

Robert Ashcroft (1842-1921)

Robert Ashcroft was a Congregational minister who left that persuasion to become a Christadelphian. He was popular among the brethren in Edinburgh, Scotland, but fell out of favor with Robert Roberts and eventually moved to Toronto where he assumed a publishing career.

He believed in the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. In 1891, just as the Church of God was beginning to experience growth pains and had organized a national conference (1888-1892), he wrote a book entitled **The Scriptures Opened**. The subtitle was Thoughts and Themes for Bible Students. This book was highly read and endorsed by Church of God pastors, but was not accepted by Christadelphians.

In his preface to the second edition Robert Ashcroft wrote, *“Indeed, it is abundantly evident that the Kingdom of God is the only Key that will unlock the Sacred Scripture from end to end.”* The Ashcroft name is seen frequently in the pages of *The Restitution*, but very little is known about his personal life. Ashcroft also published two volumes of *The Truth* from Toronto in 1891 and 1892. He said in December 1892 that it saddened him to cease publishing, but circumstances required it.

Steven Cook, a historian of the Christadelphian movement, has said that Robert Ashcroft had been a student of Robert Roberts and became immensely popular among the members. When he became too popular, Roberts exiled him. Many Christadelphian members to date have never seen the Ashcroft book, of which there are many copies in the Archives of Atlanta Bible College. After Ashcroft left the Christadelphians, there is no record of him joining the Church of God, but many felt a kinship with him and his literary accomplishments, and many bought and read his publications.

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