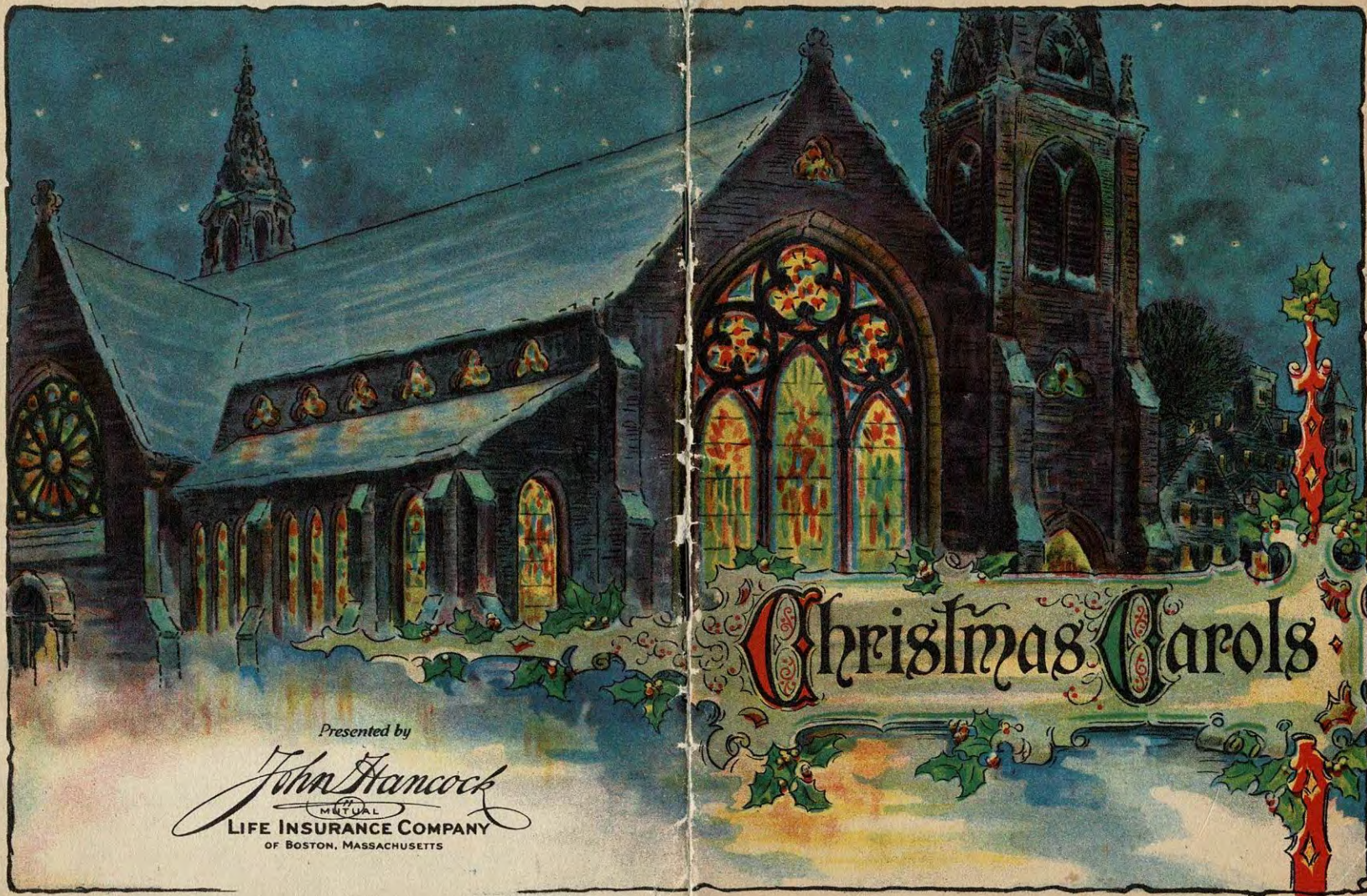




Presented by

John Hancock
MUTUAL
LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Christmas Carols

A
Merry Merry
Christmas



Christmas Carols

*I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old, familiar carols play,
And wild and sweet
The words repeat
Of peace on earth, good-will to men.*

—HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW



Presented with the
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LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY
OF BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS



Christmas Carols

*What sweeter musick can we bring
Than a caroll, for to sing
The birth of this our Heavenly King?*

—HERRICK

EACH year the Christmas season is ushered in by the singing of Christmas carols and hymns, and we hear again the familiar and ever beautiful songs of Christmas which have been handed down through the centuries, sung in every tongue and by every nation.

An ancient and lovely custom is this singing of Christmas carols, in the streets of our towns and cities, in our homes and churches and schools. It harkens back to the days of old, when carols were sung in the streets by waits and minstrels, when the Yule log burned on the hearth, holly and mistletoe gleamed among the Christmas candles, the boar's head was paraded in grand procession, and was-sail songs made glad the festive and joyful Christmastide.

Surviving with all of these picturesque traditions of Christmas are the carols themselves, with their quaint words and delightful melodies. Preserved to us are these original Christmas carols, composed in almost every tongue,—Latin, English, French, Anglo-Saxon, German, Italian, Spanish, and many others—simple folk-songs, charming in their quaintness and naïveté, with a reverent gaiety which only suggests the religious. For a carol, in its true meaning, is a song in which a religious theme is treated in a familiar and festive manner. A hymn is essentially devotional. So it is that many of our more familiar Christmas songs, such as "O Little Town of Bethlehem," "It Came upon the Midnight Clear," and others which we commonly designate as carols, are not in the true sense Christmas carols, but rather Christmas hymns.

We like to think that the first carol ever sung was by the angel chorus on that first Christmas eve, nearly two thousand years ago,



when "Glory be to God on high, and on earth peace, good will to men" was caroled over the fields of Bethlehem.

But it is not until the thirteenth century that we find the beginning of the true Christmas carol, and Italy is its birthplace. Here the friars, gathered around St. Francis of Assisi, tried to humanize the story of the gospel and composed songs about the birth of Christ, which they sang around a crèche or tableau, depicting the surroundings of the holy manger. A Franciscan, named Jacopone da Todi, was the first writer of carols.

From Italy the carol spread to Spain, France, England, and Germany, where it retained its folk-song qualities of legendary lore and childlike simplicity, with a strange mingling of reverence and genial mirthfulness. The French Noël began to appear in the fifteenth century as did the Christmas carols in England, where they ranged from charming lullabies to riotous drinking songs. During the Reformation, the true carols with their spontaneity and festive element disappeared, to be replaced later by the more sedate and devotional hymns.

The beginning of the eighteenth century marks the transition from the true carol to the more dignified and solemn Christmas hymn. "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night," "Hark, the Herald Angels Sing," and "Adeste Fideles" belong to this period. "Adeste Fideles," or "O Come All Ye Faithful," was composed probably in France about 1700 and is perhaps best beloved of the Christmas hymns. The nineteenth century brought the beautiful "Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht," also "O Little Town of Bethlehem," written by our Phillips Brooks and inspired by a Christmas eve spent by him in Bethlehem.

Thus the Christmas carols have lived through the centuries. And so, on Christmas eve, as the candles burn in our windows, in remembrance of the Star of Bethlehem, and we hear youthful voices caroling these old familiar songs, let us rejoice that we are preserving ideals and traditions which will be forever the heritage of every Christian nation.

Silent Night (Stille Nacht)

FRANZ GRUBER

1. Si - lent night, Ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2. Si - lent night, Ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3. Si - lent night, Ho - ly night! Son of God,

all is bright 'Round yon Vir - gin Moth - er and Child
 at the sight! Glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 loves pure light Ra - diant beams from Thy ho - ly face,

Ho - ly In - fant so ten - der and mild, Sleep in heav - en - ly
 Heav'n - ly hosts sing Al - le - lu - ia; Christ the Sa - viour is
 With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at Thy

peace, — Sleep in heav - en - ly peace! —
 born, — Christ the Sa - viour is born! —
 birth, — Je - sus, Lord, at Thy birth. —

The First Noël

Traditional

Harmonized by Sir John Stainer

1. The first No - ël the an - gel did say Was to
 2. They look - ed up and saw a Star Shining
 3. This star drew nigh to the north - west, O'er
 4. Then en - ter'd in there wise - men three, Full

certain poor shepherds in fields as they lay; In fields where they lay
 in the East, be - yond them far, And to the earth it
 Beth - le - hem it took its rest, And there it did both
 rev - 'rent - ly up - on their knee, And of - fer'd there in

keeping their sheep On a cold winter's night that was so deep.
 gave great light, And so it con - tin - ued both day - and night.
 stop - and stay Right o - ver the place where Je - sus lay.
 His pres - ence, Their gold - and myrrh and frank - in - cense.

No - ël, No - ël, No - ël, No - ël, Born is the King of Is - ra - el.

God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

Traditional

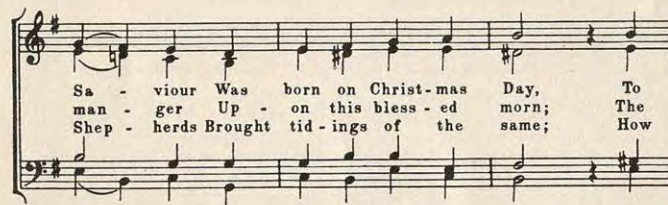
Harmonized by Sir John Stainer



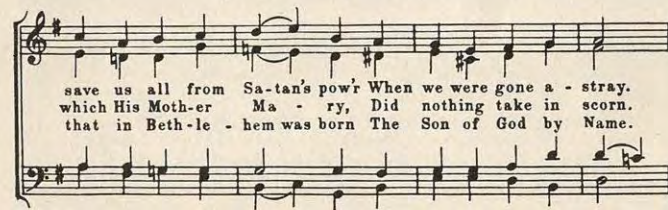
1. God rest you mer - ry, gen - tle - men, Let
2. In Beth - le - hem, in Jew - ry, This
3. From God our heavn - ly Fa - ther, A



noth - ing you dis - may, Re - mem - ber Christ our
bless - ed Babe was born, And laid with - in a
bless - ed An - gel came, And un - to cer - tain

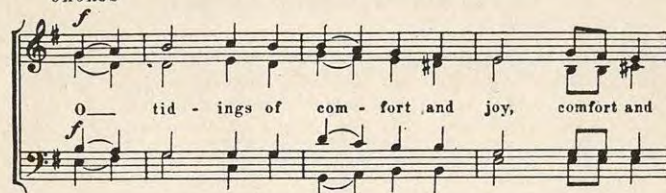


Sa - viour Was born on Christ - mas Day, To
man - ger Up - on this bless - ed morn; The
Shep - herds Brought tid - ings of the same; How



save us all from Sa - tan's pow'r When we were gone a - stray.
which His Moth - er Ma - ry, Did nothing take in scorn.
that in Beth - le - hem was born The Son of God by Name.

CHORUS



O tid - ings of com - fort and joy, comfort and



joy, O tid - ings of com - fort and joy.

4.

"Fear not then," said the Angel,
"Let nothing you affright,
This day is born a Saviour
Of a pure Virgin bright,
To free all those who trust in Him,
From Satan's power and might!"
O tidings, etc.

6.

And when they came to Bethlehem,
Where our dear Saviour lay,
They found Him in a manger,
Where oxen feed on hay;
His Mother Mary kneeling down,
Unto the Lord did pray.
O tidings, etc.

5.

The Shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding,
In tempest, storm, and wind:
And went to Bethlehem straightway,
The Son of God to find.
O tidings, etc.

7.

Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This Holy tide of Christmas
All other doth deface.
O tidings, etc.

The Cherry Tree Carol

Traditional

mf

1. As Jo - seph was a walk - ing He
 2. "He nei - ther shall be born In
 3. "He nei - ther shall be cloth - ed In
 4. "He nei - ther shall be rock - ed In

heard an an - gel sing, "This night shall be the
 hour - en nor in hall, Nor in the place of
 pur - ple nor in pall, But in the fair white
 sil - ver nor in gold, But in a wood - en

birth - time Of Christ, the heavnly King,"
 par - a - dise, But in an ox's stall,"
 lin - en That u - sen - ba - bies all,"
 man - ger That rest - eth on the mould"

5.

As Joseph was a-walking,
 There did an angel sing,
 And Mary's child at midnight
 Was born to be our King.

6.

Then be ye glad, good people,
 This night of all the year,
 And light ye up your candles,
 For his star it shineth clear.

The Wassail Song

Traditional

Harmonized by Sir John Stainer

mf

1. Here we come a - was-sail-ing A - mong the leaves so
 2. We are not dai - ly beg - gars That beg from door to
 3. Good Mas - ter and Mis - tress As you sit by the
 4. God bless the mas - ter of this house, Like - wise the mis - tress

green, Here we come a - wan-dring, So fair to be seen.
 door, But we are neighbors' chil-dren Whom you have seen be-fore.
 fire, Pray think of us poor chil-dren Who wan-der in the mire,
 too; And all the lit - tle chil-dren That round the ta - ble go.

CHORUS

Love and joy come to you, And to you your was-sail

too, And God bless you, and send you A hap - py new

year, And God send you a hap - py new year.

Away in a Manger

MARTIN LUTHER
1483-1546



1. A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a
2. The cat - tle are low - ing, the poor Ba - by
3. Be near me, Lord Je - sus, I ask Thee to



bed, The lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet
wakes, But lit - tle Lord Je - sus no cry - ing He
stay Close by me for - ev - er, and love me, I



head; The stars in the sky — looked down where He
makes; I love Thee, Lord Je - sus look down from the
pray; Bless all the dear chil - dren in Thy ten - der



lay, The lit - tle Lord Je - sus, a - sleep on the hay.
sky, And stay by my cra - dle Till morn - ing is nigh.
care, And take us to heav - en, To live with Thee, there.
cresc.

It Came Upon the Midnight Clear

E. H. SEARS, 1846

R. S. WILLIS, 1850



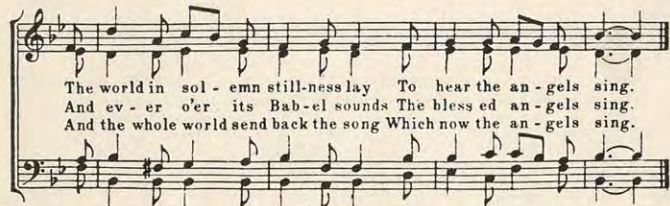
1. It came up-on the mid-night clear, That glo-rious song of old,—
2. Still through the clo-ven skies they come, With peace-ful wings un- furled;
3. For lo! the days are hastning on, By pro-phets seen of old,—



From an - gels bend-ing near the earth, To touch their harps of gold:
And still their heav'nly mu - sic floats O'er all the wea - ry world:
When with the ev - er - cir - cling years, Shall come the time fore - told,



Peace on the earth, good will to men, From heaven's all gra-cious King;
A - bove its sad and low - ly plains They bend on hov'ring wing,
When the new heav'n and earth shall own The Prince of Peace their King,



The world in sol - emn still-ness lay To hear the an - gels sing.
And ev - er o'er its Bab-el sounds The bless-ed an - gels sing.
And the whole world send back the song Which now the an - gels sing.

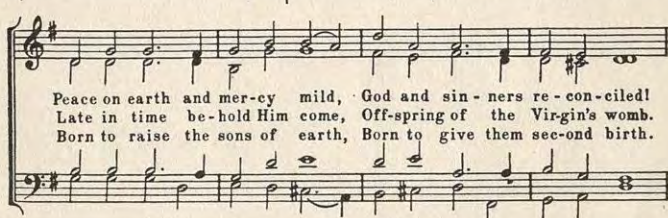
Hark! the Herald Angels Sing

CHARLES WESLEY, 1739

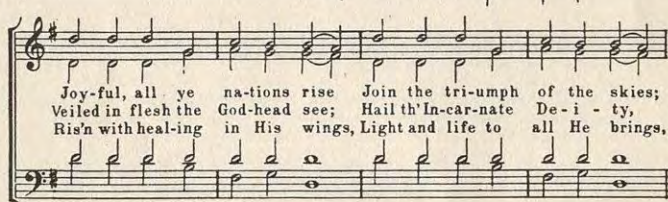
F. MENDELSSOHN
(arr. W. H. Cummings, 1850)



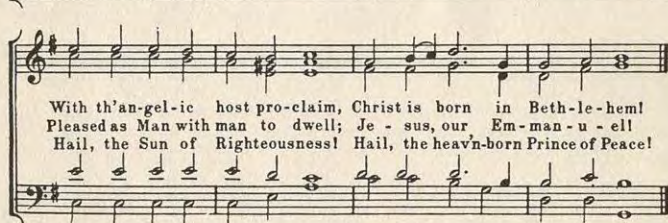
1. Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing Glo-ry to the new-born King!
2. Christ, by high-est heav'n a-dored; Christ, the ev-er-last-ing Lord;
3. Mild He lays His glo-ry by, Born that man no more may die,



Peace on earth and mer-cy mild, God and sin-ners re-con-ciled!
Late in time be-hold Him come, Off-spring of the Vir-gin's womb.
Born to raise the sons of earth, Born to give them sec-ond birth.

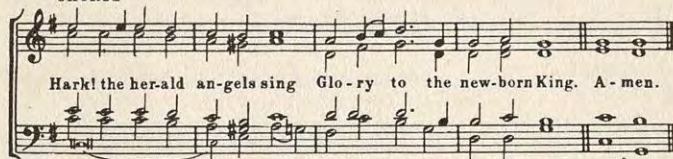


Joy-ful, all ye na-tions rise Join the tri-umph of the skies;
Veiled in flesh the God-head see; Hail th'In-car-nate De-i-ty,
Ris'n with heal-ing in His wings, Light and life to all He brings,



With th'an-gel-ic host pro-claim, Christ is born in Beth-le-hem!
Pleased as Man with man to dwell; Je-sus, our Em-man-u-ell
Hail, the Sun of Righteousness! Hail, the heav'n-born Prince of Peace!

CHORUS

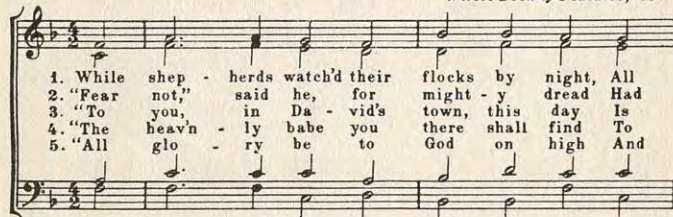


Hark! the her-ald an-gels sing Glo-ry to the new-born King. A-men.

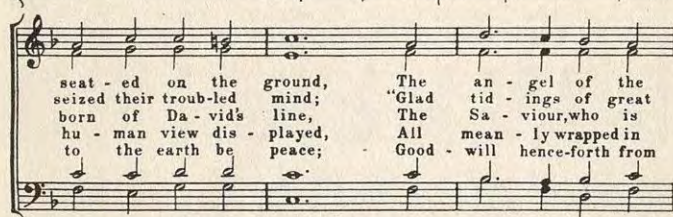
While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks

N. TATE, 1702

Melody from T. Est's
Whole Book of Psalms, 159



1. While shep-herds watch'd their flocks by night, All
2. "Fear not," said he, for might-y dread Had
3. "To you, in Da-vid's town, this day is
4. "The heav'n-ly babe you there shall find To
5. "All glo-ry be to God on high And



seat-ed on the ground, The an-gel of the
seized their troub-led mind; "Glad tid-ings of great
born of Da-vid's line, The Sa-viour, who is
hu-man view dis-played, All mean-ly wrapped in
to the earth be-peace; Good-will hence-forth from



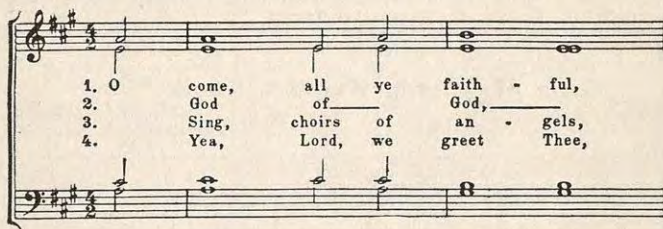
Lord came down, And glo-ry shone a-round.
joy I bring To you and all man-kind.
Christ the Lord; And this shall be the sign.
swath-ing bands, And in a man-ger laid.
heav'n to men Be-gin and nev-er cease." A-men.

O Come, All Ye Faithful

(Adeste Fideles)

Tr. F. OAKELEY, 1841

J. F. WADE'S
Cantus Diversi, 1751



1. O come, all ye faith - ful,
2. God of God,
3. Sing, choirs of an - gels,
4. Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,



Joy - ful and tri - umph - ant, O come ye, O
Light of Light, Lol He ab -
Sing in ex - ul - ta - tion, Sing, all ye
Born this hap - py morn - ing; Je - sus, to



come - ye to Beth - le - hem;
hous - es not the Vir - gin's womb;
ci - ti - zens of heav'n a - bove:
Thee be - glo - ry giv'n;

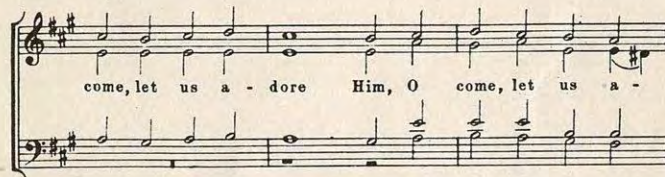


Come and be - hold Him, Born the King of an - gels;
Ve - ry God, Be - got - ten, not cre - a - ted;
Glo - ry to God In the high - est;
Word of the Fa - ther, Now in flesh ap - pear - ing;

After each verse



O come, let us a - dore Him, O



come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a -

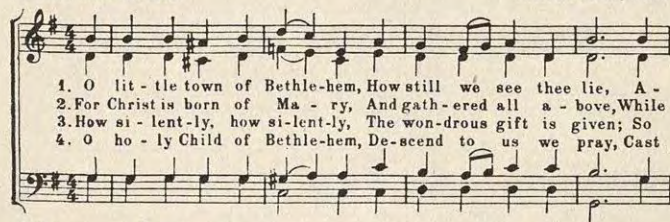


dore Him, Christ - the Lord. A - men.

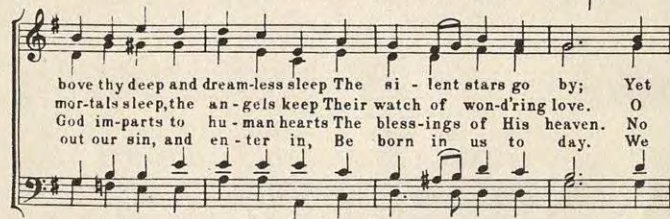
O Little Town of Bethlehem

PHILLIPS BROOKS, 1868

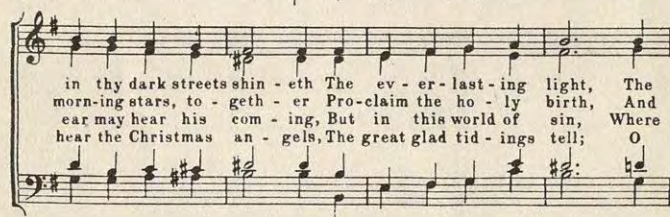
L.H. REDNER, 1868



1. O lit - tle town of Bethle-hem, How still we see thee lie, A -
 2. For Christ is born of Ma - ry, And gath - ered all a - bove, While
 3. How si - lent - ly, how si - lent - ly, The won - drous gift is given; So
 4. O ho - ly Child of Bethle-hem, De - scend to us we pray, Cast



bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go by; Yet
 mor-tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won - dring love. O
 God im - parts to hu - man hearts The bless - ings of His heaven. And
 out our sin, and en - ter in, Be born in us to day. We



in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing light, The
 morn - ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly birth, And
 ear may hear his com - ing, But in this world of sin, Where
 hear the Christmas an - gels, The great glad tid - ings tell; O



hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee to - night.
 prais - es sing to God the King, And peace to men on earth.
 meek souls will re - ceive Him still, The dear Christ en - ters in.
 come to us, a - bide with us, Our Lord Em - man - u - el.

