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16

1941 <sup>①</sup> Death of <sup>16</sup> Mr. Francis Duckworth

HIS TUNE "RIMINGTON" WON  
WORLD FAME.

THE death took place at his residence, "Swanside," Colne, on Saturday, of Mr. Francis Duckworth, composer of the famous hymn tune "Rimington," and of numerous other tunes. "Rimington" takes its name from our neighbouring little hamlet where the composer was born on Christmas Day, 1862.

When he was five years old the family moved to Stopper Lane, nearby, where his father took over the village store, which is situated next door to the Wesleyan Chapel. It was there, at the age of twelve, that Mr. Duckworth took his first and only music lessons, for which he paid 10s. Shortly afterwards he began to play the organ in the chapel.

ORGANIST FIFTY YEARS.

At the age of twenty he left his native village for Colne, where two of his brothers were in business. After working for one about six years, Mr. Duckworth commenced in business on his own account as a wholesale provision dealer, retiring several years ago.

Shortly after his arrival at Colne he was appointed deputy organist and then organist at the Albert-road Wesleyan Chapel, in which capacity he continued until his resignation in January, 1929. Reckoning the years he played at Stopper Lane, he had then completed fifty years' honorary service. As a thank offering he accompanied his resignation with a cheque for £50—£1 for every year served—towards the organ improvement scheme.

The tune "Rimington" was not published until 1904, but Mr. Duckworth used to state that the seed from which it sprang was planted when he was quite a boy. One day he overheard a conversation between his uncle and several others, in which the merits of hymn writers were discussed. His uncle revealed a partiality for the older poets, particularly Dr. Watts, about whom he said "Ah, Watts had the conception; he said more in one line than your modern hymn writers say in a whole tune."

3,000,000 COPIES. ②

"Rimington" has enjoyed phenomenal success, as at the present time there are over three million copies of the tune in circulation. It has been included in ten English hymnals, and has been printed by permission for special occasions by no fewer than 200 Sunday schools in Lancashire and Yorkshire. United to one of the greatest missionary hymns, it made a special appeal to all missionary societies, and has been included in eight foreign hymnals. Together with other tunes composed by Mr. Duckworth, "Rimington" takes a prominent place in the Salvation Army "Brass Band Journal." As an item for broadcasting and community singing, "Rimington" has always been a special favourite. It has been recorded on gramophone records by the Besses o' th' Barn Band and by the B.B.C.'s own choir. "Rimington" was sung on Mount Calvary by a party of Lancashire soldiers on the Sunday following the capitulation of Jerusalem in the Great War, and on Mount Pilatus by a party of tourists. Its notes have been sung in Armley prison, and they have cheered the lonely folk on Pitcairn Island. It is sung in California, and is a favourite with the natives in Central Africa.

COMPOSED "NOYNA."

"Rimington" is only one of several hymn tunes of a most melodious description, which, coupled with anthems, songs and choruses, make up the varied collection of Mr. Duckworth's works. He also composed the words and music of "Noyna," which Colne people have sung wherever they have found themselves throughout the world. It was once sung by a man in a South African town, seeking another native of Colne. Not

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having the slightest idea of his whereabouts, he found him by rendering "Noyna," which the sought-for man recognised.

Representatives of many organisations attended the funeral on Tuesday afternoon. A service was held in the Albert-road Methodist Church prior to the interment at Glsburn churchyard.

At many Methodist Churches throughout East Lancashire, some of Mr. Duckworth's tunes were sung on Sunday.