The Origins of Lowell Mason's Tune HAMBURG

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Lowell Mason's hymn tune HAMBURG is one of the most familiar products of the church music reform that swept the United States during the early decades of the nineteenth century.[1] Together with the English melody ROCKINGHAM (OLD) it has become one of the two most common settings in United States hymnals for Isaac Watts's "When I survey the wondrous cross."

The church music reform began as a reaction against the elaborate psalmody of eighteenth-century United States composers such as William Billings and the shape-note folk hymnody that was popular in rural areas of the country. In the estimation of the reformers, the complexity, harmonic "ineptitudes," and often dance-like rhythms of the eighteenth-century composers were both too difficult for congregations to sing and lacked the requisite devotional quality.[2] Folk hymnody was suspect because of the secular background of many of its tunes and its association with shape notes, which, though intended to teach people how to read notation, was seen by the reformers as a stumbling block to a true understanding and performance of music.

Lowell Mason and his slightly older contemporary, Thomas Hastings, were the chief figures among the reformers. In their desire to provide what they considered to be acceptable congregational music they took a two-pronged approach: (1) adapting, arranging, and simplifying melodies from European classical masters such as Mozart, Haydn, and Beethoven as hymn tunes, and (2) writing new tunes that were characterized by graceful melodies of limited range, clear harmonies emphasizing the primary chords, and easy rhythms. Mason's HAMBURG is representative of both of these techniques.

HAMBURG is a very plain melody. The rhythm is the same for each measure except for the whole notes at the end of each phrase and one measure in the last phrase that contains two half notes. The melodic range is small (covering only a fourth), there are many repeated notes and not a single skip, and the melody is completely devoid of accidentals. The first and third phrases of the melody are identical, creating an ABAC form, but the second and fourth phrases are also closely linked, with the first measure of these two phrases being the same. As it appears in most hymnals, the harmonization depends principally upon the primary chords, with an accidental used twice to create a secondary dominant.

A study of the origins of such a simple tune might seem to be counter intuitive. However, the design of the tune as it is sung today is not the same as the way it was first published, and it took a number of years and a variety of steps to bring the piece into its present form. Furthermore, there have been some misunderstandings about the tune that can hopefully be clarified here.

In hymnals of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, HAMBURG was generally labeled as a "Gregorian chant, arranged by Lowell Mason" or with a similar attribution. More recently, the fashion has been to credit it simply to Mason, leaving off the reference to Gregorian chant; as Henry L. Mason put it, the tune is "in the spirit of, rather than arranged from," plainsong.[3] However, in almost every one of his publications of the tune Lowell Mason himself cited its source as being from Gregorian chant, and in one of his later collections, Mason and George James Webb's *The Congregational Tune Book* (1848), he gave slightly more information, noting that it was "Arranged from a Gregorian Chant, (Tone I)."[4] Mason's attributions are not always to be trusted, but this one seems to be accurate, at least in a broad sense.[5] The problem, if it be such, is twofold: (1) that Mason's source for the chant was itself not completely authentic, and (2) that he continued to tinker with the tune long after its initial publication, and the more he worked on it the less HAMBURG looked like the source from which it was derived.

[1]An earlier version of this article was presented as a paper at the annual meeting of the Society for American Music in Boston, Massachusetts, March 10-13, 2016.

[2]The potential for confusion in early American psalmody is best seen in the fuging tune, a form in which at least one phrase contained imitative entrances of the voices preceded by rests, causing an overlapping of the text. The harmonic scheme was not that of the European common-practice style but a more "primitive" one that allowed for open and parallel fourths and fifths, as well as much unprepared and unresolved dissonance. The vigorous rhythms could easily result in the silencing of the congregation and were not considered to be appropriate as a language of prayer.

[3]Quoted in Robert Guy McCutchan, *Our Hymnody: A Manual of the Methodist Hymnal*, 2nd ed. (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1942), 186. Henry L. Mason was Lowell Mason's grandson. In regard to the changing attributions for the tune compare, for example, *The Hymnal* of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (1933; "Arr. from a Gregorian chant, by Lowell Mason") and *The Hymnbook* (1955), issued by the Presbyterian Church in the United States, the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A., and the Reformed Church in America (credited simply to "Lowell Mason").

[4]Lowell Mason and George James Webb, *The Congregational Tune Book* (1848), 10.

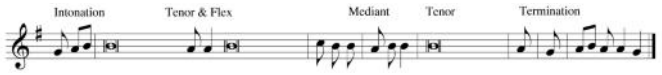
[5]On the accuracy of Mason's attributions see Ellen Jane Lorenz Porter, "A Hymn-Tune Detective Stalks Lowell Mason," *Journal of Church Music* 24 (Nov. 1982), 7-11, 31-32.

Reformers such as Mason and Hastings were generally supportive of the use of chant in the worship of American churches, and they often included examples of this type of music in their tune books. However, their preferred genre was Anglican chant. Gregorian chant in its authentic form was probably considered to be too difficult for congregations to sing because of its rhythmic freedom. Nevertheless, they seem to have found some appeal in plainsong, if not in its classic form, then at least in a hymn-tune dress that could easily be sung by the congregation. This was, of course, the same procedure the reformers used with other music from the European tradition.

The Origin of HAMBURG

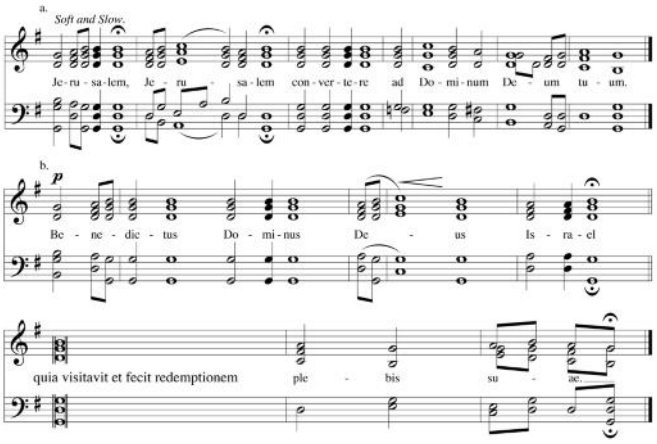
As Mason noted in the *Congregational Tune Book* (and as subsequent commentators have observed),[6] the melody is related to the first Gregorian psalm tone. Example one is a transcription of the tone into modern notation with a five-line staff and in the key of G to facilitate comparison with Mason's early arrangements; the example employs the Gregorian termination on the final (G).[7]

Example 1. Gregorian Psalm Tone I.



However, Mason did not draw directly upon the chant or a chant book in developing HAMBURG. In its first printing in the third edition of his *Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection of Church Music* (1825), the composer labeled the tune as "Gregorian Chant; 'Benedictus'—see Novello's Evening Service."[8] The reference is to Englishman Vincent Novello's *The Evening Service, Being a Collection of Pieces Appropriate to Vespers, Complin* [sic] *& Tenebrae, including the whole of the Gregorian Hymns for every principal festival throughout the year* (London, 1822). Pages 25-28 of Novello's collection contain the "Gregorian Chant for the Benedictus at Tenebrae," preceded (at the top of p. 25) by a chant "After the Lamentations at Tenebrae," both arranged for six-part (SATTBB) choir. These settings are transcribed in example two.[9]

Example 2. "After the Lamentations at Tenebrae" (a) and "Gregorian Chant for the Benedictus at Tenebrae" (b) from Novello's *The Evening Service* (1822). Reduced to closed score and breath marks omitted.



A comparison of examples one and two suggests that Novello based the post-Lamentations setting on Tone I, but that after the second reciting tone (tenor) he returned to the mediant before providing an altered termination on G. The "Benedictus" is a more straightforward presentation of the same chant, again with the termination on G.

Figure one shows the initial printing of HAMBURG as it appeared in the 1825 edition of *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection of Church Music*. A comparison of the melody (in the tenor voice) with the settings in *The Evening Service* demonstrates that, though mentioning only the Benedictus, Mason must have based his tune upon *both* the post-Lamentations and Benedictus chants as they were published by Novello. The melody in the first half of HAMBURG is identical to the post-Lamentation chant, including the repetition of the chant mediant and the altered ending found in Novello, except for its conclusion on A rather than G.[10] The second half of the melody corresponds exactly with the Benedictus setting. It should be noted that Mason also set the tune in the same key used by Novello (G major). Thus it appears that the melody of HAMBURG was indeed based upon Gregorian Tone I; however, it was not derived directly from the plainsong but through the filter of Novello's adaptation. In a sense, then, HAMBURG is an adaptation of an adaptation.[11]

HAMBURG was not the first chant-based piece to be published by Mason: both the first (1822) and second (1823) editions of *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection* had included a tune named STERLING that was a harmonized version of "An Ancient Chant." This item also appeared in the third edition of the collection, along with HAMBURG and five other chant arrangements that were likewise derived

[6]See, for example, Armin Haeussler, *The Story of Our Hymns: The Handbook to the* Hymnal of the Evangelical and Reformed Church (St. Louis: Eden Pub., 1952), 213-214.

[7]The tone is given in the version found in the *Liber Usualis*, where it is printed in F and the final is on that pitch. The use of the *Liber Usualis* is a bit anachronistic, since this volume was issued well after Mason first published HAMBURG, but it is the most convenient source for a standard form of the tone.

[8][Lowell Mason], *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection of Church Music*, 3rd ed. (1825), 241. Mason's choice of HAMBURG as the name of the tune probably had no special significance; it was common for him to assign tune names that had no specific association with a text or composition/arrangement.

[9]Ex. 2b gives only the first portion of the "Gregorian Chant for the Benedictus at Tenebrae," which continues with similar material alternating between the congregation and the choir.

[10]Mason probably made this change to provide a more interesting cadence on the dominant instead of the tonic.

[11]HAMBURG was not the only tune Mason claimed to have derived from Gregorian Tone I. In 1848 he arranged a Short Meter tune he named CLEMENT (perhaps after one of the popes of the Roman church) and published it in his *Cantica Laudis* of the same year with a note that it was "Arranged from Gregorian Tone I." Some elements of Tone I are discernable, but CLEMENT seems to be even further removed from the plainsong original than HAMBURG, even though the latter came through the intermediary of Novello and was revised several times.

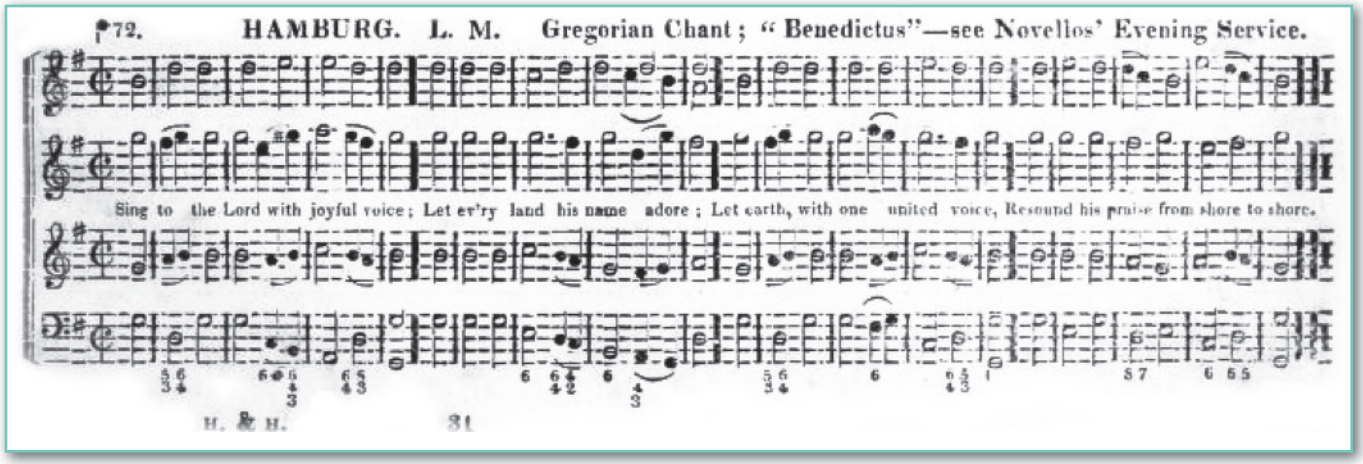


Figure 1. HAMBURG as published in the 3rd edition of *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection of Church Music* (1825).

from Novello's *The Evening Service*.[12]

Before proceeding with further discussion of HAMBURG, it will be necessary to clear up some confusion caused by statements in Henry L. Mason's *Hymn-Tunes of Lowell Mason: A Bibliography*.[13] In his "List Number 5: Sources of Hymn-Tune Arrangements," Henry Mason cataloged not only HAMBURG but two other tunes, AVENTINE and BOSTON, both of which were said to be based on "Gregorian Chant, Tone I" and to be the "same as Hamburg."[14] In "List Number 6: Hymn-Tune Arrangements,"[15] he again mentioned HAMBURG, dating the tune 1824 and noting that it was first published in 1825 in the third edition of *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection of Church Music*. This information was followed by a footnote stating that "There *was* a 3rd Ed. [of *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection*] in 1824, and in this Hamburg first appeared, but it was there called Aventine." The source for this information is given as "p. 206 of James Love's 'Scottish Church Music,'" the relevant passage of which reads as follows: "AVENTINE, No. 32 S.P., is arranged from a Gregorian Chant, and was published in 'The Boston Händel and Haydn Society's Collection,' third edition, 1824, where it is named 'Hamburg.'"[16]

However, some of the statements in Mason's footnote appear to be based upon misinformation in Love's book and others on a misunderstanding by Mason of Love's report. No copy of an 1824 edition of *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection* is known; the second edition was published in 1823 and the third in 1825, leaving no room for another edition between them.[17] Mason's reference to Love's book suggests that he had not seen a copy of an 1824 edition to verify the information.

The date 1824 in Love's book was most likely a typographical error, one that Henry Mason took at face value. Other evidence suggests that HAMBURG was indeed composed in 1824 but it does not seem to have been formally published until 1825.[18]

Henry Mason's observations about the tune being called AVENTINE at its first publication apparently resulted from a misinterpretation of Love's comments. The earlier author did not indicate that Lowell Mason ever used the names AVENTINE or BOSTON for this tune; indeed, he specifically noted that it had been named HAMBURG in its first appearance.[19]

The Revisions of the Tune

It will have been noticed that, while the melody of HAMBURG as printed in the 1825 edition of *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection* is very similar both to Gregorian Tone I and (especially) to Novello's use of that tone in *The Evening Service*, it is also quite different from the way the tune is printed and sung today. Also, the piece was not set to "When I survey the wondrous cross," but to an alteration of the first stanza of one of Watts's "imitations" of Psalm 100.[20]

[12]STERLING was a metrical adaptation by the Englishman Ralph Harrison of a chant by William Turner. See Ruth M. Wilson, *Anglican Chant and Chanting in England, Scotland, and America 1660-1820*, Oxford Studies in British Church Music (Oxford: Clarendon, 1996), 120. The other plainsong/Novello tunes in the third edition of *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection* were HELENA, GHENT, MILAN, OLMUTZ, and CALMAR.

[13]Henry L. Mason, *Hymn-Tunes of Lowell Mason: A Bibliography* (Cambridge, MA: University Press, 1944).

[14]Ibid., 52-53.

[15]Ibid., 69.

[16]James Love, *Scottish Church Music: Its Composers and Sources* (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1891), 206.

[17]True, a variant of either the second or third edition could have been published in 1824, as sometimes happened with early tune books, but in this instance there is no evidence for such a publication—none appears in either Carol A. Pemberton's *Lowell Mason: A Bio-Bibliography* (New York: Greenwood, 1988), 45, or WorldCat—except for the statement by Love.

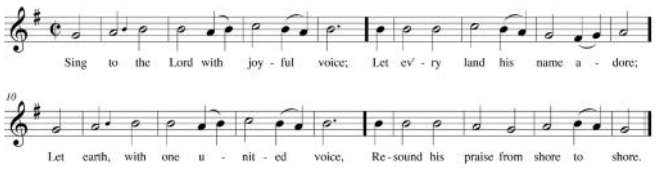
[18]See Margaret Freeman LaFar, "Lowell Mason's Varied Activities in Savannah," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 28 (Sept. 1944), 135: "It was while organist of this church [Independent Presbyterian Church] that he also composed in the same year [1824], those other favorite tunes, *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross* and *Safely Through Another Week*, which, too, were first sung in this old Savannah church." LaFar followed this statement with a footnote to "Records of the Independent Presbyterian Church."

[19]Indeed, Love's point was that the piece titled AVENTINE or BOSTON in several Scottish collections, *Scottish Psalter, with Tunes and Chants* (1883), *Free Church Hymnal, with Tunes* (1882), and *United Presbyterian Hymnal* (1877 or 1886), was first published by Mason under the title HAMBURG.

[20]The last two lines of Watts's original text had read "The British isles shall send the noise/Across the ocean to the shore." The alteration of these lines used by Mason had appeared at least as early as James M. Winchell's *An Arrangement of the Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs of the Rev. Isaac Watts, D. D.* (1818), no. 84. Note the repetition of *voice* at the end of line three to

This version and text, as well as the position of the tune in the book at page 241, continued to be used in subsequent publications of *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection* until the ninth edition of 1830, the first to include Mason's name on the title page.[21] Here the tune was moved to page 69, some of the quarter notes were altered into grace notes, the rhythm at the ends of phrases one and three was altered to a dotted half note (with the following phrases consequently beginning with a quarter note), and a number of changes were made in the harmonizing parts; the information about Novello's *The Evening Service* was dropped and the source was given simply as "[Gregorian Chant.]" (example 3). In the next edition (10th, 1831), the same music was used but the first line of the text was changed to "O praise the Lord with joyful noise," and this format continued to be employed through the thirteenth edition of 1833.

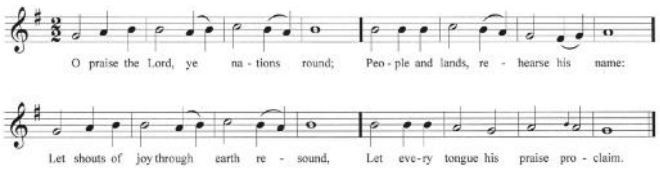
Example 3. HAMBURG as published in the 9th edition of *The Boston Handel and Haydn Society Collection* (1830). Melody only.



For the 14th edition (1834), the entire book was reset typographically. The only alterations made in HAMBURG were a change in the time signature from a cut time symbol to 2/2 and the use of a new first line for the text, "O praise the Lord with one consent," probably an imitation of the stanza that opens Nahum Tate's version of Psalm 100.[22] The tune continued to appear in this form in the later versions of the book.

In the meantime, the piece had begun to appear in other Mason collections. In 1833, Mason published HAMBURG in the second edition of *The Choir: or Union Collection of Church Music*.[23] Here the melody began on the first beat of the measure and was printed in the rhythm that is common today, except that the penultimate note was a half note preceded by a grace note (example 4). Apart from the opening of phrases one and three, the pitches are also identical to the now-standard form of the melody. The source of the text, "O praise the Lord, ye nations round," has not been located.[24]

Example 4. HAMBURG as published in the 2nd edition of *The Choir* (1833). Melody only.



The mid-1830s brought two significant Mason publications in the development of HAMBURG. It was probably in *The Boston Academy's Collection of Church Music* (1835) that the piece achieved the melodic and rhythmic form that typically appears in modern hymnals, including the repeated tonic note at the beginnings of the first and third phrases; the only thing that sets *The Boston Academy's Collection* form of the melody apart from the current one is its continued use of a grace note on the penultimate note. Though the melody was still printed in the tenor, the harmonizing parts are also quite similar to those that became standard in later publications; furthermore, the tune is in the key of E♭, apparently the first time it had appeared in a key other than G major. The only unusual features of this presentation are the addition of an apparently optional second ending that concludes on a G major chord and the use of yet another text, Watts's "Kingdoms and thrones to God belong."

At about the same time, HAMBURG appeared in *The Sabbath School Harp* (ca. 1836). Here the tune was given in essentially the same form as in *The Boston Academy's Collection* except that it was now in closed score with the melody in the top voice and a few changes were made in the harmonizing parts of the last phrase; the second ending was also eliminated. Yet another text was employed with the piece, "Thou great Instructor, lest I stray" by William Goode.[25]

An important printing of the tune by one of Mason's contemporaries and fellow workers occurred in George James Webb's *The Massachusetts Collection* (1840). Here the melody was in the exact form in which it is known today (with a regular quarter note in the next-to-last measure) but with a considerably more active harmonization than that used by Mason. Particularly striking is the sudden transition from an F major to a D major chord between the end of the first phrase and the beginning of the second (example 5). Webb also spelled the tune name as HAMBURGH.

Subsequent printings of the tune by Mason hold little interest, since they generally follow the form of the melody and harmonization found in *The Sabbath School Harp*, though sometimes with minor variations. For instance, in *The American Sabbath School Singing Book* (1843) he adopted the notation for the penultimate measure that had been used by Webb, and in his and Webb's *The Psaltery* (1845), a substantially different harmonization was provided (along

rhyme with the same word at the end of line one.

[21]While the music was identical between the 1825 edition and the next one (1826, 4th edition), there were a few typographical changes, as can be seen particularly in the positioning of the slurs. In one edition, the 8th, of 1829, the last note in the bass part was inadvertently printed a third too high (B rather than G).

[22]This change, without a consequent alteration in line three, results in there being no rhyme between the first and third lines. Also, of the four lines originally written by Watts, only one was now left!

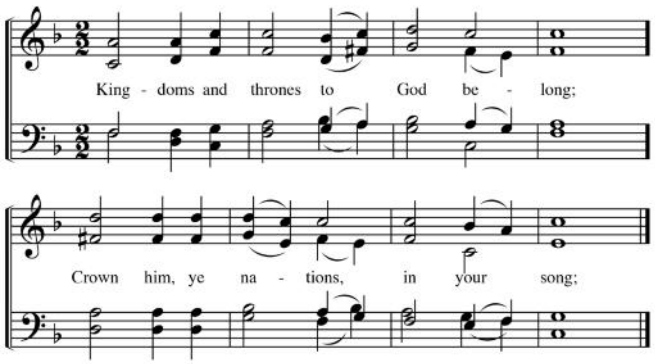
[23]HAMBURG was not included in the first edition (1832) of *The Choir*. The initial edition contained two printings of the tune CENTREVILLE, one with the melody in the soprano and one with it in the tenor. In the 2nd edition, HAMBURG replaced the tenor-melody version of CENTREVILLE.

[24]The first line appears in Francis Hopkinson's *The Psalms of David . . . for the Use of the Reformed Protestant Dutch Church of the City of New York* (1767) as a revision of Tate and Brady's "With cheerful notes let all the earth" (Ps. 117), but the remaining lines in Hopkinson (and Tate and Brady) do not correspond with those found in *The Choir*.

[25]The copy used for this study was the 2nd edition of 1837, the earliest known to be extant. The copyright date on the title page verso of the second edition is 1836, perhaps indicating that the 1st edition was published in that year. In *The Sabbath School Harp Instructor* was misspelled as *Instructer*.

with halving the note values and putting the meter in 4/4).[26]

Example 5. The opening of HAMBURGH *[sic]* from George James Webb's *The Massachusetts Collection* (1840). Reduced to closed score; bass figures omitted. Melody in tenor.



The Link with "When I survey"

The chief interest in Mason's later publications of HAMBURG revolves around the text. He continued to use a variety of lyrics with the tune, including Anne Steele's "Now I resolve with all my heart" (*American Sabbath School Singing Book*, 1843), Watts's "Happy the man whose cautious feet" (*The Psaltery*, 1845), and "Call me away from flesh and sense" (a stanza from Watts's "My God, permit me not to be"; *Asaph*, 1861), in addition to "Kingdoms and thrones to God belong" and "Thou great Instructor, lest I stray."

The first located usage by Mason of HAMBURG with "When I survey" occurred in *The Sabbath Hymn and Tune Book* (1859), which he compiled in conjunction with Edwards A. Park and Austin Phelps. Like many other hymnals in the second half of the nineteenth century, *The Sabbath Hymn and Tune Book* printed a tune across the top of a page and gave two or more full texts that could be sung to it underneath. HAMBURG appeared three times in the book. At one of the occurrences (p. 293) four texts were given as options, the first of which was "When I survey." However, other than its position as the lyric at the top left of the text section of the page, there is no indication that this text was preferable to any of the others for use with this tune. Apart from this instance (and the repetition of this page in *The New Sabbath Hymn and Tune Book*, 1866), Mason does not seem to have set HAMBURG to "When I survey."

An examination of other hymnals of the late nineteenth century yields much the same result: many of them include both "When I survey" and HAMBURG but not in combination.[27] Some followed Mason's lead from *The Sabbath Hymn and Tune Book* in giving "When I survey" as one of several texts that could be sung to HAMBURG. For example, Charles S. Robinson's *A Selection of Spiritual Songs with Music for the Church and Home* (1878) interlined the first stanza of "When I survey" with HAMBURG and gave all five stanzas of the hymn below the tune at page 105.[28] However, the page also included another text that could be sung to the same music, Horatius Bonar's "Jesus, whom angel hosts adore"; furthermore, at the bottom of the page the first stanza of "When I survey" was interlined with an arrangement of the tune HASLAM, and HAMBURG appeared with other texts in a different part of the book on page 321.

The Link Becomes Established

To be sure, there were a few instances in the late nineteenth century of HAMBURG being linked solely with "When I survey," including I. H. Bunn and John F. Merry's Sunday school collection *Minnetonka Songs* (1879), the 1890 edition of Charles S. Robinson's *Laudes Domini: A Selection of Spiritual Songs Ancient and Modern for Use in the Prayer-Meeting*, H. R. Palmer's *Garnered Gems of Sunday School Song* (1892), Peter Bilhorn's *Male Chorus No. 1* (1893), and Robert Ellis Thompson's *The National Hymn Book of the American Churches* (1893). There were probably others, and because of the significant number of hymnals and song books published in the United States during the last half of the nineteenth century and the lack of bibliographical control over this immense repertory, it is impossible to state authoritatively when and where a firm linkage between HAMBURG and "When I survey" took root.[29]

However, two sources stand out as potential suspects: Ira D. Sankey, James McGranahan, and George C. Stebbins's *Gospel Hymns*, and *The* [Presbyterian] *Hymnal* edited by Louis F. Benson and William W. Gilchrist. "When I survey" was not included in the first three volumes of the *Gospel Hymns* series, but in *Gospel Hymns No. 4* (1882) the first two stanzas of the hymn were interlined with HAMBURG and two additional stanzas were given below the tune. A second text, "Jesus, and shall it ever be," was also printed underneath the music, presumably so it could likewise be sung to HAMBURG.[30] The

[26]It should be noted that Mason continued to use the grace note in some subsequent publications, including *The Cherokee Singing Book* (where the tune was also called HAMBURGH, 1846), *The New Carmina Sacra* (1850), and even as late as *The American Tune Book* (1869), nearly thirty years after the change to a regular quarter note had been made in Webb's *Massachusetts Collection*. In an 1848 printing of HAMBURG in Mason and Webb's *The National Psalmist* the last measure of the second phrase was given as E♭-F-G-F instead of the usual E♭-D-E♭-F.

[27]To cite but two examples, Henry Ward Beecher's *The Plymouth Collection* (1855) and the *Hymnal of the Methodist Episcopal Church* (1878) printed both HAMBURG and "When I survey," but not together. Other tunes frequently used for "When I survey" included ROCKINGHAM, Isaac B. Woodbury's EUCHARIST (sometimes called OLIVET), and John Hatton's DUKE STREET.

[28]Robinson's printing of Watts's original fourth stanza ("His dying crimson, like a robe") was by this time rather unusual in hymnals.

[29]It seems doubtful that any of the items named earlier in this paragraph served as the catalyst for this combination. Only the one by Robinson probably achieved much circulation and none of them were denominationally-published hymn books. Furthermore, Robinson, who was a prolific compiler of hymnals, was not consistent in these volumes in applying HAMBURG to "When I survey."

[30]A note attached to "Jesus, and shall it ever be" reads "G. H. 3—104. combined 32," meaning that the hymn appeared as no. 104 in *Gospel Hymns No. 3* and as no. 32 in the combined edition of the first three volumes. In *Gospel Hymns No. 3*, the tune WARD (also by Lowell Mason) had been specified for use with "Jesus, and shall it ever be." The first two volumes of *Gospel Hymns* were compiled by Sankey with Philip P. Bliss; after Bliss's death in 1876 Sankey was assisted in the later volumes by McGranahan and Stebbins.

fact that stanzas from "When I survey" were interlined with the tune suggests that this was the preferred combination, at least by the editors of the book.

This was made even more explicit in the comprehensive edition of *Gospel Hymns Nos. 1 to 6* (1894), which included "When I survey" twice. The first time, at no. 491, it was linked with a tune by Sankey and included a chorus. At no. 709, the initial stanzas of "When I survey" were interlined with HAMBURG and two more were given below the tune, just as had been done in *Gospel Hymns No. 4*. Unlike the earlier book, however, no other hymns were indicated for use with the tune.[31] It seems likely that it was the combination of HAMBURG with "When I survey" in this extremely popular collection that initiated the inextricable link between the two in the minds of many twentieth-century church-goers, especially those who were heavily influenced by the revivalist tradition.

It is difficult to imagine a more striking contrast to the populist nature of *Gospel Hymns Nos. 1 to 6* than *The Hymnal* of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (1895). Louis F. Benson, the editor of *The Hymnal*, was an avid student of hymnody whose later books *The English Hymn* (1915) and *The Hymnody of the Christian Church* (1927) became classics of hymnological scholarship. William W. Gilchrist, "Mus. Doc.," the musical editor, was one of the founders of the American Guild of Organists, a prize-winning composer, and an accomplished conductor and teacher. When these men included HAMBURG as the setting for "When I survey" in *The Hymnal*, it undoubtedly brought the attention of a different section of the church to the possibilities of this combination.

If these two collections did indeed serve as catalysts for the wider use of HAMBURG with "When I survey," it is evident that this did not happen overnight or with complete consistency, at least in denominational hymnals. The progression can be traced through a representative group of collections from the Methodist, Baptist, and Presbyterian traditions.

The Methodist Hymnal (1905)—a joint production of the Methodist Episcopal Church and Methodist Episcopal Church, South—included HAMBURG twice, but neither time with "When I survey," which used Isaac B. Woodbury's EUCHARIST instead. In the next *Methodist Hymnal* (1935), published by the same denominational bodies plus the Methodist Protestant Church, Woodbury's tune was again employed for Watts's text, though, as the editor of the hymnal, Robert Guy McCutchan, observed in the companion to that book, "Methodists are alone in the use of this tune for this hymn, nearly all other denominations using the tune 'Hamburg .'"[32] By the time of the United Methodist Church's 1966 *Methodist Hymnal*, the weight of developing tradition had become too much to withstand, and "When I survey" appeared with HAMBURG as the sole setting. This combination was continued in *The United Methodist Hymnal* (1989), though ROCKINGHAM was also provided for use with the text.

The first hymnal published by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board in Nashville, Lansing Burrows's *The Baptist Hymn and Praise Book* (1904), partnered HAMBURG with "When I survey," but when the Dallas layman Robert H. Coleman issued *The Modern Hymnal* in 1926, he—like contemporary Methodists—linked Watts's text with Woodbury's EUCHARIST. Seven years later, in *The American Hymnal* (1933), Coleman again printed EUCHARIST with "When I survey" but added HAMBURG as another setting of the text.[33] When B. B. McKinney—who had served as an editor for Coleman before becoming music editor at the Baptist Sunday School Board—compiled *The Broadman Hymnal* (1940), HAMBURG was given as the only tune for "When I survey," a circumstance that has continued in almost every subsequent collection for Baptists in the South.[34]

Despite Benson and Gilchrist's pioneering association of HAMBURG with Watts's hymn in the 1895 *Hymnal*, later Presbyterians have been more ambivalent about this pairing.[35] The next official collection, *The Hymnal* (1933), included both ROCKINGHAM and HAMBURG , with the latter labeled the "second tune," suggesting a preference for the former.[36] In the 1972 *Worshipbook* only HAMBURG was used for "When I survey." The most recent collections, *The Presbyterian Hymnal* (1990) and *Glory to God* (2013), adopted both HAMBURG and ROCKINGHAM. The option of using both tunes has recently characterized the hymnals of other denominations, as well.[37]

There are, of course, some traditions in which HAMBURG appears never to have been used as a setting for "When I survey," at least in officially-sanctioned denominational books. An example is the Episcopal church, whose hymnals have linked Watts's text with a variety of tunes—chiefly ROCKINGHAM—but apparently never with HAMBURG.[38]

[31]One page earlier, at no. 704, the text of "Jesus, and shall it ever be" was included, again with a reference to the tune WARD, which was printed at no. 384.

[32]McCutchan, *Our Hymnody*, 186. As will be seen, McCutchan's statement about the usage of other denominations was not completely accurate but does reflect the general trend of the times.

[33]*The Modern Hymnal* and *The American Hymnal* were not official publications of the Baptist Sunday School Board but were widely used in the churches of the denomination and there was a sort of unstated understanding that they were representative of the denomination.

[34]*Baptist Hymnal* (2008) does not use the traditional setting of HAMBURG for "When I survey" but a contemporary Christian arrangement of the tune with a new chorus ("The wonderful cross" by Chris Tomlin, Jesse Reeves, and J. D. Walt). The text also appears with O WALY WALY.

[35]This paragraph deals only with hymnals of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America, those jointly compiled with other Presbyterian bodies, and the ones published after the mergers that resulted in the formation of the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America (1958) and Presbyterian Church (USA), (1983).

[36]Between the 1895 and 1933 publications of *The Hymnal* the denomination issued a revision of the earlier book (1911) that, like its model, used HAMBURG.

[37]An example is the *Lutheran Service Book* (2006).

[38]See the website http://www.oremus.org/hymnal/w/w299.html (accessed August 22, 2014), which lists all the tunes used with "When I survey" in Anglican and Episcopal hymnals between 1861 and 2000.

Conclusion

As noted at the beginning of this article, HAMBURG is a relatively nondescript tune. Indeed, about the only thing that is complicated about it is its history, moving from plainsong to choral arrangement to singing-school piece and finally to congregational tune.

Furthermore, Mason's arrangement is not likely to be considered as either one of the "great" hymn tunes or one that would win—or even place highly in—a "favorite hymn tunes" poll. So how do we account for its continued use?

Perhaps it is the very unremarkability of the tune that is its greatest strength. Its unpretentiousness serves to concentrate attention upon Isaac Watts's profound words. Indeed, one is reminded of Watts's own statement in the preface to his *Hymns and Spiritual Songs* (1707), the collection in which "When I survey" first appeared: "if the Verse appears so gentle and flowing as to incur the Censure of Feebleness, I may honestly affirm, that sometimes it cost me labour to make it so." Lowell Mason could have said much the same thing about HAMBURG: he had to work diligently to write/arrange music that was so modest and straightforward. The linkage of this simple, yet solemn tune with one of the great English-language texts on the passion of Christ created a combination that allows both for easy involvement of the congregation and for reflection on the message of the words.

Furthermore, unlike many other tunes that contain angular melodies and splashy harmonies, the simplicity of the tune means that much can be done with it in performance: stanzas can be sung a cappella or in a minor key, a soloist can effectively sing a stanza, a modulation for the last stanza brings the climax of Watts's text to life. All of these techniques and more have been used both in congregational singing and in choral arrangements with this pairing of text and tune.

In the early years of the twenty-first century, HAMBURG remains one of the most familiar musical settings for "When I survey" in the United States. That such an unassuming piece of music continues to hold a secure place among various denominations and sections of the country nearly 200 years after its first publication is a testament both to its usefulness as a setting for the words of Isaac Watts and to the work of the composer/arranger who brought it into the light of day.

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