

Henry Alford, 1810-1871

Born: October 7, 1810, Bloomsbury, Middlesex, England.

Died: January 12, 1871, Canterbury, Kent, England.

Buried: St. Martin's, Canterbury, Kent, England.

For his own epitaph he wrote: *The inn of a pilgrim traveling to Jerusalem.*

Rev. Dr. Henry Alford, 1810-1871.

Alford wrote the following in his Bible at age 16: *I do this day in the presence of God and my own soul renew my covenant with God and solemnly determine henceforth to become his and to do his work as far as in me lies.* Alford attended Ilminster Grammar School and Trinity College, Cambridge and was ordained in 1833. He was curate at Winkfield, Wiltshire, and Ampton; and vicar at Wymeswold, Leicestershire (where he served 18 years). In 1853 he went to Quebec Chapel, London. In 1857 he became dean of Canterbury Cathedral. He was also a scholar, producing volumes on *Homer*, English poetry, and the *Greek New Testament*.

His works include:

Poems and Poetical Fragments (Cambridge, England: J. J. Deighton, 1833)

Psalms and Hymns, 1844

Poetical Works, 1845

The Year of Praise, 1867

Hymns

Brightly Did the Light Divine

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

In *Psalms and Hymns*, 1844.

Tune: **St. George's Windsor**; 1858 music by Sir George Job Elvey, 1816-1893.

Forward! Be Our Watchword

Herald in the Wilderness

In Token That Thou Shalt Not Fear

Let the Church of God Rejoice

Not in Anything We Do

O Thou at Whose Divine Command

O Why on Death So Bent?

Of All the Honors Man May Wear

Our Year of Grace Is Wearing to a Close

Savior, Thy Father's Promise Send

Since We Kept the Savior's Birth

Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand (1867)

Tune: **Alford**; music by Rev. John Bacchus Dykes, 1823-1876.

The Highest and the Holiest Place

Thou That Art the Father's Word

Thou Who on That Wondrous Journey

Through Israel's Coasts in Times of Old

Thy Blood, O Christ, Hath Made Our Peace

We Walk by Faith

When in the Lord Jehovah's Name

Two of Rev. Dr. Alford's hymns were included in *The Methodist Hymnal*, 1932 (1939 Edition), Whitmore & Smith.

Come, Ye Thankful People, Come was also included in *The American Hymnal*, 1933, The Broadman Press and it survives in *The United Methodist Hymnal*, 1989, Abingdon Press.

In a manner of speaking, both hymns enjoy the privilege of having dedicated music. In the three hymnals mentioned no other hymn used Elvey's tune, **St. George's Windsor** and (following his sometime practice) Rev. Dykes named his tune, **Alford** – either as a tribute to or because it was requested by Rev. Dr. Alford.