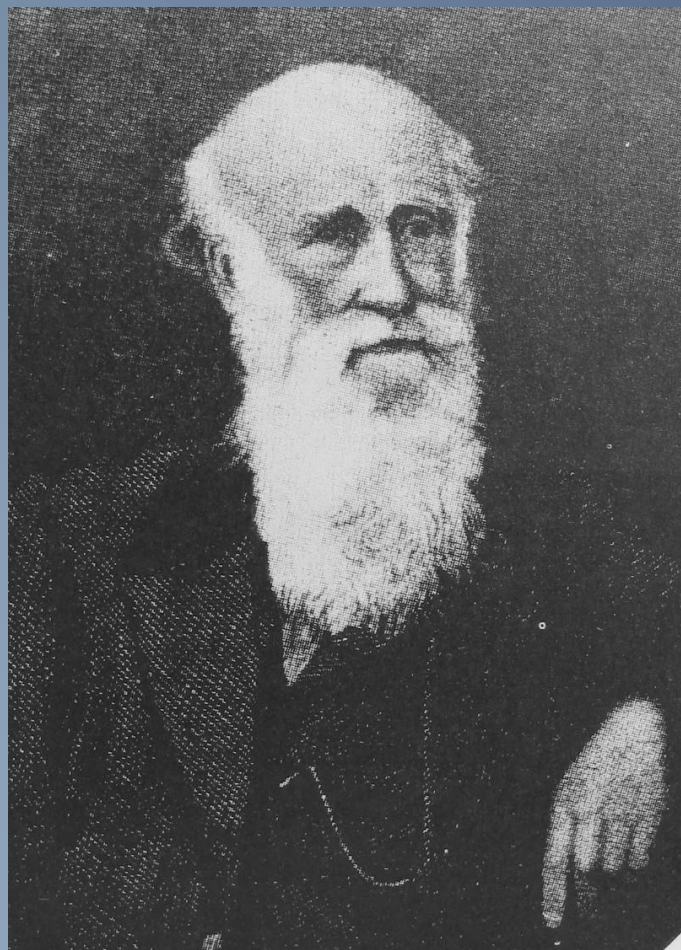
## The romance of a lifetime



“ I was drawn to her with a power that soon ended in the closest intimacy. Her tastes were all in the line of intellectual and Spiritual things” Bro. Roberts

Robert Roberts & Jane Norrie

# First meeting with Bro. Thomas



- It is impossible to exaggerate the charm of Dr. Thomas's company under our own roof. He was a totally different man from what his writings prepared us to expect. He was quiet, gentle, courteous, well-mannered, modest, absolutely devoid of affectation or trace of self-importance.
- To Bro. Roberts, Bro. Thomas was the most Christ-like, and the most spiritually minded of all men he had ever known.

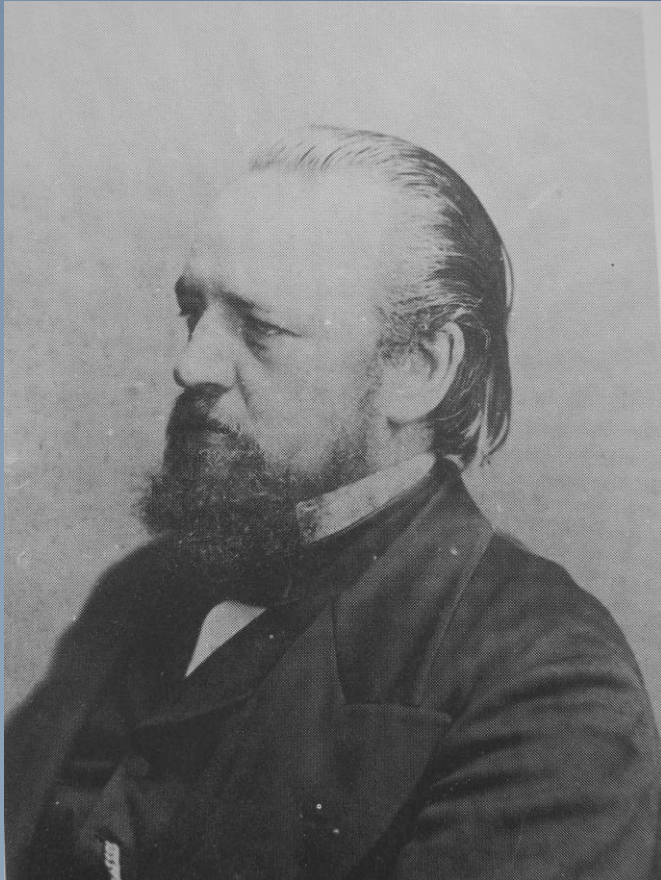
# Editor of the Ambassador



- At the suggestion of Bro. Thomas, Bro. Roberts moved to Birmingham at the age of 25 years and started a monthly magazine which he called *The Ambassador*.
- The first issue in July 1864 had 16 pages per number. By October 1867 it had grown to 28 pages.



# Out of the abundance of his heart he spoke



- “I have never met anyone to compare with Robert Roberts in the apparently spontaneous movement of conversation to the rich fields of Scripture, in the perfectly natural way in which every thought was given a turn in the direction of the great things which dominated his mind” (Bro. Islip Collyer)

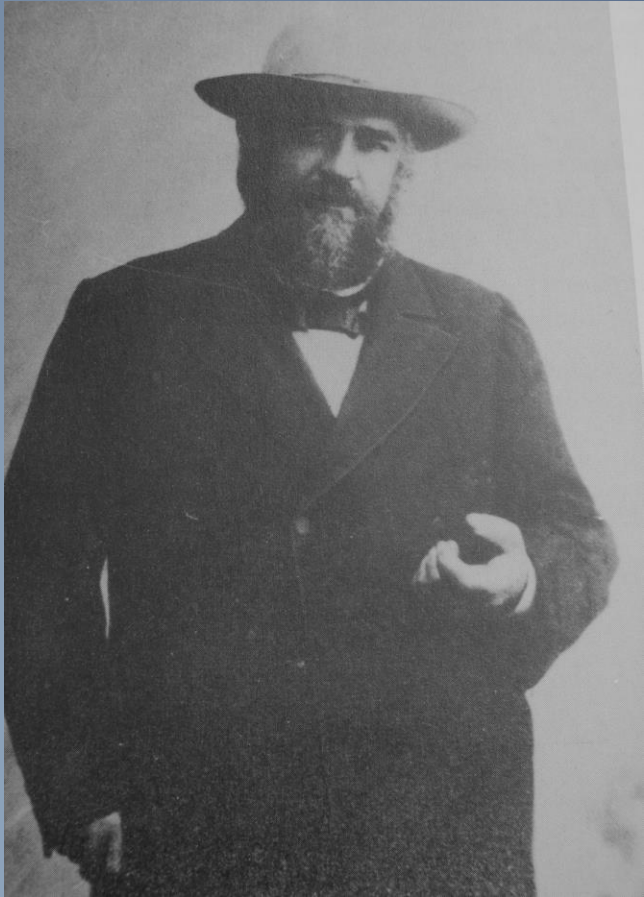


# His debates



- Bro. Roberts participated in 3 great debates.
- **1871** with Louis Stern - “Was Jesus Of Nazareth The Messiah?” (3 nights)
- **1876** with Charles Bradlaugh - “Is The Bible Divine” (6 nights)
- **1879** with Edward Hine - “Are Englishmen Israelites” (3 nights)

# Lecturing

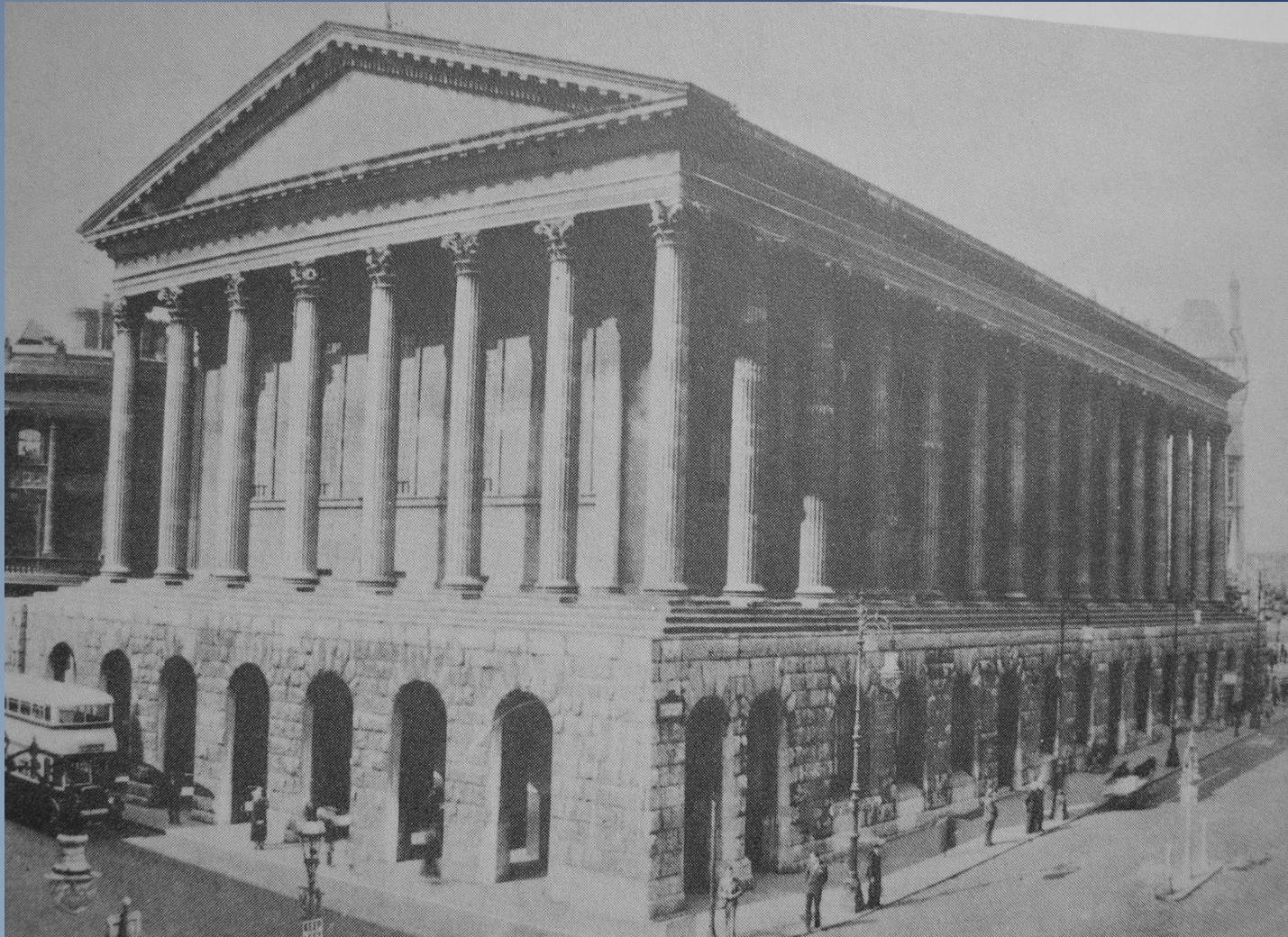


**Bro. Roberts aged 47**

- Being himself impressed by the argument of reason, he endeavoured to use the same.
- The subjects of his choice were often prophetic and always closely related to the Gospel taught by the apostles.
- Many of his lectures were presented in the form of a series.
- He often used a series of questions to demonstrate the solidity of our foundations.

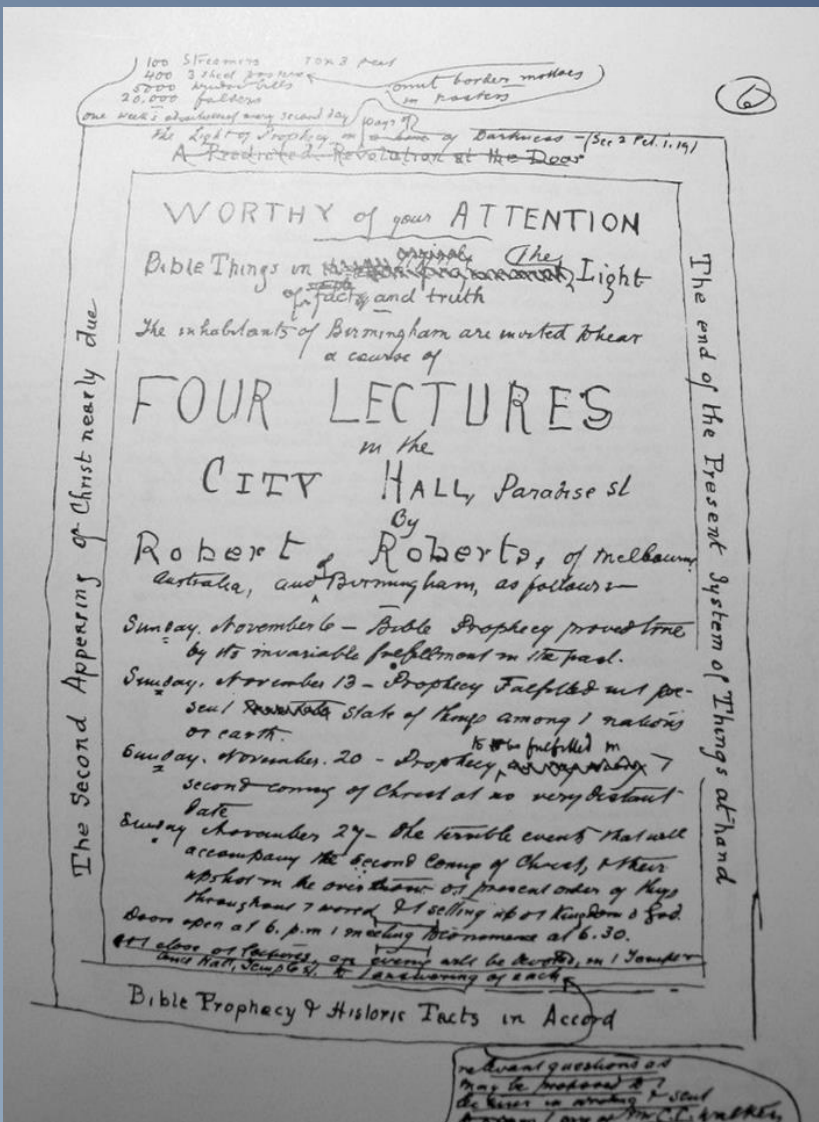


# The Birmingham Town Hall





# A typical lecture advertisement



The inhabitants of Birmingham are invited to hear a course of

## FOUR LECTURES

Bible Prophecy proved true by its invariable fulfilment in the past

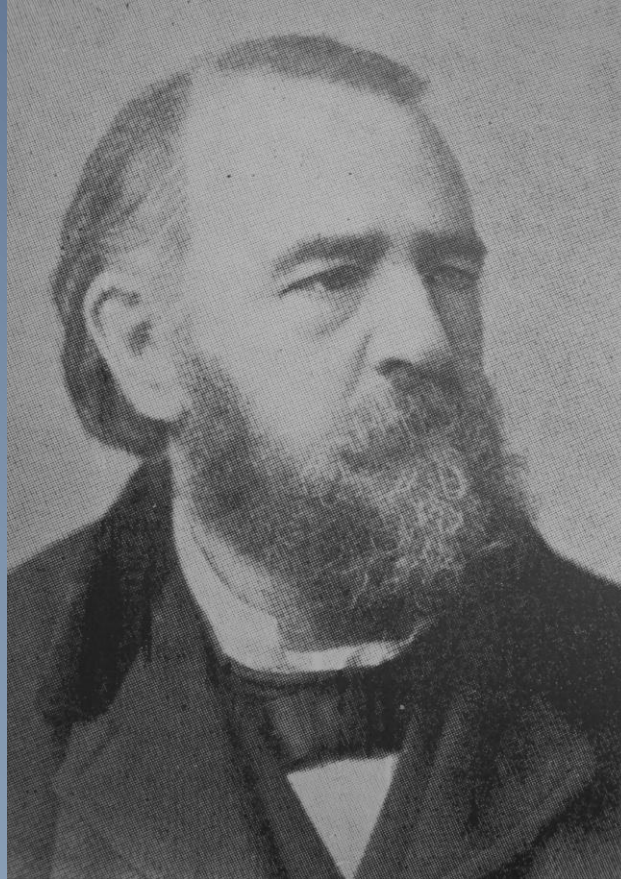
Prophecy Fulfilled and the present state of things among nations on earth

Prophecies to be fulfilled in the second coming of Christ

The terrible events that will accompany the second coming of Christ



# His writings



## A new beginning



- In 1897 Bro. Roberts with his wife and two daughters moved to Melbourne.
- The arrangement was designed to end his financial difficulties, benefit his health and provide Australian members with the spiritual assistance they greatly needed.

# Home in Australia



**Orient House 1897**  
(side view)



**Orient House 2003**  
(side view)



# The last journey

## Sydney to San Francisco, 1898



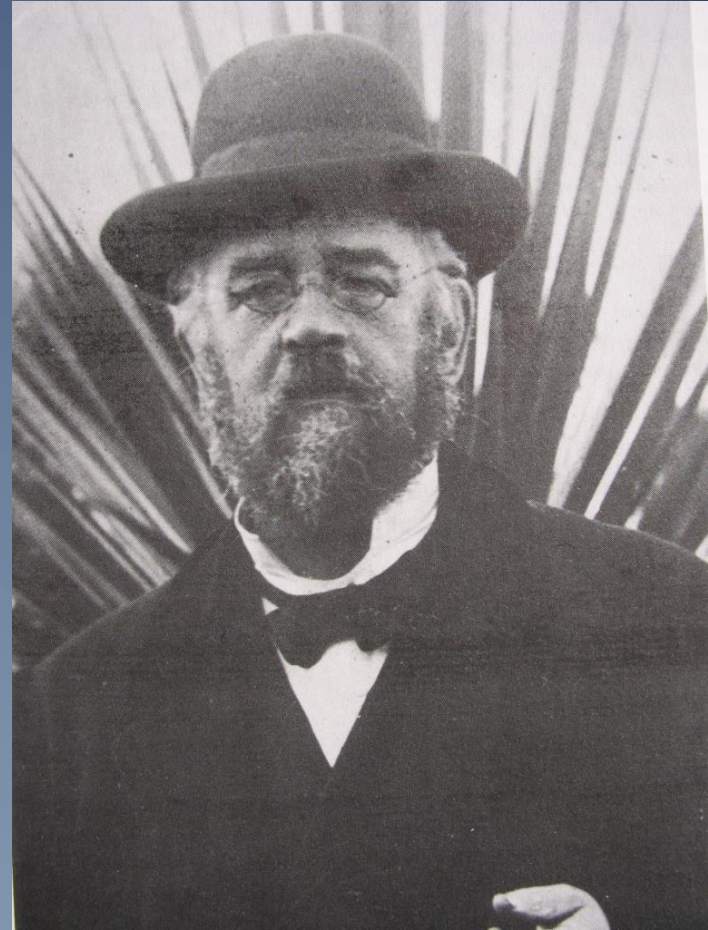
**S.S Alamenda - Sydney**



# Short was the measure of his days

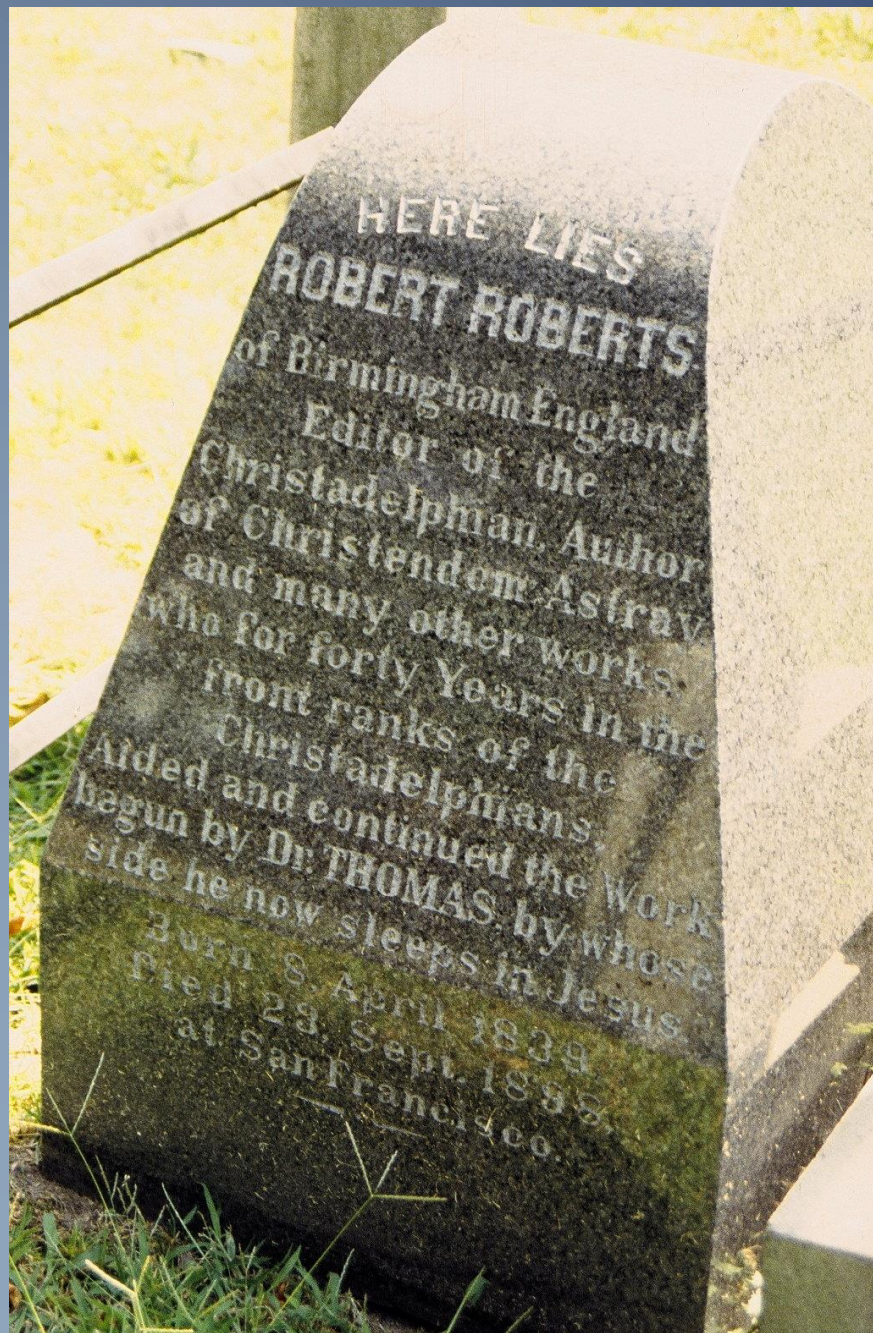


Aged 20



Aged 59





HERE LIES  
ROBERT ROBERTS  
of Birmingham England  
Editor of the  
Christadelphian, Author  
of Christendom Astray  
and many other works  
who for Forty years in the  
front ranks of the  
Christadelphians,  
Aided and continued the work  
begun by Dr. THOMAS by whose  
side he now sleeps in Jesus.  
Born 8, April 1839  
Died 23, Sept. 1898  
at San Francisco.

# His impact on the Truth

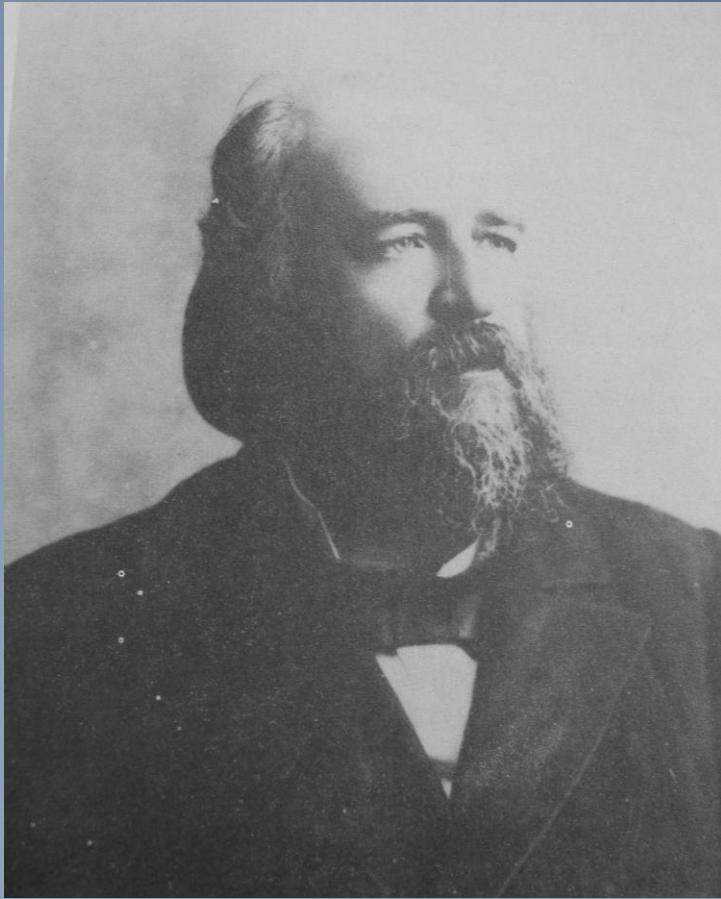
- 1854 Bible Companion
- 1862 Christendom Astray
- 1867 Declaration
- 1873 Dr. Thomas - His Life & Works
- 1873 The Slain Lamb
- 1879 Seasons Of Comfort
- 1880 13 Lectures on the Apocalypse
- 1881 Ways Of Providence
- 1882 The Trial
- 1883 Visible Hand Of God
- 1883 Ecclesial Guide
- 1885 Further Seasons Of Comfort
- Letters To The Elect Of God
- 1886 Christadelphian Instructor
- 1890 Nazareth Revisited
- 1894 My Days & My Ways
- 1895 The Blood Of Christ
- 1895 Diary Of A Voyage
- 1897 Diary Of A Second Voyage
- Law Of Moses
- Ministry Of The Prophets (Ch. 1 to 5)



# His impact on the Truth

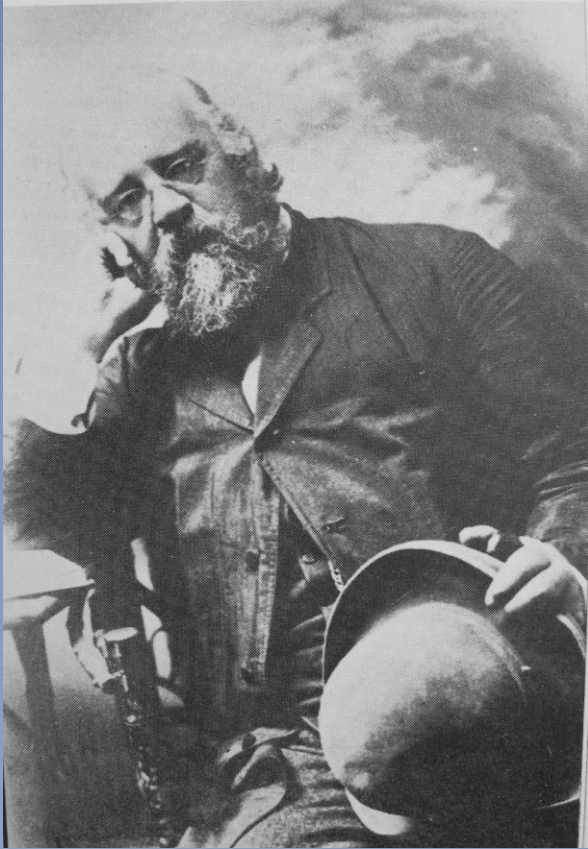
- He inculcated a habit among believers to read their Bibles daily. He wrote “Salvation depends upon the assimilation of the mind to divine ideas, principles, and affections, exhibited in the Scriptures. This process commences with a belief of the gospel, but it is by no means completed thereby, it takes a lifetime for it’s scope, and untiring diligence for it’s accomplishment. The infallible advice then to every man and woman anxious about their salvation is, Read the Scriptures daily. It is only in proportion as this is done, that success may be looked for. The man who sows sparingly on this respect, will only reap sparingly”.

# The spirit of Bro. Roberts



- God-centred
- Single-minded
- There was no lukewarmness in his character.
- Sacrificed all human interest on the altar of his faith
- Unfeigned humility

# His work and labour of love



He was frequently uncomfortable both physically and mentally. A lover of home so often going away; a lover of peace so often having to do battle for principle, and a lover of fellow man feeling constrained to choose a course which turned friends into enemies. In a very real sense, he was one who lost his life for the sake of the Gospel. (I. Collyer)