

ABIDE WITH ME

Henry F. Lyte, Lyrics, 1847; William H. Monk, Music 1861

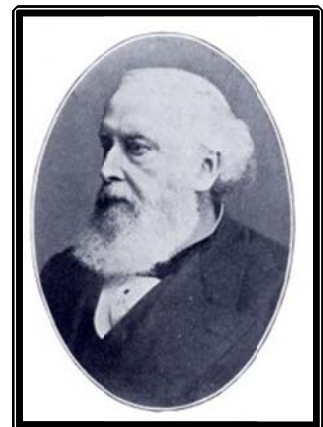
"Abide with Me" is a Christian hymn written by Scottish pastor and religious poet, Henry Francis Lyte, in 1847. Lyte was inspired to write this hymn as he



was dying of tuberculosis; he finished it the Sunday he gave his farewell sermon in the parish he served so many years. The next day, he left for Italy in an attempt to regain his health. He didn't make it, though - he died in Nice, France, three weeks after writing the words to this hymn. At the time Lyte wrote the hymn he also wrote the tune it was sung to, called, "Abide with Me", as well. Since it was written, it has been paired with four other tunes, but is most often sung to William Henry Monk's tune, "Eventide". It quickly became a very popular and has been used throughout its history in music, sports, politics, movies, and radio.

Orphaned at an early age, Lyte attended Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, distinguishing himself in English poetry. In 1815, he was ordained, and served a number of parishes in Ireland and western England. However, for most of his career, he was pastor at All Saints Church in Lower Brixham, Devonshire, England. He wrote two books of religious poetry and hymns, "Poems Chiefly Religious", 1833 & 1845 and "The Spirit of the Psalms", 1834.

William Monk was born, March 16, 1823, living his entire life in London, England, until his death, March 1, 1889. His youth is not well-documented, but it seems that he developed quickly on the keyboard, but perhaps less so in composition. As an adult, he was known in his day as an organist, church musician, and music editor. In addition, he was music director for almost four decades at St. Matthias, Stoke Newington, London, and was the first musical editor for "Hymns Ancient and Modern". The historic hymnal sold 60 million copies.



~Tull