

## Hymn Stories.: Number 1.

### Introduction

First, a scripture reading.

This comes from Paul's epistle to the Colossians, chapter 3, just verse 16:<sup>1</sup>

Let the word of Christ<sup>2</sup> (that which has the Lord Jesus both as its source and its subject) dwell<sup>3</sup> in you richly ('Let the word of Christ', that is, '*make its home* in you richly'<sup>4</sup>), in all wisdom<sup>5</sup> teaching and admonishing<sup>6</sup> one another in psalms<sup>7</sup> and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace (not only with your lips, but) in your hearts<sup>8</sup> to the Lord.<sup>9</sup>

I wonder if you have ever thought how great a part that singing plays in our Bibles. Without attempting to be in any way exhaustive, I am able to point to references to singing *by heavenly beings* which span from the time of the earth's creation<sup>10</sup> on into the endless future.<sup>11</sup>

But not only have *the courts of heaven* been ringing (and will ever continue to ring) with the sound of singing, but, through the ages, *God's people on earth* have also been characterised by giving expression in song both (i) to their praise of God and (ii) to their own spiritual experiences.

So, for example, in Old Testament days, we read (i) of how Moses, Miriam and the children of Israel burst into song immediately following their deliverance from Pharaoh and the Egyptian army;<sup>12</sup> (ii) of how Deborah and Barak burst into song immediately following Israel's deliverance from their Canaanite oppressors;<sup>13</sup> and (iii) how the women of Israel burst into song following David's 'stunning' defeat of the great Philistine champion.<sup>14</sup>

And on entering the New Testament, we find that, according to Luke, the very Nativity scenes are punctuated by four outstanding songs of praise;<sup>15</sup> in order, those of Mary,<sup>16</sup> Zachariah,<sup>17</sup> the angels,<sup>18</sup> and Simeon<sup>19</sup>.

Later, we not only read of our Lord Himself singing with His disciples just before His crucifixion and death,<sup>20</sup> but we discover that, from its very beginning, the Christian church was a singing church,<sup>21</sup> and this often in spite of severe opposition and suffering.<sup>22</sup>

Make no mistake then, scripture is full of singing, both by *angelic beings in heaven* and by *God's people on earth*.

And I was interested to find that in one of the earliest descriptions of a church service we possess, Pliny the Younger (the Roman governor of Bithynia) reported to the then Roman Emperor (Trajan) concerning the activities of the Christians in the early second century that 'they met on a stated day before it was light, and *sang a hymn* to Christ, as to a god'.<sup>23</sup>

Personally, I take heart that nowhere in scripture does it say that we have to sing *well* ... only that we have to sing!<sup>24</sup> But I note that, although scripture does not demand that we sing *with tuneful voices*, it does stipulate that, when we do sing, we should sing, not thoughtlessly, but *with our minds 'in gear'* – that we should sing with our 'understanding',<sup>25</sup> and both 'in'<sup>26</sup> and 'with'<sup>27</sup> our hearts.<sup>28</sup>

And I note that, on occasions, scripture also provides us with the background to the words which were to be sung, directing us both (i) to the one who wrote the words and (ii) to the circumstances in which those words were first written.<sup>29</sup>

And, with this in mind, I thought that it might prove useful if we considered briefly the personalities and circumstances which lay behind the composing of some of our well-known and much-loved hymns.

#### 1. I begin with the classic hymn, '**What a friend we have in Jesus**'.

And first, I want you to meet the man behind the hymn. His full name is Joseph Medlicott Scriven; his unusual middle name being his mother's maiden name.<sup>30</sup>

As is the case with many hymn writers, Joseph Scriven was no stranger to heartache and trials, his life being marked by two great personal tragedies in particular.

Sadly, his story has suffered much at the pen of many compilers of books which *purport* to give the history of hymns. As a result of which, as has been well said, 'Joseph Scriven has become more myth than man'.<sup>31</sup> As far as possible, I will confine my comments to known and well-established facts.

Mr Scriven was born in the town of Banbridge in Northern Ireland in 1819.<sup>32</sup> His father (John<sup>33</sup>) was a well-to-do officer in the Royal Marines, and Joseph's early life was one of comfort and plenty. At the age of 16, he left home to study at the best University in Ireland,<sup>34</sup> Trinity College in Dublin,<sup>35</sup> from which he later obtained his Bachelor of Arts degree.<sup>36</sup> It is claimed that it was at Trinity College that he became a Christian.<sup>37</sup>

Following his College studies, he returned to Banbridge, where he took up a post as a tutor. About a year after his return, he became engaged to a local young lady.

But, tragically, the very day before their wedding, his fiancé fell from her horse when crossing a bridge over the river Bann, and drowned<sup>38</sup> in full view of Joseph, who was awaiting her arrival on the other side. And so, at 23 years of age, Joseph Scriven was plunged, for his part, into his first great experience of sorrow.<sup>39</sup>

Two years later, in May 1845, he left Northern Ireland, and sailed to Canada.<sup>40</sup> To cut a long story short, after working in several towns in Canada for several years, he was offered a position as tutor to the son of a retired naval officer, Robert Pengelley, and his wife Lydia, who lived near a small township in Ontario.<sup>41</sup>

It was there that he first met the Pengelley's young niece Eliza Catherine Roche.<sup>42</sup> Several years later – in 1859 – they became engaged. He was then 39 and she was 22. Eliza already suffered with TB, and the following year, she developed pneumonia, weakened over a four-month period, and died on the 6th of August 1860.<sup>43</sup> She was buried in the little cemetery beside the Pengelley chapel.<sup>44</sup>

That Mr Scriven never really got over his loss is proved by the way in which he obtained a promise from Mr Pengelley that, at his own death (which, in the event, came full 26 years later) his body would be buried near hers ... which it later was.<sup>45</sup>

Oh yes, Joseph Scriven knew all about tragedies during his lifetime. And throughout that lifetime, he proved himself to be a truly good and unassuming gentleman. So unassuming indeed, that he refused to have his picture taken, for in his eyes it was a form of vanity.<sup>46</sup>

Not long after Mr Scriven's death, someone wrote of him, 'When Mr Scriven had means, his hand was open as day to the calls made upon him. He has been known to divest himself of his own clothing, in order to cover the nakedness and relieve the sufferings of destitute ones. He was always ready to minister in the sick chamber to the suffering, and fear of infectious disease was no hindrance. He established and managed a dairy, for over 20 years, at Port Hope, in order to afford support to a destitute widow'.<sup>47</sup>

One lady who knew him well testified, 'I never knew another person who was as constant a Christian. He would keep only what he barely needed for his necessities ... He desired not honour or any worldly thing, but wished to be free to serve his Master with a pure conscience in a humble way'. Another lady, who had known him when she was a small child, bore witness that on one occasion he was given money while in Port Hope to pay his way to Toronto to attend a Christian gathering, but 'in meeting with a case of distress, he gave away the money and walked from Port Hope to Toronto' (a distance of 66 miles)!<sup>48</sup>

Though a graduate of Trinity College and a man of refinement, Mr Scriven chose humble duties.

One afternoon he was seen walking down the streets of Port Hope, where he lived, dressed as a plain workingman and carrying a saw and a wooden trestle. A gentleman there, 'noticing that a friend recognized him, asked: 'Do you know that man? What is his name and where does he live? I want someone to cut wood, and I find it difficult to get [anybody] to do the work faithfully'. 'But you can't get that man', was the reply, 'That is Mr. Scriven. He won't cut wood for you'. 'Why not?' queried the gentleman. 'Because you are able to pay for it. He only saws wood for poor widows and sick people'.<sup>49</sup>

Following a lengthy illness, Joseph Scriven went to be with Christ aged 67 on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October<sup>50</sup> 1886. Ironically, just as had been the case with his first fiancé, he died by drowning. It seems that, when crossing a mill dam, near to the house where he was staying with a friend, he slipped and fell into the sluice-way (a hole some six or seven feet deep, where the water runs over the dam).<sup>51</sup>

But what of our hymn?

Mr Scriven was not only a good man. He was also a very gifted man. He wrote many poems and hymns during his lifetime, mainly for use in the small Christian assembly where he was.<sup>52</sup> Certainly he never envisaged that the verses of his 'poem' should ever become so well-known as they have.

We know that this hymn (as many others) began life as a poem; in this case, a poem entitled, 'Pray without ceasing'. We know too that it went through several drafts at Mr Scriven's own hand.<sup>53</sup> We do not know for sure exactly when he penned the first draft,<sup>54</sup> but it see from all that I have read, it seems most likely that it was written either in 1850 or a little before. It is clear that he made several copies of his poem himself; at least five copies.<sup>55</sup>

One of these copies found its way into a New York newspaper, where it was spotted by a Christian composer, Mr Charles Converse, who set Mr Scriven's poem to music.<sup>56</sup> The resulting hymn, now renamed 'What a Friend we have in Jesus', came to the attention of Ira Sankey, the well-known American gospel singer and composer, associated with evangelist D. L. Moody. Mr Sankey included it in his widely-circulated book of gospel hymns,<sup>57</sup> and from that moment its popularity was assured.

When we think of the opening words of Mr Scriven's hymn, we do well to remember that it was a man who became a true friend to those in need around him who draws our attention to One who, in a far greater sense, is the true Friend to every last one of His people.<sup>58</sup> And we can hardly fail to remind ourselves of our Saviour's own words, 'Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends'.<sup>59</sup>

What a friend we have in Jesus,  
All our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry  
Everything to God in prayer!  
O what peace we often forfeit,  
O what needless pain we bear,  
All because we do not carry  
Everything to God in prayer.

Have we trials and temptations?  
Is there trouble anywhere?  
We should never be discouraged.  
Take it to the Lord in prayer!  
Can we find a friend so faithful,  
Who will all our sorrows share?  
Jesus knows our every weakness.  
Take it to the Lord in prayer!

Are we weak and heavy laden,  
Cumbered with a load of care?  
Precious Saviour, still our refuge.  
Take it to the Lord in prayer.  
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?  
Take it to the Lord in prayer!  
In His arms He'll take and shield thee.  
Thou wilt find a solace there.

2. Our second hymn story centres in the much-loved '**How great Thou art**'.<sup>60</sup>

Remarkably, the account of the writing of this hymn in its finished form spans no less than 63 years.<sup>61</sup> And the *whole* story, which we cover only briefly, requires us to visit no less than seven countries; in order, Sweden, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, England, India, and, finally, America.

The history of the hymn<sup>62</sup> begins with a Swedish pastor by the name of Carl Gustav Boberg.<sup>63</sup> As well as being a member of Upper House of the Swedish Parliament, Carl Boberg was a leading evangelist of his day and published several volumes of poetry and hymns.

The inspiration for one of his hymns came one day in 1885 when he and some friends were caught in a thunderstorm on the south-eastern coast of Sweden. The violence of the storm, followed by the return of the sun, together with a rainbow, filled him with a great sense of awe. That evening, he penned nine stanzas of a poem which he titled '*O store Gud*' ('*O mighty God*').<sup>64</sup>

The first stanza and the refrain ran:

*O mighty God, when I behold the wonder*

*Of nature's beauty, wrought by words of Thine,  
And how Thou ledest all from realms up yonder,  
Sustaining earthly life in love benign.*

*With rapture filled, my soul Thy name would laud,  
O mighty God! O mighty God!  
With rapture filled, my soul Thy name would laud,  
O mighty God! O mighty God!*

The text of that poem was translated into German in 1907 by a Baptist nobleman, Manfred von Glehn,<sup>65</sup> and, under the title 'Wie groß bist du' ('How Great Thou Art') became a popular hymn in Germany. The German hymn reached Russia where a Russian version was produced in 1912 by Ivan Prokhanov.<sup>66</sup> The Russian version was titled 'Великий Бог'<sup>67</sup> ('Great God'<sup>68</sup>), and was included in a songbook published in Moscow in 1927.

It was in that book that Stuart Hine, an English missionary<sup>69</sup> in the Western Ukraine,<sup>70</sup> discovered it.

He and his wife Mercy often sang this Russian version as a duet in their gospel work. Mr Hine later paraphrased some of the verses into English while serving God in the beautiful Carpathian Mountains. It was in the summer of 1934 that he set out by bicycle on a 300-mile journey<sup>71</sup> to preach and to distribute Bibles high up in those mountains,<sup>72</sup> and, in virtually a re-run of the experience of Carl Boberg almost 50 years before,<sup>73</sup> it was after an awe-inspiring thunderstorm there that he paraphrased Mr Boberg's first stanza and refrain to read:

O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder,  
Consider all the worlds Thy hands hath made;  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art! How great Thou art.

In one village they visited, Mr and Mrs Hine heard of a husband and wife who were believers. When they approached that couple's house, they heard the wife reading about our Lord's crucifixion to a houseful of guests, following which some of those present called out to God, 'saying how unbelievable it was that Christ would die for their own sins, and praising Him for His love and mercy'. Mr Hine noted down some of the expressions used by those there, and this inspired the verse which begins, 'And when I think that God, His Son not sparing, sent Him to die – I scarce can take it in'.<sup>74</sup>

When the Second World War broke out in 1939, Mr and Mrs Hine were compelled to return to England, where they continued their gospel work among the many displaced persons from Eastern Europe. The one recurring question which such people asked was, 'When are we going home?' And this question prompted Mr Hine to compose the closing verse of his hymn, which he did in 1948: 'When Christ shall come with shouts of acclamation, and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart'.<sup>75</sup>

Mr Hine went to be with Christ on 14 March 1989. His memorial service was held at the Gospel Hall on Martello Road, Walton-on-Naze, Essex, England, on 23 March 1989.<sup>76</sup>

It was in April 1954, when on a visit to north-east India, that Mr J. Edwin Orr, a well-known evangelist and Bible teacher from America, heard the hymn being sung in English.<sup>77</sup> Mr Orr took the hymn back with him to America, where it was published and copyrighted.

To cut a long story short, the hymn came into the hands of George Beverley Shea,<sup>78</sup> the soloist at all of Billy Graham's large gospel crusades. During Billy Graham's meetings in New York in 1957 alone, George Beverley sang the hymn almost one hundred times.<sup>79</sup>

O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder,  
Consider all the worlds Thy Hands hath made;  
I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,  
Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!  
Then sings my soul, my Saviour God, to Thee,  
How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

When through the woods, and forest glades I wander,  
And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees.

When I look down, from lofty mountain grandeur  
And hear the brook, and feel the gentle breeze.

And when I think that God, His Son not sparing,  
Sent Him to die – I scarce can take it in;  
That on the Cross, my burden gladly bearing,  
He bled and died to take away my sin.

When Christ shall come with shouts of acclamation,  
And take me home, what joy shall fill my heart.  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration,  
And there proclaim, 'My God, how great Thou art!'

As a postscript, I add that, in Mr Hine's book, '*Not You, but God: A Testimony to God's Faithfulness*', he reports two additional verses which he copyrighted in 1953 as a translation of the Russian version. One of those verses reads:

When burdens press, and seem beyond endurance,  
Bowed down with grief, to Him I lift my face;  
And then in love He brings me sweet assurance:  
'My child! for thee sufficient is my grace'.

Well said, Mr Hine!

*To be continued, God willing, next week.*

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> 'The Colossian passage is parallel with Eph. 5. 18-20. In the latter passage the hymns and songs are the outgrowth of the filling of the Spirit, while in Colossians they are the result of the deep assimilation of the Word of God. In other words, the Word-filled Christian is a Spirit-filled Christian', Thomas Constable, 'Expository Notes', on Col. 3. 16.

Note that the peace of Christ can only rule in our hearts if the word of Christ dwells richly in us.

<sup>2</sup> "'Christ's word" must either mean (I should say) the way Christ speaks or speech about Christ. Their lips are to be full of Christ, and so are their hearts', B. F. Westcott, '*A Letter to Asia*', page 157.

<sup>3</sup> 'As the rabbis later pointed out, he who dwells in a house is the master of the house, not just a passing guest', J. D. G. Dunn, '*The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*' (NIGTC). page 236.

<sup>4</sup> A. T. Robinson, '*Robinson's Word Pictures*', on Col. 3. 16.

<sup>5</sup> Contrast, 'the idea of wisdom is better joined to the following clause, which refers to mutual teaching—"in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another." Our translators, too, so point the verse as to make psalms and hymns the material of instruction, whereas it seems better, and more appropriate, to keep the clause distinct, thus—"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another: in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts unto the Lord." Some take the words down to χάριτι, as connected with the preceding participles—"admonishing one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." Our objection is, that while metrical or musical compositions are not the common vehicle of instruction or admonition, they are specially connected with sacred song', John Eadie. But the KJV structure is followed by RV, JND and ESV.

<sup>6</sup> See verse 28. 'Teaching is the imparting of truth, and admonition is warning against error', Thomas Constable. 'Dr. Johnson once said, that if he were allowed to make the ballads of a nation, he cared not who made the laws. It is true in a more important sense that he who is permitted to make the hymns of a church, need care little who preaches, or who makes the creed. He will more effectually mould the sentiments of a church than they who preach or make creeds and confessions', Albert Barnes.

<sup>7</sup> 'A Psalm is a sacred song with instrumental accompaniment', B. F. Westcott, *op.cit.*, page 159.

<sup>8</sup> 'There must be the thanksgiving of the heart, as well as of the lips', J. B. Lightfoot, '*Epistles to the Colossians and Philemon*', page 224; 'I do not think the Apostle depreciates the music of the lips; he only would have us know that the heart must go with the voice. A song is not a song, unless it be sung', B F Westcott, *op.cit.*, page 160.

<sup>9</sup> Compare Eph. 5. 19-20. 'The early Church was a thankful Church because its members were still dazzled with the wonder that God's love had stooped to save them; and it was a thankful Church because its members had such a consciousness that they were in the hands of God', William Barclay, '*Daily Study Bible*', on Ephesians 5. 15-21.

<sup>10</sup> 'Where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth ... when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?' Job 38. 4-7.

<sup>11</sup> 'And the four living creatures *cease not day and night* saying, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!' Rev. 4. 8. 'The four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb ... and *they sang a new song*, saying, 'You are worthy to take the scroll and to open its seals, for you were slain, and by your blood you ransomed people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation, and you have made them a kingdom and priests to our God, and they shall reign on the earth', Rev. 5. 8-10. 'And all *the angels* were standing around the throne ... and they fell on their faces before the throne and worshipped God, saying, 'Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom and thanksgiving and honour and power and might be to our God *forever and ever! Amen*', Rev. 7. 11-12.

<sup>12</sup> Exod. 15. 1, 20-21.

<sup>13</sup> Judges 5. 1.

<sup>14</sup> 1 Sam. 18. 6-7.

<sup>15</sup> Mary's song: the Magnificat; Zechariah's song: the Benedictus; the Angels' song: the Gloria in Excelsis; and Simeon's song: the Nunc Dimittis.

<sup>16</sup> Luke 1. 46-55.

<sup>17</sup> Luke 1. 67-79.

<sup>18</sup> Luke 2. 13-14.

<sup>19</sup> Luke 2. 29-32.

<sup>20</sup> Mark 14. 26; cf. Heb. 2. 12. (Philo tells us that often the Jews would spend the whole night in hymns and songs. See the references to Philo given by J. B. Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, on Col. 3. 16.)

<sup>21</sup> 'I will sing with the spirit, but I will sing also with the understanding', 1 Cor. 14. 15; 'whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching', 1 Cor. 14. 26; 'Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing ...', James 5. 13.

<sup>22</sup> Acts 16. 23-25.

<sup>23</sup> Source: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/2811/2811-h/2811-h.htm> (Correspondence with the Emperor Trajan, letter XCVII). Latin: '*carmenque Christo quasi deo dicere secum invicem*'. Cf. Hippolytus: 'And how many psalms and hymns, written by the faithful brethren from the beginning, celebrate Christ the Word of God, speaking of Him as Divine', Eusebius, '*Church History*', Book V, Chapter 28. (See the quote by J. B. Lightfoot, *op. cit.*, on Col. 3. 16.)

'Practically every great moving of the Spirit of God resulting in a spiritual awakening, has been accompanied by great singing', Cliff Barrows, '*Revival In Our Time: the Story of the Billy Graham Evangelistic Campaigns*', Chapter 4.

<sup>24</sup> See Hayden Nesbit, '*Souls need songs*', at <https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/souls-need-songs>.

<sup>25</sup> 'I will sing with the spirit, but I will sing also *with the understanding*', 1 Cor. 14. 15.

<sup>26</sup> '...in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace *in your hearts* to the Lord', Col. 3. 16..

<sup>27</sup> 'Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord', Eph. 5. 19.

<sup>28</sup> Far from being a leg-stretching exercise before and after the message, singing itself forms an integral part of the church's worship and teaching. It is a humbling fact for preachers and teachers that the songs we sing are often remembered long after the sermons have been forgotten.

'Next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise. She is a mistress and governess of those human emotions... which control men or more often overwhelm them... Whether you wish to comfort the sad, to subdue frivolity, to encourage the despairing, to humble the proud, to calm the passionate or to appease those full of hate... what more effective means than music could you find', Martin Luther, '*Preface to Georg Rhau's Symphoniae lucundae*', Luther's Works, vol. 53: Liturgy and Hymns, page 323.

'There is an elevating, stirring, soothing, spiritualizing, effect about a thoroughly good hymn, which nothing else can produce. It sticks in men's memories when texts are forgotten. *It trains men for heaven, where praise is one of the principal occupations*. Preaching and praying shall one day cease for ever; but praise shall never die. The makers of good ballads are said to sway national opinion. The writers of good hymns, in like manner, are those who leave the deepest marks on the face of the church', J. C. Ryle, '*Christian Leaders of the 18th Century*', page 382.

'There is nothing in public worship in our churches more noble and uplifting than making melody in the heart unto God. That would rule out ... pious jigs that affect the feet more than the heart', A. T. Robertson, '*Paul and the Intellectuals*', page 168.

<sup>29</sup> See, for example: 'And David spoke to the Lord the words of this song on the day when the Lord delivered him from the hand of all his enemies, and from the hand of Saul; and he said, The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer', 2 Sam. 22. 1-2.

Also see the titles of some of the other psalms attributed to David:

Psalm 3 - when he fled from Absalom;

Psalm 34 - when Abimelech drove him away;

Psalm 51- when Nathan came to him;

Psalm 52 - when Doeg betrayed him to Saul;

Psalm 54 - when the Ziphites betrayed him to Saul;

Psalm 56 - when the Philistines took him in Gath;

Psalm 57 - when he fled from Saul in the cave;

Psalm 59 - when they watched the house to kill him.

<sup>30</sup> Jane Medicott (1787-1866).

<sup>31</sup> <http://porthopehistory.com/jmscriven/>.

<sup>32</sup> His Baptismal Entry is recorded in the registers of Seapatrik Parish Church, where his father, Captain John Scriven of the Royal Marines, was twice Churchwarden.

<sup>33</sup> (1780-1850).

<sup>34</sup> 'He had grown up in a well-to-do family and had attended the best University in Ireland, Trinity College Dublin'. Source: <https://www.jacksonholeclassicalacademy.org/page/news-detail?pk=1054758>.

<sup>35</sup> Where his two younger brothers (George and John) also studied, one of whom achieved Bachelor of Medicine.

<sup>36</sup> In 1842. 'In hopes of carrying on the family military tradition, Joseph spent two years at Addiscombe military school in England, but, ultimately being thought physically unfit for a soldier's life, he returned to Trinity College', <http://porthopehistory.com/jmscriven/>.

<sup>37</sup> Jack Strahan (*'Hymns and their writers'*, page 186) claims that Mr Scriven was converted when at Trinity College. So also does Nelson McCausland' see ... <https://nelsonmccausland.blogspot.co.uk/2010/02/ulster-hymnwriters-6.html>.

<sup>38</sup> It may be that there is a remarkable parallel in the life of Anne Steele, the Baptist sister ('England's First Woman Hymnist') who, in 1760, wrote the hymn which begins:

Father of Mercies, in Thy Word  
What endless glory shines!  
Forever be Thy Name adored  
For these celestial lines.

We can read, for instance, that 'the hardest blow, however, came in 1737, when her lover [her fiancé], Robert Elscourt, was *drowned on the day before he and Anne were to have been married*. The grief-stricken young woman with heroic faith nevertheless rose above her afflictions and found solace in sacred song'. Source: Ernest Edwin Ryden. *'The Story of Our Hymns'* (written 1930: Kindle Locations 3653-3655). Her fiancé drowned in 1737, when she was 21 years old. Mr Scriven's fiancé drowned just over 100 years later (1843) when he was 23 years old. In all, Anne wrote '144 hymns and 34 versified [metrical] psalms' ([http://cyberhymnal.org/bio/s/t/e/steele\\_a.htm](http://cyberhymnal.org/bio/s/t/e/steele_a.htm)); Joseph wrote 15 hymns. Both Ann Steele and Joseph Scriven left us one famous hymn each; namely, 'Father of mercies', and 'What a Friend' respectively.

It is claimed by some that 'modern research refutes the details of this story [of her fiancé drowning]'; see

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anne\\_Steele](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anne_Steele). However, it is difficult to imagine someone creating the name 'Robert Elscourt'. It is said that he 'decided to swim and bathe in the River Test the day before their wedding. He drowned'; see <http://www.hampshire-history.com/mystery-anne-steel-hymn-writer/>. The story is recounted on page 84 of *'Hymns Historically famous'*, by Colonel Nicholas Smith. The book was published in 1901; it can be accessed at ... <https://archive.org/details/hymnshistorical00smitgoog>.

Neither Anne nor Joseph ever married.

<sup>39</sup> These events took place in 1843.

<sup>40</sup> He sailed on 9 May 1845 on the three-masted vessel 'Perseverance'. 'About 1850 he came to the neighbourhood of Rice Lake - 10 miles from Port Hope, Ontario - and engaged as tutor in the family of Lieut. Pengelly. He at this time was a professedly religious man, having also embraced, to a large extent, the tenets of the Plymouth Brethren, though he did not belong to the body. He gathered a small Plymouth church at Rice Lake, and was for years a preacher on market and other days, in the streets of Port Hope. Like his Brethren, he refused to join in the services of any of our churches - not recognizing them as such - and only when his peculiar tenets were questioned, was he liable to lose command of an otherwise smooth temper', J. Cleland, *'What a Friend we have in Jesus and other hymns by Joseph Scriven with a sketch of the author'*, 1895, pages 7-8.

<sup>41</sup> [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/scriven\\_joseph\\_medlicott\\_11E.html?print=1](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/scriven_joseph_medlicott_11E.html?print=1).

<sup>42</sup> See the note by Lydia Emily (Roche) Pengelley:

'Memoir of Joseph Scriven, a Man's Philanthropist

He was the son of a Captain of Marines, he was born in Dublin in the year 1819, educated in Trinity College and subsequently at the Military College Addiscombe, England. Cannot say in what year he came to Canada.

Was teaching school at Clinton from whence he was invited to become private tutor to my son mister T Pengelley, in which capacity he acted for 3 years and subsequently resided under our roof for two years longer. Here he became acquainted with my niece, who died of consumption after an illness of two years.

This brings us to the year 1860 when she died. They had been engaged a year or more at this time. Mister S. left us & made Port Hope more or less his home where he spent and gave away some thousands of dollars, acting the part of a benefactor to the poor of that town & when money failed, working as a labourer for his own support. He died in the neighbourhood of Bewdley in Oct. 1886, where he was itinerating as a kind of Home Missionary. He had previously been suffering from some internal disease from which the doctors at Port Hope were unable to relieve him. Owing to his Christian devotedness and lavish generosity the people may not have been aware of the extreme poverty to which he had reduced himself, when the mysterious fact of his death was brought to their ears ... L. E. E. Pengelley'. Source: <http://porthopehistory.com/jmscriven/>.

Eliza was the daughter of Andrew Roche, a brother of Lydia Emily, the second wife of Robert Pengelley

<sup>43</sup> Jack Strahan ('*Hymns and their writers*', page 186) has the facts and dates jumbled up.

<sup>44</sup> In all likelihood, it was in response to Eliza's homecall that Mr Scriven wrote the following poem:

They've decked thee o'er with flowers,  
But like thyself they'll fade  
Ere the freshness of their morning hours  
Gives place to evening shade.

They've decked thee o'er with flowers,  
No garland they can weave  
Will spread such grace around the brow  
As Jesus' name will leave.

They've decked thee o'er with flowers,  
But lovelier far than they  
Will bloom thy bright and loving powers  
On Jesus' nuptial day.

They've decked thee o'er with flowers,  
And yet no longer thee;  
'Tis but the empty prison house  
From which thou now are free.

Source: <http://porthopehistory.com/jmscriven/>.

<sup>45</sup> Foster M Russell, '*What a Friend We Have in Jesus, 1981*', page 79.

<sup>46</sup> He 'would not have his picture taken, for to him it was a form of vanity. However, the Rev George A Osborough of Belfast located a great-nephew of Joseph, Dr W. H. Scriven, who possessed a photograph which he believed was an authentic picture of Joseph'. Source: <http://www.thejoshlink.com/article192.htm>.

<sup>47</sup> J. Cleland, '*What a Friend we have in Jesus and other hymns by Joseph Scriven with a sketch of the author*', 1895, pages 12-13.

<sup>48</sup> Elizabeth M. Lindsay, Clinton, Ontario. Source of both quotations: <http://porthopehistory.com/jmscriven/>.

<sup>49</sup> Source: [http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/Portals/0/Education/sgh\\_08.pdf](http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/Portals/0/Education/sgh_08.pdf). See under 'What a Friend we have in Jesus'.

<sup>50</sup> 'October' seems right, rather than 'August' as in many biographies. Although the Pengelley Memorial quotes 'August' (as does J. Cleland, 'What a Friend we have in Jesus and other hymns by Joseph Scriven with a sketch of the author', 1895, page 15), Foster M Russell ('What a Friend We Have in Jesus', 1981), maintains that it was in 'October' 1886 (see ... [https://books.google.co.uk/books?redir\\_esc=y&id=lv\\_eAAAAMAAJ&focus=searchwithinvolume&q=august+1886](https://books.google.co.uk/books?redir_esc=y&id=lv_eAAAAMAAJ&focus=searchwithinvolume&q=august+1886)). Probably the firmest evidence come from the dates of the Port Hope Guide (15 October 1866 and 12 November 1866), quoted at ... <http://porthopehistory.com/jmscriven/>.

<sup>51</sup> '... in passing over the mill dam, it is supposed he had slipped and fallen in the sluice-way, a hole 6 or 7 feet deep, where the water runs over the dam. The body was recovered during the day, and Coroner R. A. Corbett was notified, but he did not think it necessary to hold an inquest. Mister Scriven had not an enemy in the world, he was truly a good man and it is to be hoped the sermons he preached on the streets of Port Hope may be like bread cast upon the waters, the fruit of which may be seen for many days', 'The Port Hope Guide', Friday, October 15, 1886.

Source: <http://porthopehistory.com/jmscriven/>.

It is claimed that 'in his later years Scriven became blind', which would go no small way to explaining why he missed his footing. See <http://www.cobourg.ca/en/recreation-and-culture/resources/Library/Bewdley.pdf>. But why should a sick blind man leave his bed and go for such a walk in the early hours of the morning?

His friend, Mr Sackville wrote, 'His body was just worn down with toil, and his mind was wearied with failure and disappointment in his work during past years. In the end of his days he failed to trust God to provide for his body wants, and to resign himself to the will of God, and to wait patiently till the Lord's time came to release him from the body, and to take him home to Himself.' Mister Sackville, having heard of his illness, hastened to him, and found him "just prostrate in mind and body. His greatest fear appeared to be lest he should do anything to dishonour God, or bring reproach on the name of Christ. The one desire and prayer of his heart seemed to be expressed in the words which he was heard to speak a few days before his departure, 'I wish the Lord would take me home.' His confidence in the Lord, as to his own personal safety, and the bright prospect of future glory, were firm and unshaken, to the end. Two scriptures I heard him repeat, during the last hour I was with him, "I am the Lord's" and "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee". Mr Sackville brought him to his own house. "We left him", he says, "about midnight. I withdrew to an adjoining room, not to sleep, but to watch and wait, and occupied myself with reading my brother's writings, until about 5 o'clock in the morning. You may imagine my surprise and dismay, when, on visiting his room, I found it empty. All search failed to find any trace of the missing one, until a little after noon, the body was discovered in a water nearby, lifeless and cold in death. A veil of mystery hangs over the last hours of my beloved brother's life on earth', J. Cleland, 'What a Friend we have in Jesus and other hymns by Joseph Scriven with a sketch of the author', 1895, pages 15-18.

There has been much conjecture about the cause of Mr Scriven's death, ranging from murder (see <http://www.thepeterboroughexaminer.com/2009/12/31/writer-of-famed-hymn-was-murdered-expert>, but the Coroner at the time saw no reason to hold an inquest) to suicide (most unlikely for such a godly man) or accident (which I think the most probable cause).

<sup>52</sup> 'He gathered a small group of Plymouth Brethren in a chapel at the Pengelley property on Rice Lake and preached on the docks and in the market place of Port Hope but was often mocked, pelted with mud, and considered to be an eccentric'. Source: <http://www.cobourg.ca/en/recreation-and-culture/resources/Library/Bewdley.pdf>.

<sup>53</sup> For instance:

(i) The surviving handwritten copy has the text of only the first two verses of later versions, and then with significant differences to the closing four lines. Source: <https://archive.org/details/canadiansingerst00caswuoft>, page 129.

Source: <https://archive.org/details/canadiansingerst00caswuoft>, page 129.

(ii) The Port Hope Guide, December 14, 1900, reports: 'In conversation with a particular friend of the late Joseph Scriven, author of the of the hymn "What A Friend We Have In Jesus," we are informed that a change has been made from the original. In the fifth line of the last verse it originally read, "Has thy brother, sister grieved thee?" instead of "Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?"'

Source: <http://porthopehistory.com/jmscriven/>.

(iii) The hymnbook, Songs of Pilgrimage (1888) has an extra verse to the hymn (number 1291 in this hymnbook).

Source: <https://archive.org/details/songsofpilgrimag00hast>.

<sup>54</sup> It could have been as early as 1846, long before he even met Eliza. It is claimed that, 'In 1846, during a trip to the Middle East, as a tutor in the Bartley family, like Saul of Tarsus (called Paul), Joseph found inspiration on the street called Straight, in Damascus. There he is said to have written the first line, "What a Friend we have in Jesus", and the rough draft of a poem, later to be called, "Pray Without Ceasing"'. Source: <http://porthopehistory.com/jmscriven/>.

We know for fact that the hymn was published (in the form in which it is known today) in 1870, as one which had been in use previously. The unattributed hymn was published in 1870 in 'Silver Wings' claiming that the words came from 'the Genevan Presbyterian Church (of Brooklyn) Collection', with the music composed by Karl Reden [the pen name of Charles Converse]. Source: <https://archive.org/details/silverwingscolle00bost>, hymn number 98. In the preface, the compiler claims that all the hymns in 'Silver Wings' had 'been tried by the children, and found to possess the true Sunday School ring'. At that time, the hymn was deemed suitable for Sunday School use!

The hymn was subsequently incorporated by Ira Sankey into his early compilation, 'Gospel Hymns'. He wrote, 'Returning from England in 1875, I soon became associated with P. P. Bliss in the publication of what later became known as "Gospel Hymns No. 1". After we had given the completed compilation to our publishers I chanced to pick up a small paper-covered pamphlet of Sunday school hymns, published at Richmond, Virginia. I discovered this and sang it through, and determined to have it appear in "Gospel Hymns". As the composer of the music was my friend C. C. Converse, I withdrew from the collection one of his compositions and substituted for it, "What a friend we have in Jesus". Thus the last hymn that went into the book became one of the first in favour.

'As published in the small Richmond hymnal, the authorship of the words was erroneously attributed to the great Scotch preacher and hymn-writer, Dr Horatius Bonar. We were in error, also, in assigning the words to him. Some years afterward Dr Bonar informed us that he was not the author, and that he did not know who wrote it. It was not until six or eight years after the hymn first appeared in our collection that we learned who the author really was'. Source: Ira D. Sankey, 'Story of Gospel Hymns' 1907, under the title, 'What a Friend we have in Jesus'. Accessed at ... <http://www.baptistbiblebelievers.com/LinkClick.aspx?fileticket=kwF-1mEA2OE%3d&tabid=402&mid=1284>.

'According to George F. Henderson, assistant archivist, Queen's University, Kingston, there is varying conjecture: Hymnologists and historians do not know the actual background of the inspiration for "What A Friend We Have In Jesus". Some state the hymn was created in 1855, others agree the date was 1857 and that Scriven sent the hymn to his mother who was seriously ill in Dublin. The proof exists that the composition was publicly but not widely known in 1865, but the author was not disclosed. Further research has revealed that a copy of the hymn was given to John Charles Benet in Brantford, the date about 1850. Scriven did not indicate when the hymn was composed. The Irish version, of course, was that the first draft was made on the road to Damascus, circa 1846 {when Scriven made a pilgrimage to the Middle East}. The possibility remains that the hymn was published first in an Irish newspaper, if and when Scriven sent a copy to his mother. The anonymity is plausible because Scriven considered the creation a very personal one. This fact was revealed when Scriven did not include "What a Friend we have In Jesus" in a booklet of hymns and verses which he produced in 1869, printed in Peterborough', Foster Russell, *What A Friend We Have In Jesus* (1981). This latter point is underlined by the fact that in his 1869 publication, *Hymns and Verses*, Mr Scriven included at the back twenty-one items 'not to be sung in the assembly, but to convey truth, as well to convey comfort, instruction or reproof to our hearts, in order that we may walk together in obedience'. His poem 'Pray without ceasing' did not make it even into that section. [His poem was originally titled, 'Pray without ceasing'; see ...

<https://archive.org/details/canadiansingerst00caswuoft>, page 129.]

<sup>55</sup> Four of the five 'known' copies went (i) to George Wilson, (ii) to Mr J C Benett, (iii) to his own mother, and (iv) to Mrs Sackville. Mr Scriven still possessed (v) one copy at the time of his death.

The evidence for each of these copies runs:

(i) 'According to numerous speculative articles written since Scriven's death in attempts to reconstruct the life of the hymn writer, Scriven often gave copies of his writings to friends. One of those was George Wilson, publisher of the Port Hope Evening Guide. Wilson was impressed with "Pray Without Ceasing" and published the poem anonymously in his newspaper in 1865'.

Source: <http://www.cobourg.ca/en/recreation-and-culture/resources/Library/Bewdley.pdf>.

(ii) 'Through the kindness of Mrs. A. M. Tremaine, of this city, the Editor was permitted the use of a slight M.S. book of poems of Joseph Scriven, author of "What a Friend we have in Jesus," on the inside of the back cover of which the poet had inscribed what without doubt would seem to be the first draft of his famous hymn. This little paper-bound book, comprising ten pages of poems written by his own hand, was given by the author to Mrs. Tremaine's father, the late John Charles Benett, of Brantford, in the early '50's. Scriven was then living in that City, where for a time he conducted a private school for children, of which school Mrs. Tremaine in her early childhood was a pupil. The hymn as reproduced here (p. 129), it will be noticed, not only differs in some of the lines from the version in use to-day, but is lacking eight lines of the latter. There would seem to be no doubt that it is the hymn as originally composed by the author'. Source: '*Canadian Singers and their Songs*', edited by Edward S. Caswell (1919), pages 9-10. Accessed at ... <https://archive.org/stream/canadiansingerst00caswuoft#page/128/mode/2up>.

(iii) 'Mrs Sackville was a devoted Christian lady, a member of the Plymouth brethren, and a special friend of the late Joseph Scriven, who was the author of that hymn, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus". She was the possessor of the original copy, before it was sent to Ireland, where it first appeared in print in the City of Dublin', '*The Port Hope Guide, November, 1900: Death of Mrs James (Jane Jemima 'Jean' Thompson) Sackville*'.

Source: <http://porthopehistory.com/jmscriven/>.

(iv) 'When residing at the house of his friend Mister Sackville, near Rice Lake, he composed this hymn; making two copies, one of which he sent to his mother, in Dublin, and gave the other to Mrs Sackville, which the old lady, now over eighty years of age, values highly. Probably it was through his mother that the hymn was given to the public', J. Cleland, '*What a Friend we have in Jesus and other hymns by Joseph Scriven with a sketch of the author*', 1895, page13.

(v) James Sackville took care of Joseph during his last days. It was James who discovered Joseph's copy of the hymn while searching a drawer on his behalf. When asked how he came to write such a beautiful hymn, Joseph simply replied, "The Lord and I did it between us". Source: <http://www.thejoshlink.com/article192.htm>. Typical modesty!

<sup>56</sup> 'The composer of the music, Charles C. Converse, was a well-educated versatile and successful Christian, whose talents ranged from law to professional music. Under the pen name of Karl Reden, he wrote numerous scholarly articles on many subjects', see [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAWZSU\\_5lg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jAWZSU_5lg).

<sup>57</sup> 'Returning from England in 1875, I soon became associated with P. P. Bliss in the publication of what later became known as "Gospel Hymns No. 1". After we had given the completed compilation to our publishers I chanced to pick up a small paper-covered pamphlet of Sunday school hymns, published at Richmond, Virginia. I discovered this and sang it through, and determined to have it appear in "Gospel Hymns". As the composer of the music was my friend C. C. Converse, I withdrew from the collection one of his compositions and substituted for it, "What a friend we have in Jesus". Thus the last hymn that went into the book became one of the first in favour.

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<sup>58</sup> The hymn addresses many of the varied experiences of life. But when I come to the last lines of his hymn as we have it ('In His arms He'll take and shield thee; Thou wilt find a solace there'), I think in particular of the anguish of heart suffered by Mr Scriven when he had his two young 'brides-to-be' snatched from him.

<sup>59</sup> John 15. 13-14.

<sup>60</sup> A well-produced (if not entirely accurate) video of the history of the hymn can be accessed at ... [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fr78\\_-H\\_7fg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fr78_-H_7fg).

<sup>61</sup> From 1885 to 1948.

<sup>62</sup> Probably the most accurate account of the history behind the hymn is to be found in the article by R.D.K. and G.P.G., "The Story of 'How Great Thou Art'", accessed at <http://www.joy-bringer-ministries.org/hymns/HGTA.pdf>. This article is based on two publications by Stuart Hine. One of these publications is, 'The Story of "How great Thou art"! How it came to be written ... With complete album of hymns of other lands', by Stuart K. Hine (1958).

<sup>63</sup> Born: 1859; died: 1940. He was converted at the age of 19.

<sup>64</sup> Carl Boberg published the words and music for the first time on 16 April 1891 in 'Sanningsvittnet' ('The Witness for the Truth'.) A literal English translation of five stanzas was made by E. Gustav Johnson in 1925. The first stanza and the refrain run:

O mighty God, when I behold the wonder  
Of nature's beauty, wrought by words of Thine,  
And how Thou leadest all from realms up yonder,  
Sustaining earthly life in love benign.

*Refrain:*

With rapture filled, my soul Thy name would laud,  
O mighty God! O mighty God!  
With rapture filled, my soul Thy name would laud,  
O mighty God! O mighty God!

The original Swedish (together with Manfred von Glehn's German translation) can be accessed at ...  
<http://ingeb.org/spiritua/howgreat.html>.

<sup>65</sup> Born: 1867; died: 1924.

<sup>66</sup> Born: 1869; died: 1935. Prokhanov has been called the 'Martin Luther of Russia' and 'the most prolific Protestant hymn writer and translator in all of Russia' at that time. See ...  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How\\_Great\\_Thou\\_Art#cite\\_ref-21](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How_Great_Thou_Art#cite_ref-21).

<sup>67</sup> The text of the hymn can be accessed at <http://uucyc.ru/songs/item/373>.

<sup>68</sup> See [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How\\_Great\\_Thou\\_Art#Russian\\_translation\\_281912.29](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How_Great_Thou_Art#Russian_translation_281912.29).

<sup>69</sup> Mr Hine was associated with the so-called 'Open Brethren' assemblies. 'He served in the First World War from 1917-19, after which he and his wife became Plymouth Brethren missionaries, mainly in Eastern Europe between 1923 and 1939, when they were forced to return to Britain by the political situation. During the Second World War they worked with displaced persons. Hine retired to Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset, and later to Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex', from <https://hymnology.hymnsam.co.uk/s/stuart-keene-hine>. Also note the 'testimony' of Marian Coleman at <http://howgreatthouarthymn.com/testimonies/> and <https://www.videoblocks.com/video/shaftesbury-hall-christian-brethren-church-burnham-on-sea-somerset-uk-where-stuart-k-hine-author-of-how-great-thou-art-worshipped-hhoiu7crgiximuwmv/>.

<sup>70</sup> Mr and Mrs Hine also worked extensively in Poland; see <http://stuarthinetrust.com/about-stuart/>.

<sup>71</sup> See <http://stuarthinetrust.com/about-stuart/>.

<sup>72</sup> See <http://howgreatthouarthymn.com/the-hymn/>.

<sup>73</sup> In 1934, compared with Carl Boberg's experience in 1885.

<sup>74</sup> 'It was typical of the Hines to ask if there were any Christians in the villages they visited. In one case, they found out that the only Christians that their host knew about were a man named Dmitri and his wife Lyudmila. Dmitri's wife knew how to read -- evidently a fairly rare thing at that time and in that place. She taught herself how to read because a Russian soldier had left a Bible behind several years earlier, and she started slowly learning by reading that Bible. When the Hines arrived in the village and approached Dmitri's house, they heard a strange and wonderful sound: Dmitri's wife was reading from the gospel of John about the crucifixion of Christ to a houseful of guests, and those visitors were in the very act of repenting. In Ukraine ... this act of repenting is done very much out loud. So the Hines heard people calling out to God, saying how unbelievable it was that Christ would die for their own sins, and praising Him for His love and mercy. They just couldn't barge in and disrupt this obvious work of the Holy Spirit, so they stayed outside and listened. Stuart wrote down the phrases he heard 'the repenters' use, and (even though this was all in Russian), it became the third verse that we know today: "And when I think that God, His Son not sparing, Sent Him to die, I scarce can take it in", Michael Ireland, 'Veleky Bog: How Great is Our God! The story behind how a thunderstorm in Sweden prompted the writing of How Great Thou Art, one of Christianity's greatest and much-loved hymns', ASSIST News Service (Sunday, October 7, 2007). See ... [www.assistnews.net/Stories/2007/s07100068.htm](http://www.assistnews.net/Stories/2007/s07100068.htm).

<sup>75</sup> See <http://www.joy-bringer-ministries.org/hymns/HGTA.pdf>. The original lyrics are at <http://howgreatthouarthymn.com/lyrics/>. See also ... [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How\\_Great\\_Thou\\_Art#cite\\_note-ReferenceA-28](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/How_Great_Thou_Art#cite_note-ReferenceA-28).

<sup>76</sup> 'It is reported that many years after the song was introduced in America, Stuart Hine visited our country and was honoured with banquets and other forms of recognition. He was saddened by all of the applause that came his way. His thoughts were that people should have been honouring the "God of the song" instead of the author. A great portion of the royalties from the sale of the song, which went to Hine, was given to other ministries for the Lord and to people in need. In my possession is a prized copy of "How Great Thou Art" in the Russian language. All four of the men who helped bring us this song — Boberg, the Swede; Von Glehn, the German; Prokhanoff, the Russian; and Hine, the Englishman — carefully preserved the awesome message. I also held in my hand the original letter from Hine's daughter, Sonia, dated March 16, 1989, which contained the sombre news that Stuart Hine had died peacefully in his sleep two days before. He was 92 years old. Thus, in quiet dignity, ended the life on earth of a man who brought us this great song'. See ... <https://www.staugustine.com/living/religion/2016-06-24/story-behind-song-how-great-thou-art>.

<sup>77</sup> It was sung by a choir of Naga tribesmen from Assam.

<sup>78</sup> In 1954, 'George Beverly Shea bumped into his friend George Gray on Oxford Street in London. Gray gave him a copy of "How Great Thou Art" that he just happened to have in his briefcase. In this 1982 video produced by World Wide Pictures, Shea recalls that meeting and the way the song began to play a role in Billy Graham crusades. (The segment dealing with "How Great Thou Art" begins 16 minutes and 23 seconds into the 20-minute video.) <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2013/april-web-only/how-great-thou-art-100-year-old-bass.html?start=2>.

<sup>79</sup> 'Baptist hymnologist William Reynolds cites comments by George Beverly Shea (1909-2013) on the hymn's introduction in the United States through the Billy Graham Crusades: "We first sang [it] in the Toronto, Canada, Crusade of 1955. Cliff Barrows [1923-2016] and his large volunteer choir assisted in the majestic refrains. Soon after, we used it in the 'Hour of Decision' [radio broadcasts] and in American crusades. In the New York meetings of 1957 the choir joined me in singing it ninety-three times!", C Michael Hawn, 'History of Hymns: "How Great Thou Art"'. Accessed at <https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/resources/history-of-hymns-how-great-thou-art>.