

Rob Roy Peery's Reminiscence

Rob Roy Peery (1900-1973) enjoyed a long career as a composer and editor of church music. He first attended a meeting of The Hymn Society in January 1927. When Carl F. Price played two of Peery's tunes at that year's June meeting, he referred to him as "the youngest member of the Society."

In a 1961 letter to Treasurer Edith Holden, Peery reported that he continued to set Hymn Society texts and recalled

Your reminder that my membership dates back to 1927 brings many memories, some amusing. In those days, membership in the Hymn Society (New York) was confined only to composers, authors, and compilers of hymnals. In that same year, I won a contest conducted by the Funk and Wagnalls Co. (through *The Homiletic Review*) with my setting of "Dear Lord, who sought at dawn," by Dr. Harry Webb Farrington, and this has subsequently appeared in many hymnals. It was because of this that I was elected to membership, and, as a young man in his twenties, I was very proud of it. It happened that in 1928 [*sic*], I went to New York to study composition at the Juilliard Institute with Ruben Goldmark, and so I attended my first meeting of the Society. At that time I was quite the youngest member! In fact, it seemed to me that I was the only person under fifty present. Now to be one of the "earliest" members is something of a shock.

Peery was 61 years old at the time of his reflection.