

HYMN BOOKS inc BONCHURCH & MERCER

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The Oxford Movement 1830's and the period running up to it stimulated the use of choirs and congregational hymn singing in many Anglican Churches. It is said that between 1810 and 1850 over one hundred hymnals were published. Two connected with the Island are included below. By the middle of the century the situation was getting very chaotic and there was a move, not least for economy and uniformity, to produce one version. In 1861 the full tune version of Hymns Ancient and Modern was published. Later to be followed by rivals such as the English Hymnal and of course the free Churches were not missing out.

THE BONCHURCH HYMN BOOK

John George Gregory was the energetic Rector of Bonchurch who kept to his own book the first edition being in 1868, the 3rd in 1873 where it was used by the congregation worshipping at Park Chapel in Chelsea where he was now the incumbent.

His book contains some 300 hymn – 250 plus 50 intended for children's use. There are many marked with + saving they are copyright which suggest they are his own. However, there is no list of authors or ownership. The hymns are in alphabetical order but listed for special seasons or events.



Bonchurch Old Church – site of Doomsday Book building

Advent	11	† No 62	Holy Saviour, Thou reignest
Christmas	04	† No 25	Christ, our Lord, enthroned on high
Epiphany	03		
Good Friday	04		
Easter	06		

Ascension	04		
Whitsunday	04	† No 88	Lead Thou, Lord, and bid us follow
Trinity	06		
New Year	01		
Morning	02		
Evening	07		
Baptism	03	† No 67	In faith and hope we bring this child
		† No 99	Lord, heat Thy people pray ...
Lord's Supper	03	† No 70	In memory of thy love ...
Funerals	01		
Missions to the Jews	02		
General Missions	06	† No 86	Defer not, O our God!
Harvest-Home	02		
For Those at Sea	01		
Holy Scripture	03		
The National Anthem	01		
Doxologies	06		
Close of Worship	05		
Grace Before Meat	02	† No 264	Great God, we bless Thy care
Grace After Meat	02	† No 282	Oh what shall we poor children

Below is a selection of what is thought to be his own hymns and give an idea of his style:

General Mission

No 36

1
Defer not, O our God,
Make bare Thine arm of might,
Where'er the foot of man hath trod
Spread Thy the gospel light

2
O call Thy remnant forth
From men of every race,
In east and west, in south and north,
By thy prevailing grace.

3
Thy power e'en now, each land
O'spreads with wonders, Lord;
In all the earth, Thy mighty hand
Hath magnified Thy word.

4
If further still the light
Of gospel truth must shine,
Ere He, to whom belongs the right,
Shall come as King divine, -

5
The, Lord, O hear our prayer
Retrain not Thou Thy power;
Pour down on those who Christ declare,
A heart –refreshing shower.

6
Soon shall he speak the word
Whom every eye shall see,
And all shall bow before the Lord
Of endless majesty.

Baptism

No 67

1
In faith and hope we bring this child,
To dedicate *him*, Lord to Thee;
Receive *him*, we beseech Thee, now,
And give *him* life eternally.

3
'Mid conflicts, heaven's highway lies,,
But let Thy Spirit onward guide,
And strength to *him* impart each day,
Until *he* join the glorified.

2.
O may *he* ever walk in light,
With Thee who dost in glory shine;
May Satan's power all harmless fall,
And *he* stands boldly for the as Thine.

No 99

1 Lord, hear Thy people pray For one in infancy, Whom. In all confidence to-day, They humbly bring to Thee.	3 Lead <i>him</i> to Christ indeed, And sanctify <i>his</i> heart; Supply with strength and peace <i>his</i> need, Till <i>he</i> from hence depart.
2 Accept the child, O Lord, O bless and make <i>him</i> Thine; Teach Thou and lead <i>him</i> by Thy word, In light and truth divine.	4 Then take <i>him</i> , ord, on high, There let <i>him</i> see Thy face. And with Thy children, magnify The wonders of Thy grace.

Grace before Meat

No 264

1 Great God, we bless Thy Care Thou dist our food prepare: The corn that grows, The stream that flows, The weather wet and fair, - Lord, from Thee come, O God, to whom We offer praise and prayer.	2 In Jesu's name we may Our thankfulness display, For this our food, And all the good Thou givest us this day Oh teach us how Our hearts to bow Before Thee, Lord, we pray.
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Grace After Meat

1 Oh what shall we poor children give To Thee, our Lord and God of love For blessings we have now received, Sent in great mercy from above?	2, Wilt Thou accept the feeble praise Which we, through Christ, would offer Thee? Lord, may we thank Thee more and more For goodness constant, full, and free.
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No 300 The last of the children's hymns and of the book –
Some 14 verses re the Jews (shows the thinking of the period)

1. Zion's streets were thronging, And, in many a band, Boys and girls were singing Songs of Canaan's land.	8. Her true sons and daughters Shall again return, And, with their dear children, More of Jesus learn
2. But her sons were sinful, Grieving Christ their Lord; Breaking all His precepts, Jesting at his word.	9. Then shall sit for ages Upon Zion's throne Christ, whose glorious kingdom All mankind shall own

3.
Zion's streets were silent
Songs were no more heard;
Children played no longer,
No man spoke a word.

4.
Now her God had made her,
For her sinful ways,
Sad with desolation,
Many, many days.

5.
Zion's sons are scattered
Over hill and dale,
Outcasts from their country,
Telling its sad tale.

6.
Children, what a lesson
Zion's sons have taught!
Sin, alone, this sadness
On their nation brought.

7.
Yet God keepeth Zion
By his hand of might;
For He soon will reign there
With His saints in light.

10.
And the streets of Zion,
Thronged with many a band,
Shall resound with singing
Songs of Canaan's land.

11.
Children what a lesson
We from them shall learn,
When to their loved Zion
Israel shall return!

12.
You shall know how faithful,
Loving, kind, and true,
Jesus, King of Zion,
Is to them and you.

13.
Then you shall behold Him,
And adore Him name,
Who, enthroned, abideth
Evermore the same.

14.
And with songs shall praise Him,
Reigning in His might,
Lord and king for ever,
High in glory's light.



Bonchurch New Church 1848

Every hour is passing
Brings us on our way,
Onwards, upwards, homewards,
Towards the glorious day.
Every joyful moment
In which our hearts delight,
Tells of gladness coming
In you heaven so bright.

3
Every tear of sadness
Bursting fro the eye
Speaks of coming freedom
From all misery.
Every stroke if chastening
From the Father's hand,
Proves His love now guiding
Towards the better land.

No 16

1
Bind us to Thee, Lord, we pray,
Closer, firmer, day by day;
Purer, truer, let us be,
As we serve and worship Thee.

2
Teach us better to discern
Good from evil, and to learn
Daily to pursue Thy ways,
Living only to Thy praise.

3
Fill our hearts with faith and love;
Fix them on the things above;
That we may with growing power,
Serve Thee till life's latest hour.

Every foe we meet with
In the path of life,
Gives a pledge that shortly
Shall no more be strife.
Lord, who knowest all things,
Present, future past;
By thy teaching spirit
Point to rest at last.

4
Shew that time flies quickly
Towards eternal peace;
(Jubilee of freedom -
Glorious release!)
When, with Christ for ever.
Free from sin and care -
Free from all temptation,
We shall glory share.

4
For yon world shall soon unseal
Its vast glories and reveal
To our wondering eyes the sight
Keep in store for saints in light

5
And till then we must pursue,
With the glorious prize in view,
Through the hardships of the way,
To the Everlasting Day .

In 1868 the hymnal was published for use in public worship and devotional meeting and school. The publisher is back o the Isle of Wight as well as London - compiled by Rev, J.G. Gregory, M.A. and published London and by Knight & Son, High Street, Ventnor.

The words of No 16 are still used today:

*Bind us to Thee, Lord, we pray,
Closer, firmer, day by day;
Purer, truer, let us be,
As we serve and worship Thee.*

The last heard of the book is in 1897 for 19 years Emmanuel Church, Hove – when he rearranged his hymn-book

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THE MERCER HYMN BOOK



St Mildred's Church parish of Whippingham

Regular worshipers tend to get very fond of not only particular hymns book the books and collections they are printed in. Make any change and some are very unhappy – Queen Victoria at Osborne was no exception but may well be excused as Prince Albert had given the book to the Whippingham estate village church he had he had rebuilt.

“Whippingham – The Hymn-book in Whippingham Church – The Queen is generally supposed to have broad church sympathies and celebrity has the most intense reverence for anything appertaining to the Prince Consort – Some surprise is therefore felt that the ‘Mercer’s’ hymn book; which used to be used in Whippingham Church, and which the inscription ‘this book is the gift of the Prince Consort to the Congregation of Whippingham Church ‘ should have been removed from the church in order to make way for ‘Hymns Ancient and Modern’. The matter is more strange as the Rector of Whippingham is a great favourite at Osborne, and is not only chaplain in ordinary to Her Majesty, but chaplain at Osborne House, and not long ago the Queen was, through the personal intervention of the Queen, appointed to a canonry in Westminster Abbey”

Hampshire Telegraph 22 Sep 1875

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