MAY HYMN AUTHORS BIO’S

**CROSBY, FANNY JANE** (1820-1915) Fanny Cros­by was prob­ab­ly the most pro­lif­ic hymn­ist in his­to­ry. Though blind­ed by an in­com­pe­tent doc­tor at six weeks of age, she wrote over 8,000 hymns. About her blind­ness, she said:

It seemed in­tend­ed by the bless­ed prov­i­dence of God that I should be blind all my life, and I thank him for the dis­pen­sa­tion. If per­fect earth­ly sight were of­fered me to­mor­row I would not ac­cept it. I might not have sung hymns to the praise of God if I had been dis­tract­ed by the beau­ti­ful and in­ter­est­ing things about me.

**WESLEY, CHARLES** (1707-1788) the eighteenth child of the rector of the Anglican church in Epworth, Lincolnshire. All 19 Wesley children received individual weekly instructions in religious matters from their mother, who gave them some of her own independent spirit. Although Charles was bright, he wasted much of his energy looking for good times when he began his studies at Christ Church, Oxford, in 1726. In 1729, after he had settled down, Charles, his older brother John, and several other Oxford students formed the Holy Club, for the purpose of studying the Bible and receiving the Sacrament of the Eucharist. The group soon became known as the "Methodists" because of the regularity of their religious activities.

**FRANCIS OF ASSISI** (1182-1226) Fran­cis of Assi­si, wrote All Creatures of Our God and King - cir­ca 1225 (Can­ti­co di frat­re so­le, Song of Bro­ther Sun). He wrote this hymn short­ly be­fore his death, but it was not pub­lished for al­most 400 years.

**DRAPER, WILLIAM H.** (1855-1933) Draper was ed­u­cat­ed at Ke­ble Coll­ege, Ox­ford (BA in honors, MA 1880). He was or­dained in 1880, and was Cur­ate of St. Ma­ry’s, Shrews­bu­ry; Vi­car of Al­fre­ton; Vic­ar of the Ab­bey Church, Shrews­bu­ry; Rec­tor of Adel, York­shire (1899-1919); Mas­ter of the Tem­ple, Lon­don (1919-30); and Vi­car of Ax­bridge, Som­er­set. Draper al­so con­trib­ut­ed hymns to the *Guard­i­an*, *Church Month­ly*, and other mag­a­zines. He wrote about 60 hymns al­to­ge­ther.

**PIERPOINT, FOLLIOT SANFORD** (1835-1917) Pierpoint grad­u­at­ed from Queen’s Coll­ege, Cam­bridge Un­i­ver­si­ty, in 1857, and lat­er taught class­ics at Som­er­set­shire Coll­ege. He lat­er lived at Bab­bi­combe, De­von­shire, and else­where, and oc­ca­sion­al­ly taught.

**ALEXANDER, CECIL FRANCES** (1818-1985) 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.

**BABCOCK, MALTBIE DAVENPORT** (1858-1901) 1901, alt. While a pas­tor in Lock­port, New York, Bab­cock liked to hike in an ar­ea called the es­carp­ment, an an­cient up­thrust ledge near Lock­port. It has a mar­vel­ous view of farms, or­chards, and Lake On­tar­io, about 15 miles dis­tant. It is said those walks in the woods in­spired these lyr­ics. The ti­tle re­calls an ex­press­ion Bab­cock used when start­ing a walk: I’m go­ing out to see my Fa­ther’s world.

**BOBERG, CARL** (1859-1940) A carpenter’s son, Bo­berg start­ed out as a sail­or. He came to Christ at age 19 and at­tend­ed a Bi­ble school in Krist­in­e­hamm. He served as a lay preach­er for two years, ed­it­ed the week­ly San­nings­vitt­net (Wit­ness of the Truth) (1890-1916), and served in the Swe­dish par­lia­ment (1912-1931). His works in­clude sev­er­al vol­umes of po­e­try and ma­ny hymns; he al­so helped com­pile the first two hymn­als of the Swe­dish Co­ve­nant church.

**JOHNSON, E. GUSTAV** (1893-1974) Johnson’s fam­i­ly immigrated to Amer­i­ca when he was 10 years old, sett­ling in Hart­ford, Con­nec­ti­cut. He learned the craft of a print­er, but at age 30 took up stu­dies at North Park, Chi­ca­go, Il­li­nois, where he earned de­grees at the acad­e­my, coll­ege, and sem­in­ary. He went on to grad­u­ate from the Un­i­ver­si­ty of Chi­ca­go and Duke Un­i­ver­si­ty. He start­ed teach­ing Eng­lish and Swed­ish at North Park in 1931, re­main­ing there three de­cades. He al­so found time to ed­it the Swed­ish Pi­o­neer His­tor­ic­al Quar­ter­ly.

**WARE, HENRY JR.** (1794-1843) Son of a Un­i­tar­i­an min­is­ter, Ware at­tend­ed Har­vard and be­came an as­sist­ant teach­er at Ex­e­ter Acad­e­my in New Hamp­shire. In 1815, the Bos­ton Un­i­tar­i­an As­so­ci­a­tion li­censed him to preach, and in 1817, he was or­dained and be­came pas­tor of the Se­cond Church in Bos­ton, Mass­a­chu­setts. He was Pro­fess­or of Pul­pit El­o­quence and Pas­tor­al Care at the Har­vard Div­in­i­ty School, 1829-1842. He al­so ed­it­ed the Christ­ian Di­sci­ple (lat­er re­named the Christ­ian Ex­amin­er), and ran the So­ci­e­ty for Re­li­gious Im­prove­ment at Har­vard Un­i­ver­si­ty (his fa­ther was on the fa­cul­ty there, as well). A two vol­ume Mem­oir and a four vol­ume Works were pub­lished three years af­ter his death.

**WATTS, ISAAC** (1674-1748) Watts preached his first ser­mon at age 24. In the next three years, he preached fre­quent­ly, and in 1702 was or­dained as pas­tor of the In­de­pen­dent con­gre­ga­tion in Mark Lane. At that time he moved in­to the house of a Mr. Hollis in the Mi­nor­ies. His health be­gan to fail the next year, and Sam­u­el Price was ap­point­ed as his as­sist­ant in the min­is­try. In 1712, a fe­ver shat­tered his con­sti­tu­tion, and Price be­came co-pas­tor of the con­gre­ga­tion, which had moved to a new cha­pel in Bu­ry Street. It was at this time that Isaac be­came the guest of Sir Thom­as Ab­ney. He lived with Ab­ney (and lat­er Abney’s wi­dow) the rest of his life, main­ly at The­o­balds in Hert­ford­shire, then for 13 years at Stoke New­ing­ton.

**THE VENERABLE BEDE** (673-735) Bede be­came a monk and was or­dained at age thir­ty. He de­vot­ed him­self to the stu­dy of Script­ure and to teach­ing and writ­ing. He is con­sid­ered one of the most learned men of his time, and a ma­jor in­flu­ence on Eng­lish lit­er­a­ture. He wrote com­ment­ar­ies on the Pen­ta­teuch and var­i­ous other books of the Bi­ble, the­o­log­ic­al and sci­en­tif­ic treat­ises, his­tor­ic­al works, and bi­og­ra­phies. His best known work is His­tor­ia Ec­cles­i­as­tic­a, a his­tory of the Eng­lish church and peo­ple. Called Ven­er­able to ack­nowl­edge his wis­dom and learn­ing, the ti­tle was for­mal­ized at the Coun­cil of Aach­en in 853. He was a care­ful schol­ar and has been called the fa­ther of Eng­lish his­to­ry, the first to date events An­no Do­mi­ni (A.D.)

**CHARLES, ELIZABETH RUNDLE** (1828-1896) Elizabeth was the daugh­ter of John Run­dle, bank­er and Mem­ber of Par­lia­ment. She mar­ried law­yer And­rew Pa­ton Charles in 1851. Ang­li­can by af­fil­i­a­tion, she was a gift­ed po­et, mu­si­cian, paint­er, and au­thor, and trans­lat­ed a num­ber of hymns.

**WEBB, BENJAMIN** (1819-1885) Webb was ed­u­cat­ed at St. Paul’s School, and at Trin­i­ty Coll­ege, Cam­bridge (BA 1842, MA 1845). Or­dained by the Bi­shop of Glou­ces­ter and Bris­tol, he was as­sist­ant Cur­ate at Kem­er­ton, Glou­ces­ter­shire (1843-44); of Christ Church, St. Pan­cras (1847-49); and Bras­ted, Kent (1849-51). He be­came PC of Sheen, Staf­ford­shire (1851); Vi­car of St. And­rews, Wells Street, Lon­don (1862); Pre­bend of Port­pool, in St. Paul’s Ca­thed­ral (1881).

Webb was one of the found­ers of the Cam­bridge Cam­den, af­ter­ward the Ec­cles­i­o­log­ic­al So­ci­e­ty; and ed­it­or of the Ec­cle­si­o­lo­gist (1842-1868), as well as the Gen­er­al Ed­it­or of the So­ci­e­ty’s pub­li­ca­tions. His first ap­pear­ance in print was as joint ed­it­or of Bi­shop Mon­ta­gue’s Ar­ti­cles of In­quir­y in 1841.

**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.

**BRIDGES, MATTHEW** (1800-1894) Though raised as an Ang­lican, Bridg­es con­vert­ed to Ro­man Ca­thol­i­cism in 1848. He lived in Que­bec, Can­a­da, for some years, but event­u­al­ly re­turned to Eng­land.

**THRING, GODFREY** (1823-1903) Son of Rev. John Gale Dal­ton Thring and bro­ther of Lord Thring, God­frey grad­u­at­ed from Bal­li­ol Coll­ege, Ox­ford, Eng­land. He was or­dained in the An­gli­can church, and was giv­en the rec­to­ry at Al­ford-with-Horn­blot­ton, near Glas­ton­bury. Lat­er, he be­came Pre­bend­a­ry at Wells Ca­thed­ral. While at Al­ford-with-Horn­blot­ton, Thring wrote a num­ber of hymn vol­umes.

**CROLY, GEORGE** (1780-1860) Croly grad­uated from Dub­lin Un­i­ver­si­ty (MA 1804, LLD 1831), then took Ho­ly Or­ders. He worked in Ire­land un­til about 1810, when he moved to Lon­don and de­vot­ed him­self to literature. In 1835, he be­came as­so­ci­at­ed with St. Ste­phen’s, Wal­brook, and St. Be­net Shere­hog. His prose pub­li­ca­tions, in ad­di­tion to con­tri­bu­tions to Black­wood’s Mag­a­zine, were num­er­ous, and dealt with bi­o­graph­ic­al, his­tor­ic­al, and script­ur­al sub­jects.

**LITTLEDALE, RICHARD F.** (1833-1890) Littledale at­tend­ed Bec­tive House Sem­in­a­ry, and Trin­i­ty Coll­ege, Dub­lin. In 1852 he be­came a Un­i­ver­si­ty Schol­ar; in 1854, he was first class in Class­ics and gold me­dal­ist; in 1856, he won the Ber­kel­ey gold me­dal for Greek, and other awards. He grad­u­at­ed BA, 1855; MA, 1858; LLD, 1862; and DCL at Ox­ford, 1862.

Littledale took Ho­ly Or­ders in 1856, and served as Cur­ate at St. Mat­thew’s Thorpe Ham­let, Nor­wich (1856-1857), and at St. Ma­ry the Vir­gin, So­ho, Lon­don (1857-1861). In 1861, he re­tired due to ill health, and de­vot­ed him­self to li­ter­a­ture. He pub­lished about 50 works, co­ver­ing sub­jects in the­ol­o­gy, his­to­ry, li­tur­gy, and hymn­ol­o­gy.

**BROWNE, SIMON** (1680-1732) After stu­dy­ing for the min­is­try un­der John Moore of Bridge­wa­ter, Browne be­came pas­tor of an In­de­pen­dent church in Ports­mouth, then, in 1716, of the In­de­pen­dent Cha­pel in Old Jew­ry, Lon­don. His la­ter years were cloud­ed by a peculiar de­lu­sion in which he imag­ined that God had in a grad­u­al man­ner an­ni­hil­at­ed in him the think­ing sub­stance, and ut­ter­ly di­vest­ed him of con­scious­ness.

**BiÂ­anÂ­co of SiÂ­eÂ­na (?-1434)** Author of Come Down, O Love Divine – no info.

**FERGUSON, MANIE PAYNE** (1850-)In 1886, Ma­nie and her hus­band The­o­dore Poll­ock Fer­gu­son found­ed a miss­ion in Los An­ge­les, Cal­i­for­nia. This event­u­al­ly ex­pand­ed in­to what was known as the Pen­i­el miss­ions along the West Coast of Amer­i­ca, and in Af­ri­ca, Asia, South Amer­i­ca, and else­where. The main fo­cus of the miss­ions, es­pe­ci­al­ly in lat­er years, was min­is­try to sin­gle women.

**JUDSON, ADONIRAM** (1788-1850) When Judson began his mission in Burma, he set a goal of translating the Bible and founding a church of 100 members before his death. When he died, he left the Bible, 100 churches, and over 8,000 believers. In large part due to his influence, [Myanmar](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Myanmar) has the third largest number of Baptists worldwide, behind the United States and India.

Judson compiled the first ever Burmese-[English](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/English_language) dictionary. The English-Burmese half was interrupted by his death and completed by missionary E. A. Steven. Every dictionary and grammar written in Burma in the last two centuries has been based on ones originally created by Judson. Judson "became a symbol of the preeminence of Bible translation for" Protestant missionaries.

**LONGFELLOW, SAMUEL** (1819-1892) Young­er bro­ther of po­et [Hen­ry Long­fel­low](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/bio/l/o/n/longfellow_hw.htm), Sam­u­el at­tend­ed both Har­vard Coll­ege and Cam­bridge Di­vin­i­ty School. Or­dained a Un­i­tar­i­an min­is­ter, he served church­es in Fall Riv­er, Mass­a­chu­setts (1848); Brook­lyn, New York (1853); and Ger­man­town, Penn­syl­van­ia (1860).

**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.

**COWPER, WILLIAM** (1731-1800) Cowper (pro­nounced Coop­er), whose fa­ther was cha­plain to King George II, went through the mo­tions of be­com­ing an at­tor­ney, but ne­ver prac­ticed law. He lived near Ol­ney, Buck­ing­ham­shire, the name­sake town of the Ol­ney Hymns, which he co-wrote with [John New­ton](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/bio/n/e/w/newton_j.htm), au­thor of [Amaz­ing Grace](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/htm/a/m/a/amazing_grace.htm). Cow­per al­so wrote po­et­ry, in­clud­ing The Ne­gro’s Com­plaint, an an­ti-slav­ery work, and the 5,000-line The Task.

**REED, ANDREW** (1787-1862) Husband of hymn­ist [Eliz­abeth Reed](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/bio/r/e/e/reed_eh.htm), An­drew at­tend­ed Hack­ney Coll­ege, Lon­don, and be­came a Con­gre­ga­tion­al min­is­ter. He was pas­tor at the New Road Cha­pel, St. George’s-in-the-East, then at Wy­cliffe Cha­pel, which he helped build in 1830. He al­so earned a de­gree from Yale Coll­ege, and found­ed the Lon­don Or­phan Asy­lum and Reed’s School in Cob­ham, Sur­rey. He wrote 21 to­tal hymns.

**HEBER, REGINALD** (1783-1826) Heber at­tend­ed Brase­nose Coll­ege, Ox­ford, where he won a num­ber of awards in Eng­lish and La­tin. He re­ceived a fel­low­ship to All Souls Coll­ege, and lat­er be­came Rec­tor at Hod­net, Shrop­shire, Eng­land. In 1823, he be­came, some­what re­luct­ant­ly, Bi­shop of Cal­cut­ta, In­dia. Most of his hymns were not pub­lished un­til af­ter his death; 57 of them ap­peared in Hymns Writ­ten and Adapt­ed to the Week­ly Church Ser­vice of the Year (Lon­don: J. Mur­ray, 1827).

**WOLCOTT, SAMUEL** (1813-1886) Wolcott at­tended Yale Coll­ege (AB 1833) and An­do­ver The­o­log­ic­al Sem­in­ary, and served as a mis­sion­ary in Syr­ia (1841-1842). He re­turned to Amer­i­ca and pas­tored in Bel­cher­town, Mass­a­chu­setts; Prov­i­dence, Rhode Isl­and; Chi­ca­go, Ill­i­nois; and at the Ply­mouth Con­gre­ga­tion­al Church, Cleve­land, Ohio. Lat­er, he was sec­re­tary to the Ohio Home Mis­sion­ary So­ci­e­ty. Over 200 hymns are at­trib­ut­ed to him.

**LONGSTAFF, WILLIAM DUNN** (1822-1894) Longstaff was trea­sur­er of the Be­thes­da Free Cha­pel in Sun­der­land. He was friends with Sal­va­tion Ar­my foun­der [Will­iam Booth](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/bio/b/o/o/booth_w.htm), and evan­gel­ists Dwight Moo­dy and [Ira Sank­ey](http://www.hymntime.com/tch/bio/s/a/n/sankey_id.htm). A number of his hymns were ap­par­ent­ly pub­lished in the Sal­va­tion Ar­my’s War Cry in the 1880’s.