

Tell Out, My Soul, the Greatness of the Lord

By Harry Eskew

Timothy Dudley-Smith has been writing hymn texts for over fifty years. This paraphrase of the Song of Mary (the Magnificat) is the first and the most widely sung of his hymns. We are fortunate to have his own account of its origin:

I did not think of myself . . . as having in any way the gifts of a hymn-writer when in May 1961 I jotted down a set of verses, beginning "Tell out, my soul, the greatness of he Lord." I was reading a review copy of the New English Bible New Testament, in which that line appears exactly as I have put it above; I saw in it the first line of a poem, and speedily wrote the rest. I cannot now recall how it came to the hands of the editors of the *Anglican Hymn Book* [1965], then in the early stages of compilation, but they told me that they would like to use it as a hymn. (Dudley-Smith 1984, 12)

Timothy Dudley-Smith 's hymn was first matched with the tune "Tidings" in *The Anglican Hymnal*, but it was then rematched by the editor of *100 Hymns for Today* (1969) with the tune "Woodlands" (1919) by the composer Walter Greatorex (1877-1949). "Woodlands" has remained the tune of choice for subsequent publications of "Tell Out, My Soul" in a number of hymnals.

Timothy Dudley-Smith (b. Manchester, England, December 26, 1926) was ordained in 1950 as assistant curate of St. Paul's Church Northumberland Heath, and came to London in 1953 as head of the Cambridge University Mission in Bermondsey. He was then editorial secretary of the Evangelical Alliance and first editor of *Crusade* (1955-60), founded in the wake of the 1955 Billy Graham Crusade. In the 1960s he served as secretary of the Church Pastoral Aid Society, a home missionary agency of the Church of England. In 1973 he moved to East Anglia to become Archdeacon of Norwich and in 1981 Bishop of Thetford, an assistant to the Bishop of Norwich. He retired to Salisbury in 1991.

In 1997 Timothy Dudley-Smith was named a "Fellow" of The Hymn Society in the United States and Canada and in 2011 of the Royal School of Church Music. Other honors include a D.D. from the University of Durham. Having inherited a love of poetry from his father, he began writing while a student at Cambridge. His more than 300 hymns texts have been published in a number of collections. His American publisher is Hope Publishing Company, Carol Stream, Illinois.

Tell Out, My Soul, the Greatness of the Lord

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of his word;
In God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his name!
 Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
 His mercy sure, from age to age the same;
 His holy name—the Lord, the Mighty One.

Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
 Powers and dominions lay their glory by.
 Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight,
 The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.

Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
 Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure.
 Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
 To children's children and for evermore!

Tell Out, My Soul, the Greatness

The Mighty One has done great things for me — Luke 1:49 NIV

Unison

1. Tell out, my soul, the great - ness of the Lord: Un -
 2. Tell out, my soul, the great - ness of His name: Make
 3. Tell out, my soul, the great - ness of His might: Pow'rs
 4. Tell out, my soul, the glo - ries of His word: Firm

num - bered bless - ings give my spir - it voice; Ten - der to
 known His might, the deeds His arm has done; His mer - cy
 and do - min - ions lay their glo - ry by; Proud hearts and
 is His prom - ise, and His mer - cy sure. Tell out, my

me the prom - ise of His word; In
 sure, from age to age the same; His
 stub - born wills are put to flight, The
 soul, the great - ness of the Lord To

God my Sav - ior shall my heart re - joice.
 ho - ly name, the Lord, the Might - y One.
 hun - gry fed, the hum - ble lift - ed high.
 chil - dren's chil - dren and for - ev - er - more.

WORDS: Timothy Dudley-Smith, 1926-
 MUSIC: Walter Greatorex, 1877-1949

WOODLANDS
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