

A Worship Minute ...

From The One Year Book of Hymns

Twenty-one year old Peter Bilhorn, music composer of *I Will Sing the Wondrous Story*, approached Pastor Francis Rowley (author of the lyrics) one Sunday night after the evening service. The year was 1886; the place was North Adams, Massachusetts. Young Bilhorn had been converted the previous year, and already he was using his musical talents for the Lord. “Why don’t you write a hymn for me to set to music?” he asked Pastor Rowley.

Rowley’s response was this gospel song, which originally began “Can’t you sing the wondrous story?” For Bilhorn, who was a singer as well as a pianist and organist, it was an ideal personal testimony. As an unconverted teenager, he had started his music career singing in Chicago taverns. He understood the line “I was lost but Jesus found me—found the sheep that went astray.”

Bilhorn went on singing the wondrous story the rest of his life, writing two thousand songs, designing a portable folding organ (the precursor of the Lowry organ) for evangelistic use, assisting evangelists like Billy Sunday, and ministering around the world with Christian music.

*“And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God,
and the song of the Lamb, saying,
“Great and wonderful are thy deeds, O Lord God Almighty!
Just and true are thy ways, O King of the ages!”
Revelation 15:3*