

Douglas, J. D., Comfort, P. W., & Mitchell, D. (1997, c1992). *Who's Who in Christian History*.

MASON, LOWELL (1792–1872)

American composer

Mason was entirely self-taught in music. In his youth he directed a church choir in his native Medford, Massachusetts, and one in Savannah, Georgia, where he was a bank clerk. After 1827 he devoted himself entirely to teaching and lecturing about music. Through the balance of his long life, he edited an enormous number of musical instruction books, and collections of hymn tunes and anthems. He visited Europe to observe musical practices in the churches there as well as methods of musical pedagogy. New York University honored him with one of the first musical doctorates given in America. He founded the Handel and Haydn Society of Boston and also the Boston Academy of Music.

Mason exercised an enormous influence on church music in nineteenth-century America. He also composed and adapted a great number of hymn tunes, including those for “Joy to the World” (often attributed to Handel) and “When I Survey the Wondrous Cross.” The tunes for “From Greenland’s Icy Mountains” and “My Faith Looks Up to Thee” are known worldwide. Unfortunately, Mason looked down on the rich heritage of early American folk tunes. They have only recently begun to find their way into our hymn books once again.

See: Lowell Mason. In *Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia*.

[Lowell Mason](#)