

Ever, *only*, ALL  
for  
*Thee*



PAMELA D. BUGDEN



Ever, *only*, ALL  
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*Frances Ridley Havergal:  
Glimpses of Her Life and Writings*

PAMELA D. BUGDEN



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*Dedicated  
to  
David*  
.....  
*my beloved husband and  
spiritual counsellor for over 57 years*





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## Foreword

After two or three months into proofreading *The Complete Works of Frances Ridley Havergal* (not yet published), the author realised the value of Havergal's works and desired to share something of the blessing that was there to be received. I have been privileged to be involved in this book as is mentioned in the Preface, and I am very glad to recommend it to readers. As the title suggests, it is only a *glimpse* of her life and works—there is so much more to be discovered as I know through ten years of privileged involvement.

F.R.H. is an example of Jesus Christ's grace and truth shining forth in a life wholly committed to Him. Her devotional life, including a deep study of the word of God, and her desire to tell others of her Master, are well illustrated here.

I am grateful for these 'Glimpses', and want to express thanks also to Pamela's husband, the Rev. David Bugden, for his patience, support and prayers as his wife worked on first *The Complete Works* and then her biography.

– David L. Chalkley, researcher  
2007



## *Publisher's Preface*

*A*llow me to give a brief history of my discovery of Frances Ridley Havergal. A few years back I met David Chalkley of Kirksville, Missouri. He was at that time in the midst of the massive task of gathering and arranging all of her extant literature, as well as all relevant information about her. (This work is now nearly completed, and will at some time be published as five volumes, under the title *The Complete Works of Frances Ridley Havergal*.) Frances was a uniquely gifted woman, who used her talents, together with the evident anointing of God upon her labors, for the glory of the great and only King. At the time I met David Chalkley, I knew precious little of F.R.H. I was aware of some of her more well-known hymns, that C.H. Spurgeon thought highly of her (though I did not know he liked to quote from her in his sermons), and that she was included in a book of short biographies on a friend's library shelf.

Mr. Chalkley graciously gave me a copy of each of her five *Royal Books*, as well as *Like a River Glorious*, the massive seed volume for the definitive Havergal edition. It was not two months later that my wife and I were sitting in our living room with friends, each with a different *Royal Book*, reading aloud to one another in turn, joyfully praising God for the truth, simplicity, and power of what we were reading. This began to happen regularly, and such experiences soon created a real appreciation of her value as a Christian writer. Many of her poems and shorter writings were available to me in the seed volume, and I was tremendously blessed by these works, as well as perplexed that Frances was not more well-known today.

As her own preface demonstrates, Pamela Bugden's experience was quite similar to my own—growing in appreciation of Frances as she

grew in knowledge of her. It is therefore with gladness that we come together and make Frances' writings, as well as this brief account of her life, more accessible to the Christian public. F.R.H.'s works, all of them, deserve to be widely read and known. In the words of C.H. Spurgeon, she was "the last and loveliest of our modern poets." It is our earnest hope that this book will enlighten the saints of our day to another one of those 'gems' He has given to edify His church throughout her pilgrimage in this world.

– C.T. *October, 2009*







## Preface

Frances Ridley Havergal (F.R.H.) died at the early age of 42, but the wealth of her writings which she left including hymns, poems and letters is phenomenal. Her work has been described by one who has seen most of this material as a gold mine waiting to be opened up. At the time of her death she was widely known and greatly valued on both sides of the Atlantic, very likely more than four million of her books having been published between 1870 and 1900.

Many readers will have sung at least some of Frances Havergal's hymns over the years, but probably will know very little of her life and works. A lot of these details can be found in her published writings before her death in 1879 and also in her works published posthumously. However, the last significant biography of her was written by Miss Janet Grierson in 1979, which was the centenary of F.R.H.'s death.

In the Foreword to the book by Faith Cook, *Selina, Countess of Huntingdon*, Lady Elizabeth Catherwood writes: 'It is my hope that very many will read this book and discover what God can achieve through a godly woman such as the Countess, whose expressed heart's desire was that "that dear Lamb of God, my best, my eternal, my only Friend should have all dedicated to his service and glory"'.

Frances Havergal was not equal to the Countess in the wide influence she had among ministers and churches in her day, although she was very highly regarded by evangelical ministers in her lifetime (Spurgeon, Horatius Bonar and others). She had the same desire in her own sphere to live to God's glory and to serve Him 'Ever,

only, ALL for Thee'. Her hymns as well as her writings have been a blessing to very many throughout the world.

In this book the reader is taken through Frances' early days in Worcestershire where her father was rector of Astley Parish Church, and her subsequent life of devotion and service to her Master in various parts of the United Kingdom and abroad. Although she lived in middle-class Victorian England, Frances was never ashamed to be associated with those in need in the local almshouses and the poor cottages in the parish; she also exerted an influence among the higher society of her day. Frances loved to travel and particularly enjoyed being in Switzerland; this book gives accounts of her time there and other places she visited, as well as the story of how some of her hymns came to be written.

I am greatly indebted, more than I can adequately express, to David Chalkley in the USA, whose work in researching all the material on F.R.H. has been monumental. Without his research, resources and ready help, and especially the choice of photographs, this book could never have been written. He has guided the work throughout, making very helpful suggestions and additions, as well as saving me from inaccuracies.

I would also like to thank our granddaughter, Jo Davies, for her involvement in this work and whose computer expertise has been so valuable and necessary.

Perhaps the Rev. Iain Murray did not realise the flood gates he was opening when he suggested to David Chalkley that I might be able to help with proof-reading his work on *The Complete Works of Frances Ridley Havergal*. But I am very grateful for his introduction.

– Pamela D. Bugden, 2007

*A Summary of the Life of*  
FRANCES RIDLEY HAVERGAL

.....

1836 14 December	Born at Astley Rectory, Worcestershire
1842	Moved to temporary home at Henwick House, Hallow
1842 5 October	Eldest sister Miriam married Henry Crane
1845	Her father, the Rev. William Henry Havergal, appointed to the Rectory of St. Nicholas, Worcester
1848 5 July	Death of her mother, Mrs. Jane Havergal
1850 August	Went to school at Belmont, a private school for girls near London
1851 Early	Frances converted, made a new creation in Christ. 'I did trust the Lord Jesus.'
1851 July	Father married Caroline Cooke
1852 November	First visit to Germany
1854 17 July	Confirmation in Worcester Cathedral
1856 5 February	Her sister Ellen married Giles Shaw
1856 May	First visit to her sister Ellen & Giles Shaw in Ireland
1860 May	Father resigned living of St Nicholas, Worcester and moved to Shareshill, five and a half miles from Wolverhampton
1861 February	Moved to Oakhampton House to be governess to her two youngest nieces
1866	Shaws returned to England and located to Winterdyne, a large country house near Bewdley, Worcestershire
1867 December	Frances went to stay at Leamington with her father and step-mother
1867 December	First visit to Switzerland with her brother-in-law and family
1869	Publication of her first book, <i>The Ministry of Song</i>
1870 19 April	Death of her father

1871 June	Second visit to Switzerland accompanied by her close friend Elizabeth Clay
1873 Summer	Third visit to Switzerland with the Rev. and Mrs. Charles B. Snepp
1874 August	Fourth visit to Switzerland with her sister Miriam and brother-in-law Henry Crane, and their daughter Constance
1875 January	Her brother Henry East dies
1876 6 July	Final visit to Switzerland with her sister Maria
1877	A stay at Mildmay Conference Centre
1877	Publication of her first Royal Book, <i>My King</i>
1878 26 May	Death of her stepmother and break up of the home in Leamington
1878 October	Joined Maria at the home in Mumbles near Swansea, Wales
1879 January	Final visit to her publishers in London
1879 3 June	Frances' death and entry into her King's presence
1879 9 June	Buried in Astley Churchyard





## Chapter One



# A Happy Home

### A HAPPY HOME

O happy home where Thou art loved the dearest,  
Thou loving Friend and Saviour of our race;  
And where among the guests there never cometh  
One who can hold such high and honoured place!

O happy home where each one serves Thee, lowly,  
Whatever his appointed work may be,  
Till every common task seems great and holy,  
When it is done, O Lord, as unto Thee!

O happy home, where Thou art not forgotten  
When joy is overflowing, full and free;  
O happy home, where every wounded spirit  
Is brought, Physician, Comforter, to Thee.

*C. J. P. Spitta, trans. Sarah L. Findlater*

A few months before Queen Victoria came to the throne, Frances Ridley Havergal was born on December 14, 1836 at Astley rectory in Worcestershire where her father, the Rev. William Henry Havergal, was rector. She was the youngest of six children—Miriam, Maria and Ellen were 19, 15 and 13 when she was born; her brothers Henry and Frank were 16 and 7. Her mother was known as ‘the lovely Jane Head’.

Speaking of home life at Astley, Maria said, ‘God’s everlasting love might be the shining motto of those happy days...with a father never too strict, never too indulgent; with a mother teaching

us thrifty elegance in our dress, and self-helping habit, order and cheerfulness—a truly merry and happy household were we.’



Engraved by E. Evans.

S.E. VIEW OF ASTLEY CHURCH AND RECTORY

From a sketch by Miriam Havergal, 1839

The rectory, which stood on high ground beside the church, commanded a wonderful view of the surrounding countryside. To the south, outlined against the sky, stretched the distant range of the Malverns, their pale blue haze suggesting mystery and calm. In the middle distance stood the graceful tree-clad hills of Woodbury and Abberley; and immediately below was undulating land, neatly parcelled out into fields, orchards, plantations, woods and copses.

The thirty to forty acres of land adjacent to the rectory was a paradise for children, and Frances especially loved the wild woodland garden just below the church, which her father had landscaped on the site of an old monastic vineyard when he first came to Astley. A connoisseur of trees, he had planted it with specimens of unusual interest, including cedars, walnuts, weeping beeches, giant redwood and silver fir, the biggest of its kind. Frances used to scamper along the labyrinthine paths, down through the trees to her favourite flower-carpeted dell which lay alongside Dick Brook.

The lure of tree-climbing sometimes checked her progress, but more often she made straight for the brook where Flora, her faithful



little white and tan spaniel, could seek out her special haunts, while her young mistress helped herself to fistfuls of violets, snowdrops, primroses, or whatever enticing flowers happened to be in season.

Daily life at the rectory was for Frances a mixed experience of freedom and restriction. There was ample space for play as no attempt was made to confine her to the nursery, but she had to learn the discipline of life in a well-regulated household. With her mercurial temperament—her father often called her ‘Little Quicksilver’—this could have been difficult at times.

Family prayers were the first big event of the day, and from the time she was a toddler Frances joined in: it was the tradition for the youngest to sit on father’s knee. Sundays provided her with the additional privilege of taking round the missionary collecting plate to the assembled household. This included not only members of the family, but also the resident servants, and her father’s pupils, whose numbers varied at any given time from two to six. Each week the money was transferred to a Church Missionary Society box, which once a year was given a ceremonial opening. Great was the excitement of the children as they watched the growing piles of halfpennies, pennies and even occasional shillings, usually reckoning the grand total of £4–£5.

Sunday was far from being a dull day. The extra excitement of the missionary collection at breakfast time was matched in the evening by a session of hymn singing, led by Mr. Havergal, who was already a composer of some repute in the field of church music, besides being an excellent singer. As he sat by his seraphine (precursor of the harmonium) accompanying the hymns, it was Frances’ favourite game to clamber up on his shoulder and make her own contribution to proceedings from this exalted music stool.

Frances was too young when she was at Astley to see much of her father’s day-to-day work in the parish. To the extent that his health permitted, he pursued a quiet unobtrusive life of a country rector, allotting first place in his daily routine to the visitation of his parishioners, especially the sick and poor. Occasionally the older children were allowed to accompany him on his visits, and this enabled Frances’ sister Miriam to speak of them from firsthand observation:

We saw how kindly he shook hands, how gentle his ways, and then he felt the invalid’s pulse and saw about the medicine, for he was skilful,

and the parish doctor thanked him for saving him visits; and then he read to them Bible comfort, and prayed.

Mrs. Havergal, who supported her husband in all his work and especially in visiting the cottagers, often took Frances with her. She would help to carry the basket of new-laid eggs, or a can of soup or milk, or even one of the delicious apple turnovers that came hot from the rectory kitchen. In a cottage of some sick parishioner Frances would help to mind the baby while her mother attended to whatever skilled nursing was required. It was from these experiences that Frances' own ministry to the poor and needy was developed.

### - *Education* -

Mrs. Havergal and her eldest daughter Miriam took charge of Frances' formal education. Each morning she learnt reading, spelling and a rhyme. While still under three, this instruction lasted for only half an hour, to be followed in the afternoon by a session on patchwork-stitching and the learning of a short text which had to be repeated next morning at breakfast. By the age of three she could read easy books, and her brother would often find her hiding under a table engrossed in a story. French and music were soon added to the curriculum. Her keenness to learn was so great that it had to be controlled rather than encouraged, for there were times when the excitement of widening horizons was liable to overtax her strength. At the age of seven she began to scribble hymns, and from nine onwards she would write fluent letters in rhyme to her friends.

### - *Religious Impressions* -

When in later life Frances started to write an autobiography, she commenced with her recollections of herself and her surroundings when she was four years old. She writes:

Up to the time that I was six years old I have no remembrance of any religious ideas whatever. Even when taken once to see the corpse of a little boy of my own age (four years) lying in a coffin strewn with flowers, in dear papa's parish of Astley, I did not think about it as otherwise than a very sad and very curious thing that that little child should lie so still and cold...But from six to eight I recall a different state of things.

The beginning of it was a sermon preached one Sunday morning at Hallow Church, near Worcester, by Mr. (now Archdeacon) Philpotts. Of this I even now retain a distinct impression. It was to me a very terrible one, dwelling much on hell and judgment, and what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of the living God. No one ever knew it, but this sermon haunted me, and day and night it crossed me. I began to pray a good deal, though only night and morning, with a sort of fidget and impatience, almost angry at feeling so unhappy, and wanting and expecting a new heart and have everything put straight and be made happy, all at once.

All this time she could not bear being 'talked to', or prayed with, though she kept up a custom of going by herself every Sunday afternoon to a quiet room, and after reading a chapter in the New Testament would kneel down and pray, after which she 'usually felt soothed and less naughty'.

- *New Surroundings* -

In 1842 the living of Astley was resigned, and Henwick House, in the parish of Hallow, was the temporary family home until Mr. Havergal was appointed rector of St. Nicholas, Worcester, in 1845. She writes: 'We went to St. Nicholas' Rectory in 1845, and it was in very great bitterness that I bade adieu to my pleasant country life, and became, as I remember dear papa calling me, "a caged lark"'. One consolation of this move was, however, that she had a tiny room all her own with a window that enabled her to appreciate the sky and clouds in the same way that trees and flowers had been her joy at Henwick.

Soon after their arrival in Worcester, a sermon by the curate on the text 'Fear not, little flock' aroused her from the feeling of self-satisfaction into which she had drifted. Having a favourable opportunity, she unburdened her heart one evening to the curate, but he did not help the young seeker. He said the excitement of moving and coming into new scenes was most likely the cause of her feeling worse, and that it would soon go off, and then she was to try and be a good girl and pray. So after that her lips were utterly sealed to all but God for another few years.

This inner sadness, however, did not prevent Frances from realising the situation of other children who were not as favoured as she

was. She was concerned about those in her Sunday School class who were in need and at the age of nine decided to do something about it. Enlisting the aid of her friend, young Sophie Sadler, daughter of Michael Thomas Sadler, M.P., she established the Flannel Petticoat Society for the clothing of these children. From August to October every year they collected subscriptions from their friends, ranging from 3 pence to 1/- [one shilling]. Frances' mother was chief adviser on shopping and dressmaking, while her sisters Maria and Ellen were deputed to select the children. November 5th was the highlight of the Society's year. On that day a motley band of children, some twenty-five to thirty strong, invaded the rectory, exchanged their rags for brand new carefully fitted garments, and then celebrated the occasion with hymn singing and a slice of cake!



ST. NICHOLAS' CHURCH, WORCHESTER

From a Sketch taken in 1848.

St. Nicholas' parish had its share of Almshouses and several of them came under the care of Canon Havergal. One of these, known

as the Trinity Almshouses, was where Frances and her sister Maria were welcome visitors; Maria has written an interesting account of the building and some of its occupants in her book *Pleasant Fruits*. Frances herself felt that she had not been as diligent as she should have been, commenting that 'My dear almshouse folks are so affectionate...it smites me rather, because I feel it more than I deserve'. But from conversations recorded in *Pleasant Fruits* it is evident that 'our dear Miss Fanny' was a most welcome visitor. As ninety-five year old Mary Hart said: 'I like her step on my floor, and the sun seems to shine in her face, and she's always welcome to poor Mary Hart'; her musical contribution to the old people's New Year party was something that was particularly appreciated.

### - *A Sad Event* -

In 1848 Frances' mother became seriously ill, and feeling that she was soon to leave her little girl, she said to her one evening: 'Fanny dear, pray to God to prepare you for all that He is preparing for you'. This sad event, which the mother thus anticipated, Frances could not or would not understand. Frances would later write of the grief she suffered watching from the window as the funeral procession passed from the rectory to the churchyard, and the anguish she felt in her little heart, and uttering the lonely cry of a motherless heart, 'Oh, mamma! mamma! mamma!'. Her bright and apparently thoughtless manner led some to think that she was heartless, but all the while she was heavy and sad for her loss, and weary because she had not yet found pardon for her sin.

### - *New Horizons* -

A fresh chapter opened when at the age of 13 Frances was sent to a boarding school for girls in London where the Principal, Mrs. Teed, had in her care more than a hundred pupils at 'Belmont', near Campden Hill. The spiritual influences of school deepened and intensified the religious teaching which she had received at home. She says of that time, 'That single half-year was perhaps the most important to me of any in my life', though her longing for assurance remained unfulfilled. But Frances tells of how, soon after

her fourteenth birthday, she remembers talking to Miss Caroline Cooke, who had become a good friend, and who later became her stepmother:

I told her again how I longed to know that I was forgiven. She asked me a question which led to the hearty answer that I was sure I desired it above everything on earth, that even my precious papa was nothing in comparison...After a few more words she said 'Why cannot you trust yourself to your Saviour at once? Supposing that now, at this moment, Christ were to come in the clouds of heaven, and take up His redeemed, could you not trust Him? Would not His call, His promise, be enough for you? Could you not commit your soul to Him, to your Saviour, Jesus?' Then came a flash of hope across me, which made me feel literally breathless. I remember how my heart beat. 'I could surely', was my response; and I left her suddenly and ran away upstairs to think it out. I flung myself on my knees in my room, and strove to realize the sudden hope. I was very happy at last. I could commit my soul to Jesus. I did not, and need not, fear His coming. I could trust Him with my all for eternity...Then and there, I committed my soul to the Saviour... and earth and heaven seemed bright from that moment—I did trust the Lord Jesus.

- *Changes in the Family Home* -

In 1851 Frances' father married Caroline Cooke. In the autumn of 1852, they took Frances to Germany, where Mr. Havergal, whose eyes had long troubled him, spent the winter under the care of a skilful oculist at Dusseldorf. Here Frances attended the Louisenschule, with excellent results. She studied ardently, and even 'began to think in German'. When the school year ended in the summer of 1853, she was given First Prize among the school's 110 students -a wonderful achievement by this English girl of sixteen, and never before done in a foreign school. Years later she studied in the home of her German master, Pastor Schulze-Berge, who wrote of her:

She showed from the first such application, such rare talent, such depth of comprehension, that I can only speak of her progress as extraordinary. She acquired a knowledge of our most celebrated authors in a short time as even German ladies attain only after much longer study.

For some months longer she went on studying at Obercassel. Situated on the east bank of the Rhine, not far from Bonn and

65km from Dusseldorf, Obercassel was in the region of the Seven Mountains and enjoyed a fine view of the famous Drachenfels. Frances, a lover of the countryside, was delighted to exchange the urban elegance of Dusseldorf for the lush meadows and the attractions of river and mountains. Before Christmas of that year Frances returned with her parents to Worcester.

- *An Important Occasion* -

In 1854 Frances was confirmed in Worcester Cathedral; this was of considerable significance to her, the public profession being a very real act. When asked by the bishop the solemn question to which all have audibly to answer, 'I do', the reply of her heart was 'Lord, I cannot without Thee; but oh, with Thy almighty help, I do'. She always marked the anniversary of it by spending much time in prayer, reading and meditation. A poem she wrote on the day itself, later published by her sister, shows her thoughts:

"THINE FOR EVER"

Oh! "Thine for ever," what a blessed thing  
To be for ever His who died for me!  
My Saviour, all my life Thy praise I'll sing,  
Nor cease my song throughout eternity.

*(Memorials of Frances Ridley Havergal)*

Although Frances had felt like a 'caged lark' in her early days in Worcester, she had thrown herself so wholeheartedly into the life of the parish that when the time came to leave she felt the parting almost as deeply as Canon Havergal himself. But his failing health had prevented him from fulfilling the tasks of a busy city parish, and when, in 1859, he received the offer of a very small rural living in Shareshill in the diocese of Lichfield, he accepted it and went there in March 1860. For Frances, the closing of one door where she had been so happy and active in Sunday School work and visitation was the opening of another. Through an invitation to contribute poems to a magazine, *Good Words*, she realised that the pen was to be one of the instruments through which she was to exercise a ministry.

*- A Postscript -*

When Frances received her first cheque from the publishers for her contributions to *Good Words*, she wrote the following to her step-mother in 1863:

The cheque is so much larger than I expected, £10.17s. 6d. Now will you please give £10 of this to my precious papa for anything he would like to employ it on; either keep it for church alterations, or if any more immediate and pressing object, I would rather he used it for that; I should be so delighted to be able for once to further any little object which he may desire. I should be glad if you would send 10s. to J.H.E. for the Scripture Readers' collection, and the 7s.6d. to keep for any similar emergency.

This note was found among Frances' papers later:

My dear little Fan can hardly think how much her poor papa loves her, thinks about her, and prays for her Yes, he does. Thank you, dear child, for remembering me; I will keep all your love, but not the cheque. Our God send you His sweetest and choicest blessings.

*- William Henry Havergal*