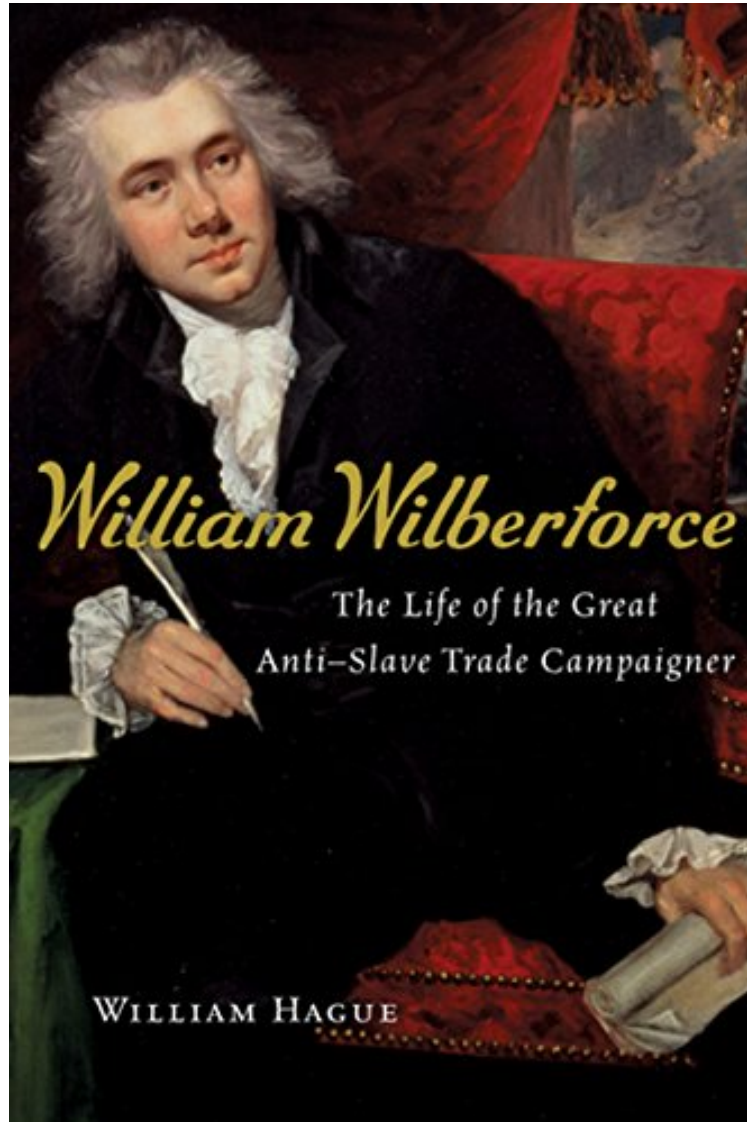


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William Wilberforce: The Life of the Great Anti-Slave Trade Campaigner

William Hague

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William Hague : William Wilberforce: The Life of the Great Anti-Slave Trade Campaigner before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised William Wilberforce: The Life of the Great Anti-Slave Trade Campaigner:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. How Christians in Politics Can Change the WorldBy AvidReaderWhat makes this one of the best biographies on Wilberforce is the author's personal experience in British

politics. For us Americans who are unfamiliar with British political processes, we found it very helpful for the author to explain some of the details that enabled us to understand just how effective Wilberforce was as a Christian politician. This is such a fascinating story of how a young man born into wealth and power wanted to give it up and serve God in a monastery, but discovered that God had a different plan for his life. God had given him the wealth, power, and friendships for a reason. He would need every bit of his money, power, and friends to destroy a horrible evil. Can you imagine fighting the most powerful industry for forty years only to finally win on your deathbed? But Wilberforce walked into Heaven having accomplished his destiny and you'll just have to read this book to find out how it happened.

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Beautifully written, well-researched biography of a true "public servant" By M. Pope There have been a number of Wilberforce biographies that have come out in the last few years, but this one, by a member of Parliament for more than twenty-five years (including being leader of the Conservative Party and a member of the Shadow Cabinet), has the advantage of being not only extremely well-written and well-researched, but has a sense of "you are there," particularly in making clear Wilberforce's great abilities as a speaker (both as he campaigned for election and re-election to Parliament) and in the House of Commons itself; his grace toward not only those members of Parliament who agreed with much of what he stood for, but those who did not; and his relentless determination to put his Christian faith into practice in a life of politics. In addition to his well-known generosity with his money (he ended his life virtually penniless because he gave away, during his life, most of the fortune he had inherited), what is perhaps less well known is that much of what made Wilberforce so powerful a figure for good during his life was his winsome and witty personality: people simply loved to be around him, and not just (or even primarily) because he was wealthy. In addition, though he enjoyed serving as a member of the House of Commons for 45 years, he never sought higher office. Perhaps thinking of what he had seen during his own life in politics, author William Hague (who himself retired from politics in 2015) concludes: "Wilberforce's pursuit of a broad and uplifting vision of society elevates him far above the general ranks of politicians. But the fact that he managed to live according to his own principles, and constantly reflect his beliefs in his own character, is his crowning glory. It may be easier to disdain money and to give much of it away if you inherit a large amount of it, but few people born in that position actually do so. It is easy to think of a Member of Parliament can resist temptations of seeking higher office if he has a great cause as an alternative, but it is still a rare event. Wilberforce exercised a genuine and remarkable self-discipline, and managed to do so while maintaining his optimistic and vivacious disposition.... He showed how a political career could be conducted differently, pursuing long-term objectives deeply rooted in certain principles, strengthened in his indifference to holding power by his understanding of its transitory nature. As a result, he defied the axiom that political careers necessarily end in failure, going to his grave fulfilled by the knowledge of what he had to do, while those politicians to whom power alone is important decline in their old age into bitterness and despair." (pp. 514-515)

Highly recommended on many levels. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Great man but disappointing writing By Doctor TI have been intrigued by the life of Wilberforce and was really looking forward to reading this book. Unfortunately I found the writing style to be tedious and repetitive. I lost the flow of his life in a wash of details that seemed nearly indistinguishable from other details. I am quite disappointed at what was a tiresome read.

From William Hague comes a major biography of abolitionist William Wilberforce, the man who fought for twenty years to abolish the Atlantic slave trade. Wilberforce, born to a prosperous family, chose a life of public service and adherence to Evangelical values over the comfortable merchant existence that was laid out for him. Of a conservative bent, Wilberforce was actively hostile to radicals and revolutionaries, but championed one of the great liberal causes of all time—the abolition of slavery—and was an invaluable contributor to its ultimate success. When Parliament finally outlawed the slave trade in 1807, Wilberforce did not rest on his laurels but took part in the campaign for the abolition of slavery itself. He never held or desired a cabinet post, but became an expert in any subject he addressed as a member of Parliament. And although his convictions were informed by deep religious fervor, he never hesitated to change his mind upon reflection. Hague captures all of these nuances and complexities in this clear-eyed, humane, and moving biography.

From Booklist The former leader of Britain's Conservative Party, Hague has lately immersed himself in biography writing. As with William Pitt the Younger (2005), this depiction of William Wilberforce recurs regularly to the political arena of the House of Commons. Pitt and Wilberforce were friends and precocious members, both entering the Commons in their early twenties, but Wilberforce's talents lay not, as Hague describes, in ministerial leadership. Sociable, eloquent, but indolent, Wilberforce experienced an evangelical conversion around 1786 that expelled the laziness from his character without compromising his geniality. Dedicating his political life to moral causes, Wilberforce decided on two: the reformation of manners, as he confided to his diary, and the abolition of African slavery. Wilberforce's campaign against vice had scant historical effect, but that against slavery in British realms arguably prodded the Western world toward abolition. Why Wilberforce's effort (trade in slaves was banned in 1807; abolition occurred in 1834) followed a tortuous path becomes understandable as Hague explains the parliamentary

practicalities that Wilberforce faced. Incorporating Wilberforce's domestic life, Hague's effort is a well-rounded portrait of the pioneering British abolitionist. --Gilbert Taylor PRAISE FOR William Pitt the Younger "Mr. Hague covers Pitt's career with elegance and panache . . . [He] has written a very fine biography of this immensely important figure in British history." Wall Street Journal "William Hague's book is a model of orderly exposition and narration . . . Anyone really interested in British history or in politics ought to read it." Frank Wilson, Philadelphia Inquirer