

Leaning on the Everlasting Arms

It was in 1888 that Rev. Anthony J. Showalter composed *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms*. Born in 1858 in Cherry Grove, Pennsylvania, he gave this explanation of how he came to write *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms*. "While I was conducting a singing-school at Hartsells, Alabama, I received a letter from two of my former pupils in South Carolina, conveying the sad intelligence that on the same day each of them had buried his wife. . . I tried to console them by writing a letter that might prove helpful in their hour of sadness. Among other Scriptures I quoted this passage. 'Underneath are the everlasting arms.' Before completing the writing of this sentence, the thought came to me that the fact that we may lean on these everlasting arms and find comfort and strength, ought to be put in a song; and before finishing that letter, the words and music of the refrain were written. The manuscript was sent to Elish A. Hoffman . . . in a few days his completion of the poem was received."

Elish A. Hoffman

Anthony J. Showalter

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 2/4 time. It consists of five staves of music with lyrics underneath. Chord symbols (G, C, D) are placed above the notes. Circled numbers (1, 9, 13, 14, 23, 31) are placed at the beginning of certain staves. The lyrics are as follows:

1. What a fel - low - ship, What a joy di - vine, Lean - ing
 on the ev - er - last - ing arms; ——— What a bless - ed - ness, what a
 peace is mine, Lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing ——— arms. ———

Chorus
 Lean - ing on Je - sus, lean - ing on Je - sus,
 Lean - ing, lean - ing, Safe and se - cure from
 all a - larms. ——— Lean - ing on Je - sus, lean - ing on
 Je - sus, Lean - ing on the ev - er - last - ing ——— arms. ———

2. What have I to dread, what have I to fear,
 Leaning on the everlasting arms?
 I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,
 Leaning on the everlasting arms. (*Chorus*)

3. Oh, how sweet to walk in the pilgrim's way,
 Leaning on the everlasting arms;
 Oh, how bright the path grows from day to day,
 Leaning on the everlasting arms. (*Chorus*)