December Hymn Author Bio’s:

**BOWING, JOHN**(1792-1872) At age 33, Bowring be­came ed­it­or of the West­min­ster Re­view. An ac­comp­lished lin­guist, it has been said he was flu­ent in over 20 lan­guag­es and could speak 80 more; he was known for his trans­la­tions of Dutch po­e­try. He was al­so one of the pre­em­i­nent Brit­ish states­men of his day: Com­mis­sion­er to France, Con­sul at Canton, Min­is­ter Plen­i­po­ten­ti­ary to Ch­ina, Gov­er­nor of Hong Kong, and twice a mem­ber of Par­lia­ment. Queen Vic­tor­ia knight­ed him in 1854.

**WESLEY, CHARLES** (1707-1788) was an [English](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/England) leader of the [Methodist](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Methodism) movement, son of Anglican clergyman and poet [Samuel Wesley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Wesley_%28poet%29), the younger brother of Anglican clergyman [John Wesley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Wesley) and Anglican clergyman [Samuel Wesley (the Younger)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Wesley_%28the_Younger%29), and father of musician [Samuel Wesley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Wesley), and grandfather of musician [Samuel Sebastian Wesley](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Sebastian_Wesley). Despite their closeness, Charles and his brother John did not always agree on questions relating to their beliefs. In particular, Charles was strongly opposed to the idea of a breach with the [Church of England](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Church_of_England) into which they had been ordained. Charles Wesley is chiefly remembered for the many [hymns](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hymn) he wrote. He ministered for part of his life in The New Room Chapel in Bristol. His house, located nearby, can still be visited today.

**MONTGOMERY, JAMES** (1771-1854) When Montgomery was five years old, his fam­i­ly moved to the Mo­rav­i­an set­tle­ment at Grace­hill, near Bal­ly­mena, Coun­ty An­trim. Two years lat­er, he was sent to the Ful­neck Sem­in­ary in York­shire. He left Ful­neck in 1787 to work in a shop in Mir­field, near Wake­field. Soon tir­ing of that, he se­cured a sim­i­lar po­si­tion at Wath, near Rother­ham, on­ly to find it as un­suit­a­ble as his pre­vi­ous job. A trip to Lon­don, hop­ing to find a pub­lish­er for his youth­ful po­ems, end­ed in fail­ure. In 1792, he glad­ly left Wath for Shef­field to be as­sist­ant to Mr. Gales, auc­tion­eer, book­sel­ler, and print­er of the *Shef­field Reg­is­ter*. In 1794, Gales left Eng­land to avoid po­lit­ic­al pro­se­cu­tion. Mont­gom­ery took the *Shef­field Reg­is­ter* in hand, changed its name to the *Shef­field Iris*, and con­tin­ued to ed­it it for 32 years. Dur­ing the next two years he was im­pris­oned twice, first for re­print­ing a song in com­mem­or­a­tion of the fall of the Bas­tille, then for giv­ing an ac­count of a ri­ot in Shef­field.

The ed­it­ing of his pa­per, the com­po­si­tion and pub­li­ca­tion of his po­ems and hymns, the de­liv­ery of lec­tures on po­e­try in Shef­field and at the Roy­al In­sti­tu­tion, Lon­don, and the ad­vo­ca­cy of for­eign mis­sions and the Bi­ble So­ci­e­ty, gave great va­ri­e­ty, but very lit­tle of stir­ring in­ci­dent in his life, though he did find time to write 400 hymns. In 1833, Mont­gom­ery re­ceived a roy­al pen­sion of £200 per year.

**COFFIN, HENRY S.** (1877-1954) was president of the [Union Theological Seminary](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Union_Theological_Seminary_in_the_City_of_New_York), [Moderator](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moderator_of_the_General_Assembly) of the [Presbyterian Church USA](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presbyterian_Church_USA), and one of the most famous ministers in the U.S. He was also one of the translators of the popular hymn [*O Come, O Come Emmanuel*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/O_Come%2C_O_Come_Emmanuel), along with [John Mason Neale](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Mason_Neale).

**NEALE, JOHN MASON** (1818-1866) We know John Ma­son Neale (1818-1866) to­day as a hymn­o­graph­er, the trans­lat­or or adapt­er of an­cient and med­ie­val hymns. It is by the hymns below and sim­i­lar hymns that most of us know Neale, if we know him at all. But Neale’s achieve­ments in other ar­eas as well de­serve our re­cog­ni­tion.

 Never in his life­time was Neale ad­e­quate­ly ap­prec­i­at­ed in his own church. Neale’s Doctor of Di­vin­i­ty de­gree was conf­erred by Trin­i­ty Coll­ege, Hart­ford, Con­nec­ti­cut, in 1860. At Neale’s fun­er­al the high­est ranking cler­gy­men were Or­tho­dox. Neale could ne­ver have guessed how much he ac­comp­lished for the church and for gen­er­a­tions of Christ­ians who would sing the hymns he gave them.

**LUTHER, MARTIN (1483-1546)** Martin Luther, one of the world’s most influential religious reformers, spent much of his life studying, working and evolving in Thuringia. He first came to Thuringia for schooling in Eisenach. Thuringia's capital, Erfurt, became the intellectual home of the young Martin Luther. He registered as a student at Erfurt University more than 500 years ago and gained a Master's Degree in the Faculty of Arts in 1505. His home during this time, the Augustinian Monastery, is both Luther memorial and unique conference venue today.

After being banned by the Pope, Luther was taken to Wartburg Castle for refuge and here he began and fulfilled his greatest cultural achievement – the translation of the New Testament from Greek into German.

**WINKWORTH, CATHERINE** (1827-1878) Winkworth spent most of her life in Man­chest­er, Eng­land. The not­a­ble ex­cept­ion was the year she spent in Dres­den, Ger­ma­ny. Around 1854, she pub­lished Lyra Ger­man­i­ca, con­tain­ing nu­mer­ous Ger­man hymns trans­lat­ed in­to Eng­lish. She went on to pub­lish ano­ther ser­ies of Ger­man hymns in 1858. In 1863, she came out with The Chor­ale Book for Eng­land, and in 1869, Christ­ian Sing­ers of Ger­ma­ny. More than any other sin­gle person, she helped bring the Ger­man chor­ale tra­di­tion to the Eng­lish speak­ing world.

**ELLIOTT, EMILY ELIZABETH STEELE** (1836-1879) Emily’s fa­ther was Ed­ward Bi­shop El­li­ott, Rec­tor of St. Mark’s Church in Bright­on, and her aunt was hymn­ist [Char­lotte El­li­ott](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/bio/e/l/l/elliott_c.htm), who wrote Just As I Am. For six years, Em­i­ly served as ed­it­or of The Church Mis­sion­a­ry Ju­ve­nile In­struct­or.

**MOULTRIE, GERALD** (1829-1885) Moultrie was ed­u­cat­ed at Rug­by and Ex­e­ter Coll­ege, Ox­ford (BA 1851, MA 1856). Tak­ing Ho­ly Or­ders, he be­came Third Mas­ter and Chap­lain in Shrews­bu­ry School; Chap­lain to the Dow­ager Mar­chion­ess of Lon­don­de­rry, 1855-59; cur­ate of Bright­walt­ham, 1859; and of Brin­field, Berkshire, 1860; Chap­lain of the Don­a­tive of Bar­row Gur­ney, Bris­tol, 1864; Vi­car of South­leigh, 1869; and Warden of St. James’ Coll­ege, South­leigh, 1873. Moultrie wrote hymns as well as translating hymns to English from their original language.

**ROSETTI, CHRISTINA G.** (1830-1894) Rossetti came from a well known li­ter­a­ry and ar­tis­tic fam­i­ly. Her fa­ther, Ga­bri­ele Ros­set­ti, in po­li­tic­al ex­ile in Eng­land, was a pro­fess­or of Ital­i­an at King’s Coll­ege in Lon­don. Her bro­thers Dan­te Ga­bri­el and Will­iam Mi­chael were among the found­ers of the Pre-Ra­pha­el­ite Bro­ther­hood, which gave birth to the 19th Century Eng­lish art move­ment of the same name. The Pre-Ra­pha­el­ites, for whom Chris­ti­na was a fre­quent mo­del, al­so in­clud­ed Ed­ward Burne-Jones, Will­iam Hol­man Hunt, Ford Ma­dox Brown, John Ev­er­ett Mil­lais, Will­iam Mor­ris, John Rus­kin and James Mc­Neill Whist­ler. Her fam­i­ly friends in­clud­ed Charles Dodg­son (bet­ter known by his pseu­do­nym Lew­is Car­roll), au­thor *of Al­ice in Won­der­land*.

Rossetti pub­lished three books of po­e­try (most­ly re­li­gious), and four books of de­vo­tions.

**PRUDENTIUS, AURELIUS CLEMENS** (c.348-413) Prudentius (whose name is some­times shown with a pre­fix of Marcus), was ev­i­dent­ly born in­to the up­per class. Af­ter work­ing as a law­yer, he served a judge. At age 57, he re­tired and be­gan to write sac­red po­et­ry.

**CASWALL, EDWARD** (1814-1878) Caswall was the son of Ro­bert Clarke Cas­wall, Vi­car of Yate­ley. He at­tend­ed Chig­well Gram­mar School, Marl­bo­rough School, and Brase­nose Coll­ege, Ox­ford, where he grad­u­at­ed with hon­ors. Be­fore leav­ing Ox­ford, he pub­lished, un­der the pseu­do­nym of Scrib­ler­us Red­i­vi­vus, The Art of Pluck, in imi­ta­tion of Aris­to­tle, a sa­tire on the ways of the care­less col­lege stu­dent.

In 1838, Caswall was or­dained as a dea­con, and 1839 as an An­gli­can priest. In 1840 he be­came per­pe­tu­al cur­ate at Strat­ford-sub-Cas­tle near Sal­is­bury. By 1847, though, he had switched to Ro­man Ca­thol­i­cism and went to the Or­a­tory of St. Phil­ip Ne­ri at Edg­bas­ton, where he did most of his hymn work. Cas­wall is best re­mem­bered as a trans­lat­or of an­cient hymns, though he al­so wrote orig­in­al ly­rics.

**ALEXANDER, CECIL FRANCES** (1818-1895) Alex­and­er’s hus­band was Will­iam Alex­an­der, bi­shop of Der­ry and Ra­phoe, and lat­er the An­gli­can pri­mate for Ire­land. Ce­cil and her sis­ter found­ed a school for the deaf, and she set up the Girls’ Friend­ly So­ci­e­ty in Lon­don­der­ry. Ce­cil Al­ex­and­er wrote about 400 hymns in her life­time. She wrote a series of hymns to teach children the Apostle’s Creed – Once in Royal David’s City, teaches about the phrase “conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.”

**TATE, NAHUM** (1625-1715) Tate grad­u­at­ed from Trin­i­ty Coll­ege in Dub­lin, Ire­land. He was a dis­tin­guished play­wright and in 1692, be­came Bri­tain’s po­et laur­e­ate.

**WADE, JOHN FRANCIS** (1711-1786) A Ca­tho­lic lay­man, Wade fled the Ja­co­bite re­bel­lion in 1745, set­tling in Douay, France. He taught mu­sic and co­pied plain chant and hymn man­u­scripts for pri­vate use.

**OAKELEY, FREDERICK** (1802-1880) Oakeley’s fa­ther was Charles Oake­ley, gov­ern­or of Ma­dras. Fred­er­ick at­tend­ed Christ Church, Ox­ford, and took Ho­ly Or­ders in 1828. In 1832, he be­came pre­ben­dary of Lich­field Ca­thed­ral; in 1837, he be­gan preach­ing at White­hall, and at Mar­ga­ret Street Cha­pel, Lon­don, in 1839. In 1845, he switched from the Church of Eng­land to Ro­man Ca­tho­li­cism; he be­came ca­non at West­mins­ter Ca­thed­ral in 1852. For ma­ny years he worked among the poor of West­min­ster. His po­e­try col­lect­ions in­clude Ly­ra Li­tur­gi­ca: Re­flect­ions in Verse for Ho­ly Days and Sea­sons (1865).

**SEARS, EDMUND HAMILTON** (1810-1876) Sears at­tend­ed Un­ion Coll­ege in Sche­nec­ta­dy, New York, and Har­vard Di­vin­i­ty School. He served at Un­i­tar­i­an church­es in Way­land, Lan­cas­ter, and Wes­ton, Mass­a­chu­setts. He al­so helped ed­it the Monthly Religious Magazine.

**CHADWICK, JAMES** (1813-1882) Chadwick at­tend­ed Ushaw Coll­ege, Dur­ham, where he was or­dained in 1836, and suc­cess­ive­ly be­came Pro­fess­or and Pre­si­dent. In 1866, he be­came the Ro­man Ca­tho­lic Bi­shop of Hex­ham and New­cas­tle.

**BROOKS, PHILLIPS** (1835-1893) Brooks has been called the great­est Amer­i­can preach­er of the 19th Cen­tu­ry. He at­tend­ed the Bos­ton La­tin School, Har­vard Un­i­ver­si­ty (where Phil­lips Brooks House was named af­ter him) and Episcopal The­o­log­ic­al Sem­in­ary in Al­ex­and­ria, Vir­gin­ia. He be­came an Epis­co­pal priest in 1860, and be­came Rec­tor of the Church of the Advent, Phil­a­del­phia, Penn­syl­van­ia. He was known for his sup­port of free­ing the slaves and al­low­ing for­mer slaves to vote. In 1869, he be­came Rec­tor of Trin­i­ty Church in Bos­ton. In 1872, he helped de­sign the Trin­i­ty Church build­ing, which to­day stands in Bos­ton’s Back Bay. In 1891, he be­came Epis­co­pal bi­shop of Mass­a­chu­setts.

**WHITEFIELD, GEORGE** (1714-1770) Whitefield was an astounding preacher from the beginning. Though he was slender in build, he stormed in the pulpit as if he were a giant. Within a year it was said that "his voice startled England like a trumpet blast." At a time when London had a population of less than 700,000, he could hold spellbound 20,000 people at a time at Moorfields and Kennington Common. For thirty-four years his preaching resounded throughout England and America. In his preaching ministry he crossed the Atlantic thirteen times and became known as the 'apostle of the British empire.'

**DIX, WILLIAM CHATTERTON** (1837-1898) Dix’ fa­ther, a sur­geon, wrote a bi­o­gra­phy of po­et Tho­mas Chat­ter­ton, and gave his son his mid­dle name in his hon­or. Young Wil­liam at­tend­ed the Bris­tol Gram­mar School. Lat­er, he man­aged a ma­rine in­sur­ance com­pa­ny in Glas­gow, Scot­land, but his heart was in the po­e­try of wor­ship. He wrote more than 40 hymns over the course of his life.

**MOHR, JOSEF** (1792-1848) Af­ter his or­din­a­tion on Au­gust 21, 1815, by the Ro­man Cath­o­lic Bi­shop of Salz­burg, Mohr was suc­cess­ive­ly as­sist­ant at Ram­sau and Lau­fen; then co­ad­ju­tor at Kuchl, Gol­ling, Vi­gaum, Ad­net, and Au­thering­; then Vic­ar-Sub­sti­tute at Hof and Hin­ter­see—all in the di­o­cese of Salz­burg. In 1828 he was ap­point­ed vic­ar at Hin­ter­see, and in 1837 at Wag­rein, near St. Jo­hann.

**YOUNG, JOHN FREEMAN** (1820-1885) Young at­tend­ed Wes­ley­an Un­i­ver­si­ty, Mid­dle­town, Con­nec­ti­cut; Wes­ley­an Sem­in­a­ry, Read­field, Maine; and the Vir­gin­ia The­o­lo­gic­al Sem­in­ary, Al­ex­and­ria, Vir­gin­ia. Or­dained a Pro­test­ant Epis­co­pal min­is­ter, he served in Tex­as, Mis­sis­sip­pi, Lou­i­si­a­na, and New York, and be­came the se­cond bi­shop of Flor­i­da in 1867

**WATTS, ISAAC** (1674-1748) Watts left the Acad­e­my at age 20 and spent two years at home; it was dur­ing this per­i­od that he wrote the bulk of his *Hymns and Spir­it­u­al Songs*. They were sung from man­uscripts in the South­amp­ton Cha­pel, and pub­lished 1707-1709.

 The next six years of his life were again spent at Stoke New­ing­ton, work­ing as tu­tor to the son of em­i­nent Pur­i­tan John Har­topp. The in­tense stu­dy of these years is re­flect­ed in the the­o­log­ic­al and phil­o­soph­ic­al ma­ter­i­al he sub­se­quent­ly pub­lished.

**MCFARLAND, JOHN THOMAS** (1851-1913) McFarland was ed­u­cat­ed at Simp­son Coll­ege, Io­wa Wes­ley­an Un­i­ver­si­ty, and the Bos­ton Un­i­ver­si­ty School of The­ol­o­gy. He pas­tored in Io­wa, Il­li­nois, Rhode Is­land, New York, and Kan­sas. He al­so served as Sec­re­ta­ry of the Board of Sun­day Schools in New York City, sec­re­ta­ry of the Sun­day School Un­ion, and ed­it­or of Sun­day school ma­ter­i­als for the Meth­od­ist Epis­co­pal Church.

**HANBY, BENJAMIN RUSSELL** (1833-1867) Son of a United Breth­ren min­is­ter, Han­by at­tend­ed Ot­ter­bein Un­i­ver­si­ty in Wes­ter­ville, Ohio. Up­on grad­u­a­tion, he worked for the col­lege, then served as prin­ci­pal of an acad­e­my in Sev­en Mile, Ohio. He lat­er pas­tored in Lew­is­burg and New Par­is, then went on to work for mu­sic pub­lish­ers John Church Com­pa­ny (Cin­cin­na­ti, Ohio) and Root and Ca­dy (Chi­ca­go, Il­li­nois). He wrote over five doz­en songs, ma­ny of which ap­peared in the quar­ter­ly Our Song Birds.

One of Hanby’s best known se­cu­lar songs is Dar­ling Nell­y Gray ([MIDI](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/mid/d/a/r/darling_nelly_gray.mid), [NWC](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/nwc/d/a/r/Darling%20Nelly%20Gray.nwc), [PDF](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/pdf/d/a/r/Darling%20Nelly%20Gray.pdf)). He wrote the song while at­tend­ing Ot­ter­bein Col­lege, in re­sponse to the plight of a run­a­way slave named Jo­seph Sel­by (or Shel­by). Han­by’s fa­ther, Bi­shop Will­iam Han­by, a Unit­ed Breth­ren min­is­ter ac­tive in the Un­der­ground Rail­road, was try­ing to raise mo­ney to free Selby’s be­loved.

**DECIUS, NIKOLAUS** (1490-1541) A grad­u­ate of the Un­i­ver­si­ty of Leip­zig (BA 1506), De­ci­us be­came a monk, and was in 1519 Probst of the clois­ter at Ste­ter­burg, near Wolf­en­büt­tel. In­clin­ing to [Mar­tin Lu­ther](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/bio/l/u/t/luther_m.htm)’s po­si­tions, he left Ste­ter­burg in Ju­ly, 1522, and went to Bruns­wick, where he was ap­point­ed a mas­ter in the St. Kath­er­ine and Egi­dien School. In 1523, he was in­vit­ed by the bur­gess­es of Stet­tin to work there as an evan­gel­i­cal preach­er, along with Paul­us von Rhode. He be­came preach­er at the Church of St. Ni­cho­las; was prob­ab­ly in­st­itut­ed by the town coun­cil in 1256, when von Rhode was in­sti­tut­ed at St. Ja­cob’s; and at the vis­it­a­tion in 1535 was rec­og­nized as pas­tor of St. Nich­o­las.

**WORK, JOHN W. II** (1872-1925) Son of a church choir director, Work grad­u­at­ed from Fisk Un­i­ver­si­ty (AB 1895, MA 1898). He taught La­tin and Greek at Fisk, be­com­ing chair­man of the La­tin & His­to­ry De­part­ments in 1906. From 1923 un­til his death, he served as pres­i­dent of Ro­ger Wil­liams Un­i­ver­si­ty in Nash­ville, Ten­nes­see.Work was a pi­o­neer in col­lect­ing, per­form­ing, and pre­serv­ing Af­ri­can-Amer­i­can folk mu­sic.

**HUTCHINSON, ALBERT H.** (n.d.) Nothing on the web.

**DOWNTON, HENRY** (1818-1885) Downton was ed­u­cat­ed at Trin­i­ty Coll­ege, Cam­bridge (BA 1840, MA 1843). Tak­ing Ho­ly Or­ders in 1843, he be­came Cur­ate of Bem­bridge, Isle of Wight (1843), and of Ho­ly Trin­i­ty, Cam­bridge (1847). In 1849, he be­came the in­cum­bent at St. John’s in Chat­ham. He went to Ge­ne­va, Switz­er­land, as Eng­lish Chap­lain in 1847, and was ap­point­ed Rec­tor of Hop­ton in 1873. He was al­so for some time Do­mes­tic Chap­lain to Lord Mon­son.

Downtown’s hymns were main­ly con­trib­ut­ed to the *Church of Eng­land* mag­a­zine, A. T. Rus­sell’s *Psalms and Hymns* (1851), Bar­ry’s *Psalms and Hymns* (1862), and the *Sun­day Mag­a­zine*. In 1873, he col­lect­ed these and pub­lished them as *Hymns and Vers­es*; his trans­la­tions from the French of Al­ex­andre Vi­net are al­so in the vol­ume.