

Christmas Carols
by
HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON
and
GRACE CASTAGNETTA

LIST OF BOOKS BY
HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON

THE FALL OF THE DUTCH REPUBLIC, 1913, Houghton Mifflin Co.

THE RISE OF THE DUTCH KINGDOM, 1915, Doubleday Page & Co.

THE GOLDEN BOOK OF THE DUTCH NAVIGATORS, 1916
The Century Co.

A SHORT HISTORY OF DISCOVERY, 1917, David McKay

ANCIENT MAN, 1920, Boni and Liveright

THE STORY OF MANKIND, 1921, Boni and Liveright

THE STORY OF THE BIBLE, 1923, Boni and Liveright

THE STORY OF WILBUR THE HAT, 1925, Boni and Liveright

TOLERANCE, 1925, Boni and Liveright

AMERICA, 1927, Boni and Liveright

ADRIAEN BLOCK, 1928, Block Hall

LIFE AND TIMES OF PIETER STUYVESANT, 1928, Henry Holt

MAN THE MIRACLE MAKER, 1928, Horace Liveright

REMBRANDT VAN RIJN, 1930, Horace Liveright

VAN LOON'S GEOGRAPHY, 1932, Simon and Schuster

AN ELEPHANT UP A TREE, 1933, Simon and Schuster

AN INDISCREET ITINERARY, 1933, Harcourt, Brace

SHIPS, 1935, Simon and Schuster

AROUND THE WORLD WITH THE ALPHABET, 1935
Simon and Schuster

AIR-STORMING, 1935, Harcourt, Brace

THE SONGS WE SING, 1936, Simon and Schuster

THE ARTS, 1937, Simon and Schuster

CHRISTMAS CAROLS, 1937, Simon and Schuster

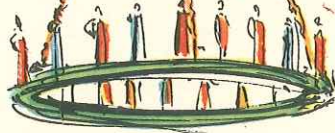
TRANSLATIONS

These books have been translated and published in the following countries: England, Holland, Germany, France, Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway, China, Japan, India, Russia, Spain, Italy, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Greece, Palestine, Roumania, and Brazil. There also have been translations into Urdu, Bantu, Esperanto, and Braille. THE ARTS will appear simultaneously in England, Austria, France, and Italy.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS

ILLUSTRATED AND

DONE INTO SIMPLE MUSIC

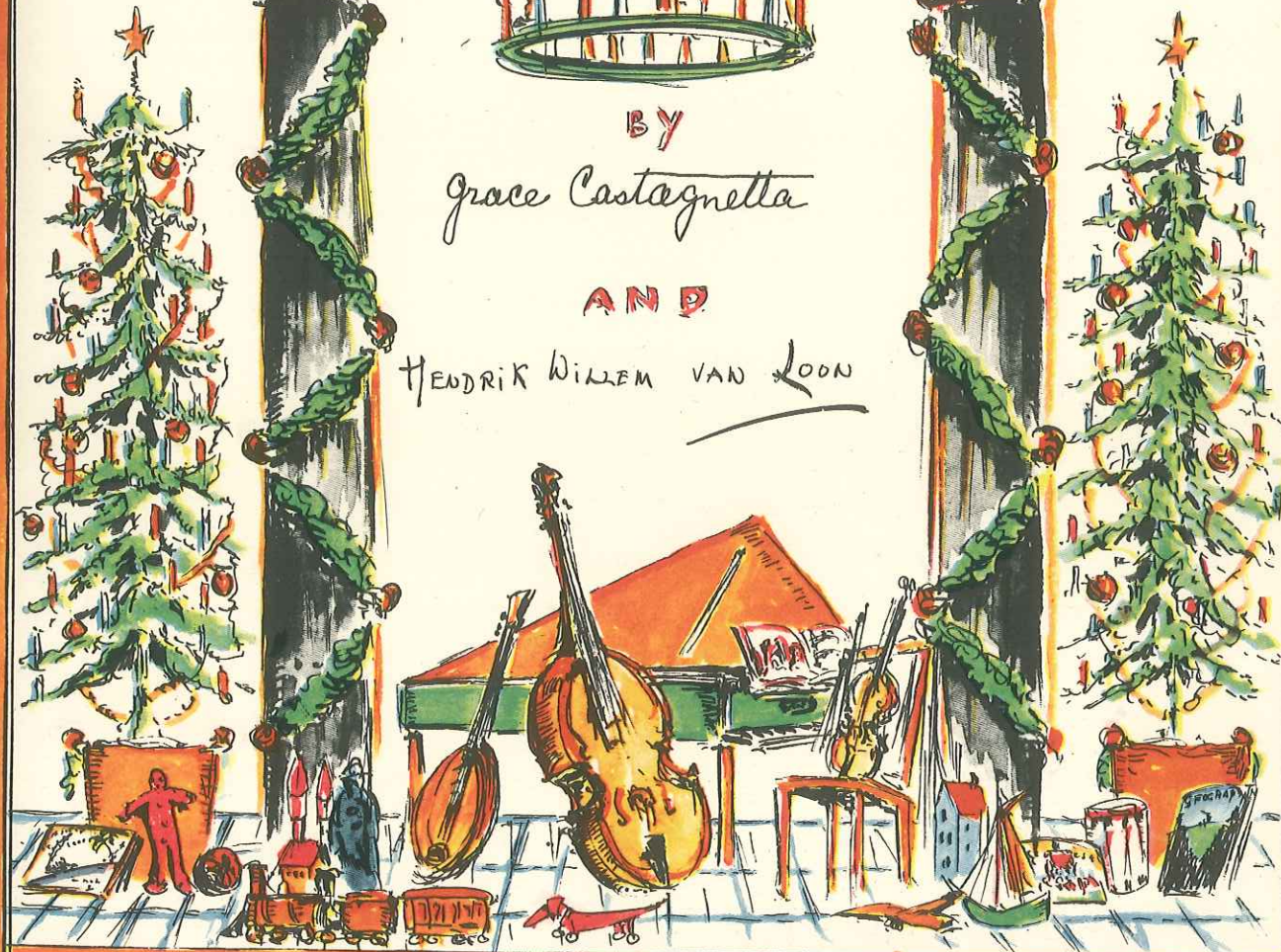


BY

Grace Castagnetta

AND

HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON



PUBLISHED BY SIMON AND SCHUSTER N.Y.

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED
Copyright, 1937, by Hendrik Willem van Loon
Published by Simon and Schuster, Inc.
386 Fourth Avenue, New York

Third Printing

Manufactured in the United States of America

*This book is dedicated
to
ANNE CARROLL MOORE
in cheerful recognition
of all the many miracles
she has performed
within that delightful realm of
the world of books
where the readers sit in little chairs
and rest their elbows on diminutive tables
while following the adventures of Ferdinand.
For if that room is now filled
with much more sunshine, gaiety,
beauty and common sense
than ever before
it is mainly through the efforts of
Annie Carroll Moore
who opened wide the windows
and said,
"A little less stuffiness right here
would surely do none of us
any harm."*



Foreword

Here are the events as related unto us by Matthew, the Evangelist, who hailed from the village of Capernaum:

“Now when Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judaea in the days of Herod the king, behold, there came wise men from the east to Jerusalem, saying, ‘Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him.’

“Then Herod, when he had privily called the wise men, enquired of them diligently what time the star appeared. And he sent them to Bethlehem, and said, ‘Go and search diligently for the young child; and when ye have found him, bring me word again, that I may come and worship him also.’

“When they had heard the king, they departed; and, lo, the star, which they saw in the east, went before them, till it came and stood over where the young child was.

“When they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy.

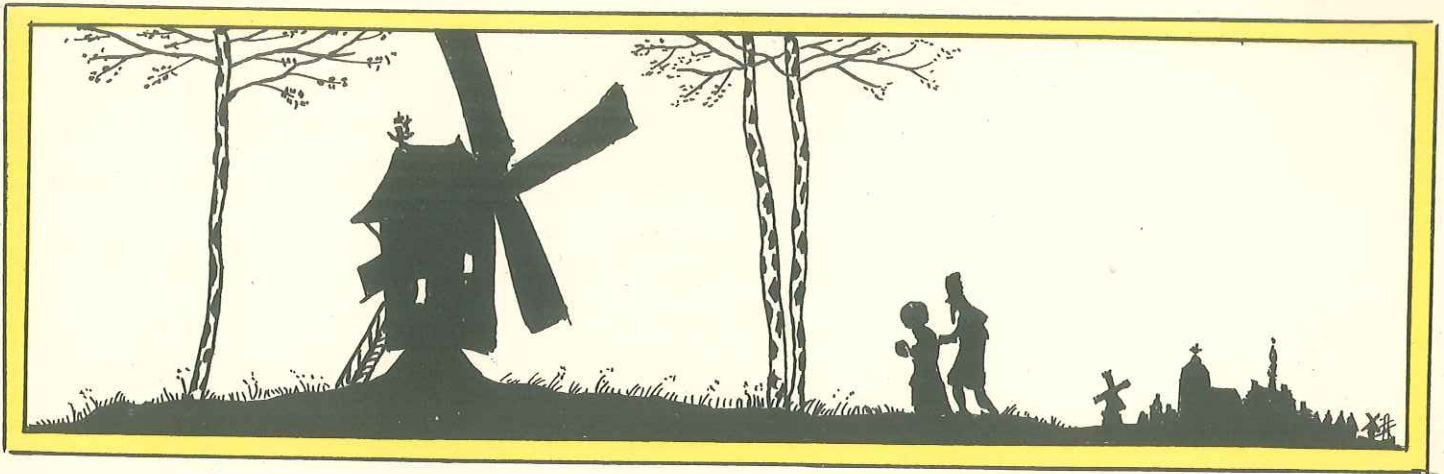
“And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and worshipped him; and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts; gold, and frankincense, and myrrh.

“And being warned of God in a dream that they should not return to Herod, they departed into their own country another way.”

In this book you will find the songs we sing every year to celebrate the joyous story of the first Christmas.

Old Greenwich, Conn.
June 29, 1937

H.v.L.
G. C.



Contents

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT	12
O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL	14
HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING	16
O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM	18
DECK THE HALL	20
AWAY IN A MANGER	22
FROM HEAVEN HIGH I COME TO YOU	24
THE FIRST NOWELL	26
I SAW THREE SHIPS	30
O JESUS, SO SWEET	32
JOY TO THE WORLD	34
WE THREE KINGS OF ORIENT ARE	36
IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR	40
WHAT CHILD IS THIS?	42
GOOD CHRISTIAN MEN, REJOICE	44
JESUS' LULLABY	46
O COME, LITTLE CHILDREN	48
GOD REST YOU MERRY, GENTLEMEN	50
HOW BRIGHTLY BEAMS THE MORNING STAR	54
GOOD KING WENCESLAS	56
<i>A Few Words About the Adventures of These Songs</i>	60
<i>A Few Words About the Music</i>	64



—and here come the songs



Silent Night, Holy Night

Silent Night, Holy Night

Josef Mohr, 1818

Franz Gruber, 1818

Slowly, with expression

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line on a single staff and a piano accompaniment on two staves (treble and bass clef). The key signature is one flat (B-flat major/D minor) and the time signature is 6/8. The tempo and expression are marked 'Slowly, with expression'. Dynamics include *pp* (pianissimo) and *mf* (mezzo-forte). The lyrics are provided in both English and German. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line and chords in the right hand. There are some '8...' markings in the piano part, likely indicating eighth notes.

System 1:

pp 1. Si - lent night, Ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright,
1. Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft, ein - sam wacht,

System 2:

'Round you Vir - gin Moth - er and Child. Ho - ly In - fant so ten - der and mild,
nur das trau - te hoch - hei - li - ge Paar. Hol - der Kna - be im loc - ki - gen Haar,

System 3:

Sleep in heav - en - ly peace, — Sleep in heav - en - ly peace! —
schlaf' in himm - li - scher Ruh', — schlaf' in himm - li - scher Ruh'! —

Silent night, holy night!
 Son of God, love's pure light,
 Radiant beams from Thy holy face,
 With the dawn of redeeming grace,
 Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth,
 Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.

Silent night, holy night!
 Shepherds quake at the sight,
 Glories stream from heaven afar,
 Heav'nly hosts sing Alleluia;
 Christ, the Saviour, is born,
 Christ, the Saviour, is born.



O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL

Sing, choirs of angels, sing in exultation,
Sing, all ye citizens of heav'n above:
Glory to God, in the highest:
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee, born this happy morning;
Jesus, to Thee be glory giv'n;
Word of the Father, now in flesh appearing:
O come, let us adore Him, O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ, the Lord.

O Come, All Ye Faithful

Latin Hymn

John Reading, 1692

With spirit, but not too fast

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of four systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part is primarily chordal, with some melodic lines in the bass. Dynamics include *mf*, *f*, *p*, *mf*, *f*, *cresc.*, and *ff*. The lyrics are in Latin and English, with some words in italics.

1. O come, all ye faith - ful, joy - ful and tri - um - phant, O
1. Ad - es - te fi - del - es, lae - ti tri - um - phan - tes, Ve -

come ye, O come ye to Beth - le - hem: Come and be -
ni - te, Ve - ni - te in Beth - le - hem: Na - tum vi -

hold Him, born the King of an - gels: O come, let us a - dore Him, O
de - te, Re - gem an - ge - lo - rum: Ve - ni - te ad - o - re - mus, Ve -

come, let us a - dore Him, O come, let us a - dore Him, - Christ - the Lord.
ni - te ad - o - re - mus, Ve - ni - te ad - o - re - mus, - Do - mi - num.



HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING

Mild He lays His glory by,
Born that man no more may die;
Born to raise the sons of earth,
Born to give them second birth.
Ris'n with healing in His wings,
Light and life to all He brings,
Hail, the Son of Righteousness!
Hail, the heav'nborn Prince of Peace!

Hark! the herald angels sing,
Glory to the newborn King.

Hark! The Herald Angels Sing

Charles Wesley, 1739

Mendelssohn, 1840

Maestoso

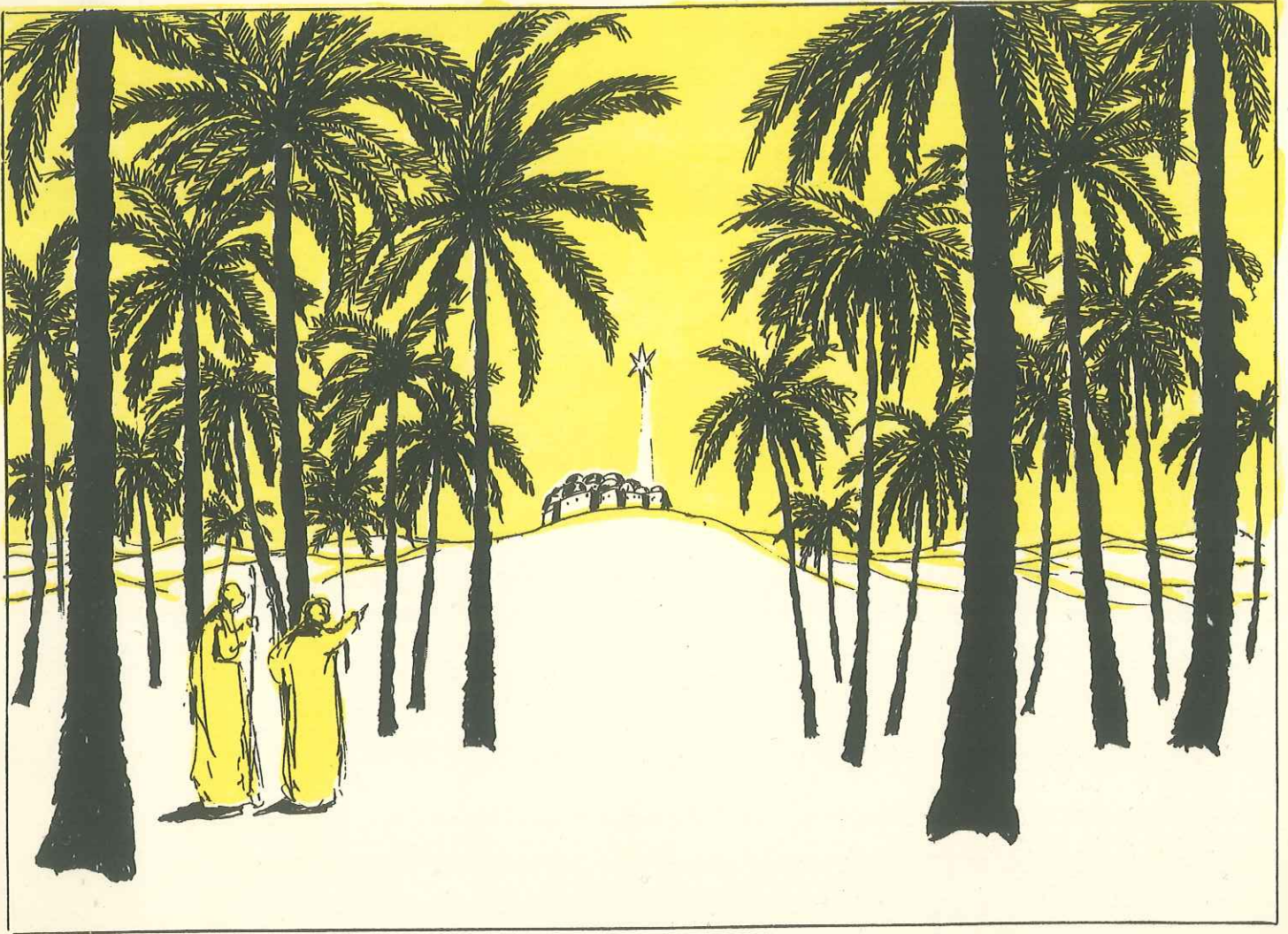
1. Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, - Glo - ry to the new-born King; Peace on earth and
2. Christ, by high - est heav'n a - dored, Christ, the ev - er - last - ing Lord; Late in time be -

mer - cy mild, - God and sin - ners re - con - ciled! Joy - ful all ye na - tions, rise, -
hold Him come, - Off - spring of the Vir - gin's womb. Veil'd in flesh the God - head see, -

Join the tri - umph of the skies; - With th'an - gel - ic host pro - claim Christ is - born in
Hail th'In - car - nate De - i - ty, - Pleased as Man with man to dwell, Je - sus our Em -

REFRAIN

Beth - le - hem.
man - u - ell Hark! the her - ald an - gels sing, Glo - ry - to the new-born King.



O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

How silently, how silently
The wond'rous gift is given:
So God imparts to human hearts
The blessings of His heaven.
No ear may hear His coming,
But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive Him still,
The dear Christ enters in.

O holy Child of Bethlehem,
Descend to us we pray,
Cast out our sin, and enter in,
Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels,
The great glad tidings tell;
O come to us, abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Phillips Brooks

Lewis Redner, 1868

Not too fast

1. O lit - tle town of Beth - le - hem, How still we see thee
2. For Christ is born of Ma - ry And gath - ered all a -

mf

lie, A - bove thy deep and dream-less sleep The si - lent stars go
bove, While mor - tals sleep, the an - gels keep Their watch of won - d'ring

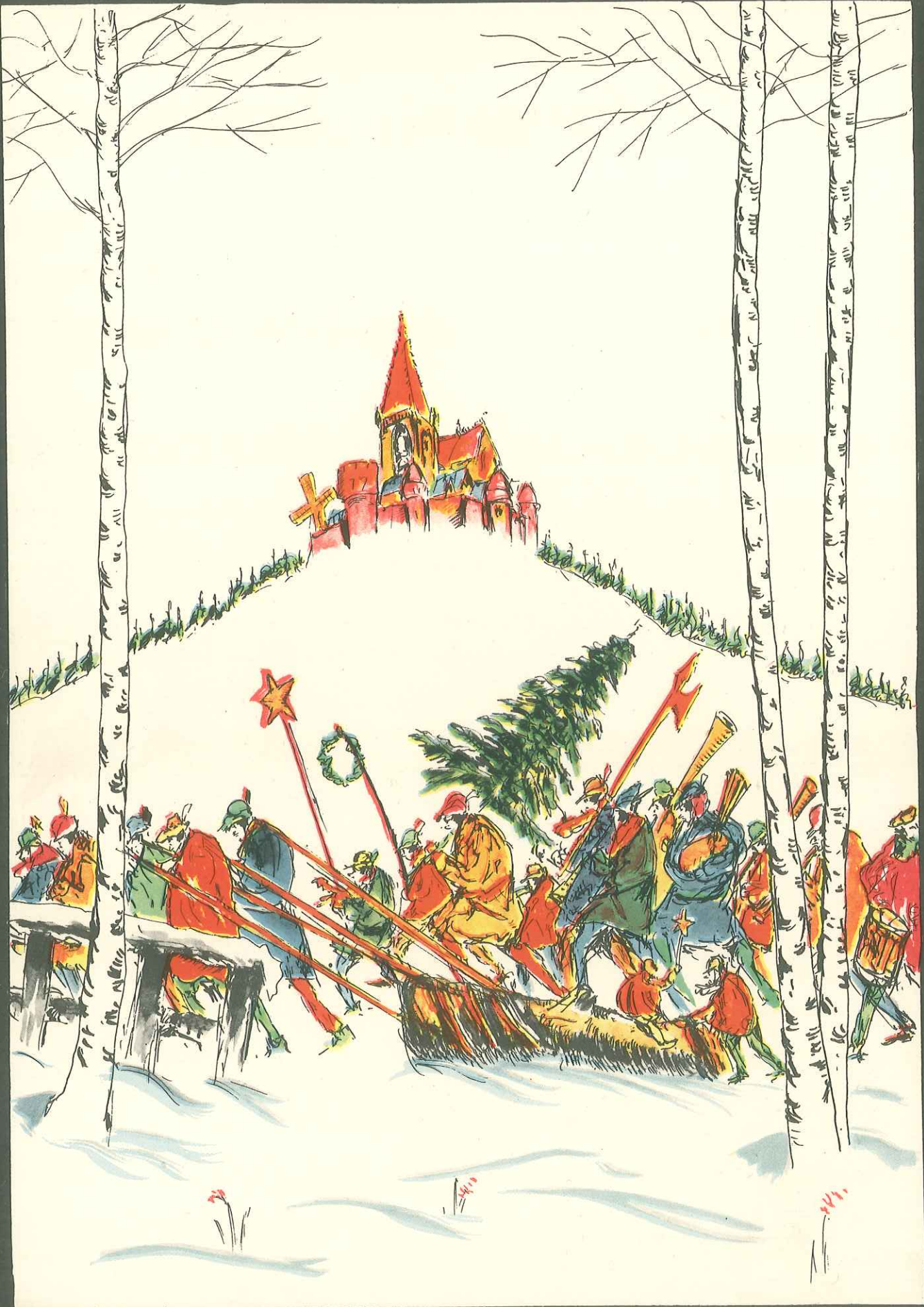
cresc.

by; Yet in thy dark streets shin - eth The ev - er - last - ing
love. O morn - ing stars, to - geth - er Pro - claim the ho - ly

p

light, The hopes and fears of all the years, Are met in thee to - night.
birth, And prais - es sing to God the King, And peace to men on earth.

f *rit.*



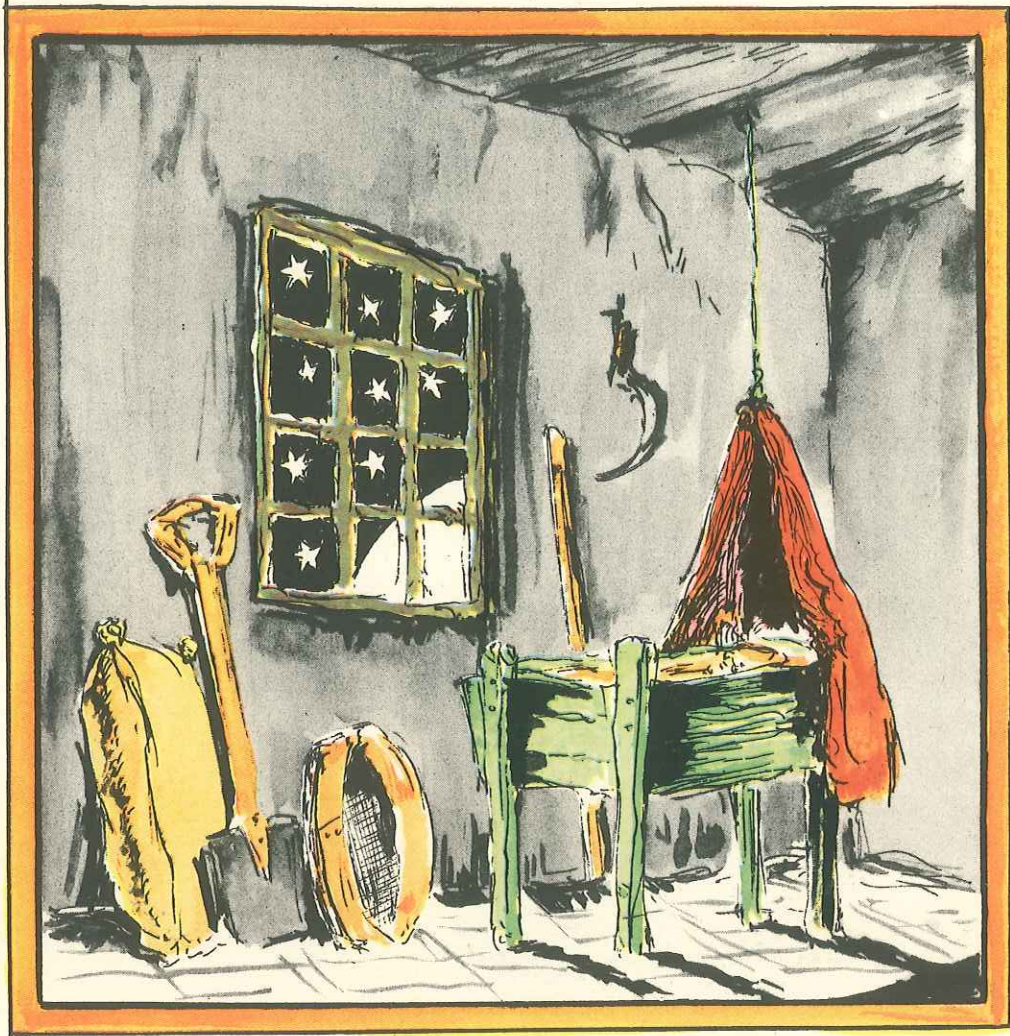
Gaily

1. Deck the hall with boughs of hol - ly,
 2. See the blaz - ing Yule be - fore us, Fa, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la.
 3. Fast a - way the old year pass - es,

'Tis the sea - son to be jol - ly,
 Strike the harp and join the cho - rus, Fa, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la.
 Hail the new, ye lads and lass - es,

Don we now are gay ap - par - rel,
 Fol - low me in mer - ry meas - ure, Fa, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la.
 Sing we joy - ous all to - geth - er,

Troll the an - cient Yule - tide car - ol,
 While I tell of Yule - tide trea - sure, Fa, la, la, la, la, la, la, la, la.
 Heed - less of the wind and watch - er,



AWAY IN A MANGER

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay
Close by me for ever, and love me, I pray;
Bless all the dear children in Thy tender care,
And take us to heaven, to live with Thee, there.

Away in a Manger

Martin Luther

German

Slowly, with gentle movement

1. A - way in a man - ger, no crib for a bed, The
2. The cat - tle are low - ing, the poor Ba - by wakes, But

p

p

And.

*

lit - tle Lord Je - sus laid down His sweet head; The stars in the
lit - tle Lord Je - sus no cry - ing He makes; I love Thee, Lord

And.

sky — looked down where He lay, The lit - tle Lord Je - sus, a -
Je - sus! look down from the sky, And stay by my cra - dle till

poco rit.

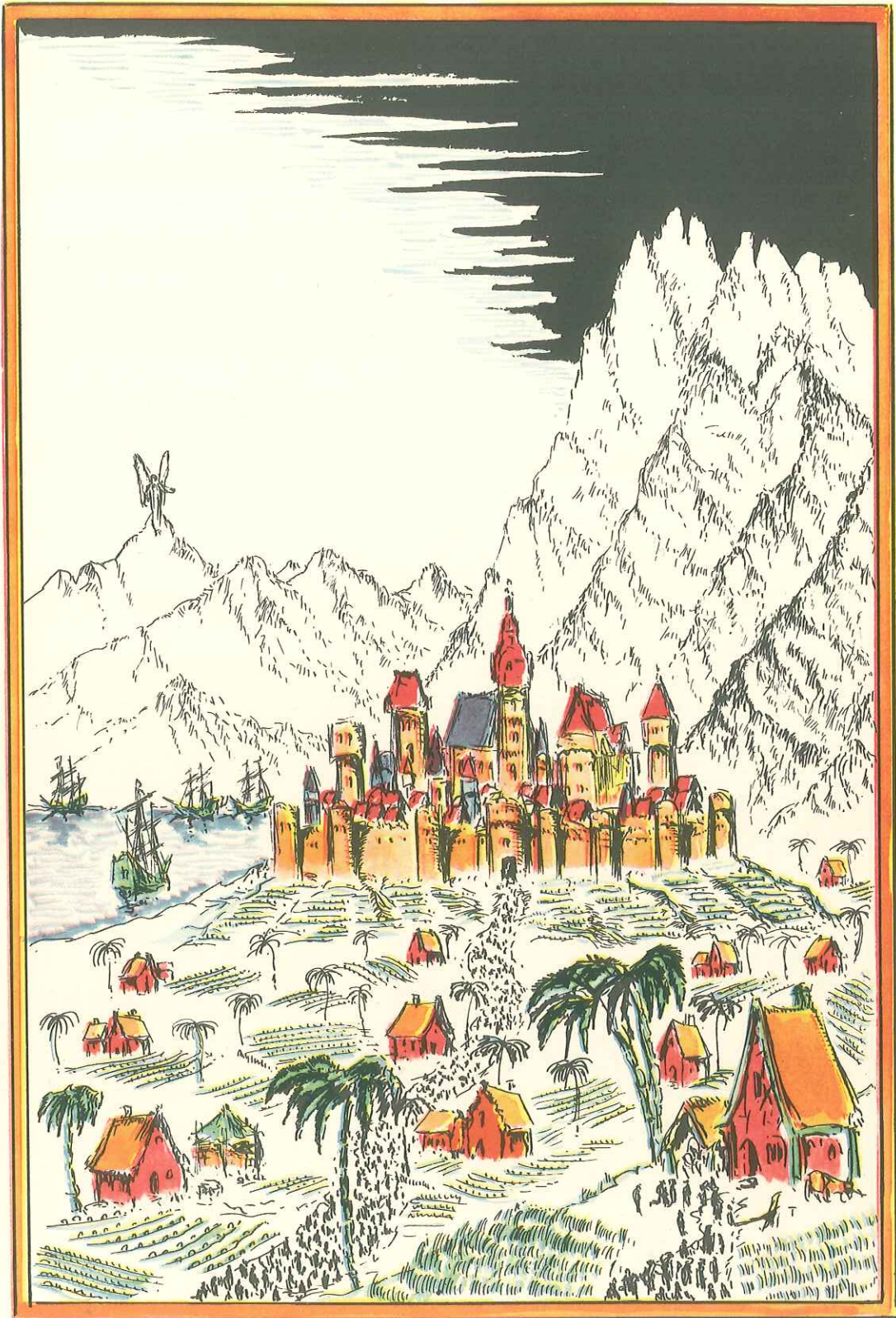
poco rit.

*

sleep on the hay.
morn - ing is nigh.

INTERLUDE

mf



From Heaven High I Come to You

Luther, 1535

Old German Melody

Slowly

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and common time (C). It consists of three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part is written in treble and bass clefs. The tempo is marked 'Slowly' and the dynamics are 'p' (piano) for the first two systems and 'mf' (mezzo-forte) for the third. The lyrics are in German and English.

p

1. From Heav - en high I come to you; I
 2. To you is born this night a Child, Of

bring you news both good and true. Glad ti - dings of great
 Vir - gin Ma - ry meek and mild; A Child so bless-ed, and

mf

joy I bring; To you is born this night a King.
 full of love, Sent for your joy from Heav - en a - bove.

mf

VOM HIMMEL HOCH

Vom Himmel hoch, da komm ich her,
 Ich bring' euch gute, neue Maer.
 Der guten Maer bring ich so viel,
 Davon ich sing'n und sagen will.

Euch ist ein Kindlein heut geborn,
 Von einer Jungfrau auserkorn,
 Ein Kindelein so zart und fein,
 Das soll eur Freud' und Wonne sein.



The First Nowell

The First Nowell

Traditional

Traditional English

Moderately

1. The first Now - ell the an - gel did say Was to
2. They look - ed up and saw a star, Shin - ing

certain poor shep-herds in fields as they lay; In fields where they lay
in the East, - be - yond - them far, And to the earth it

Keep - ing their sheep On a cold win - ter's night that was so deep.
gave great light, And so it con - tin - ued both day and night.

CHORUS

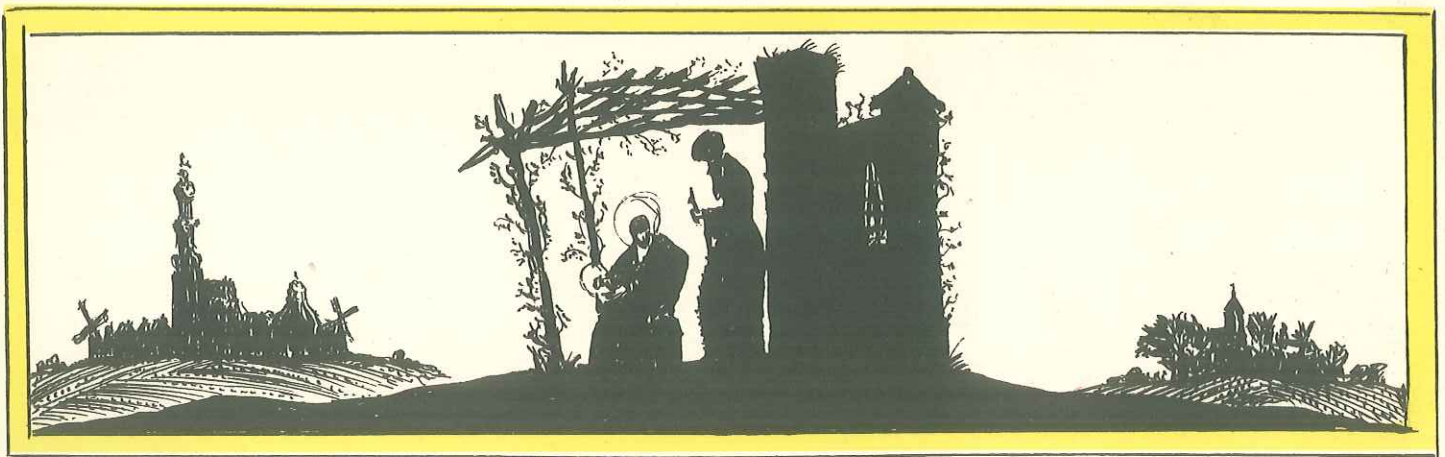
f

Now - ell, ——— Now - ell, Now - ell, Now -

The first system of the chorus features a vocal line in treble clef and piano accompaniment in grand staff. The key signature is two sharps (D major). The vocal line begins with a forte dynamic marking. The lyrics are: "Now - ell, ——— Now - ell, Now - ell, Now -".

ell, Born is the King — of Is - ra - el.

The second system continues the chorus with the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "ell, Born is the King — of Is - ra - el." The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both hands.



THE FIRST NOWELL

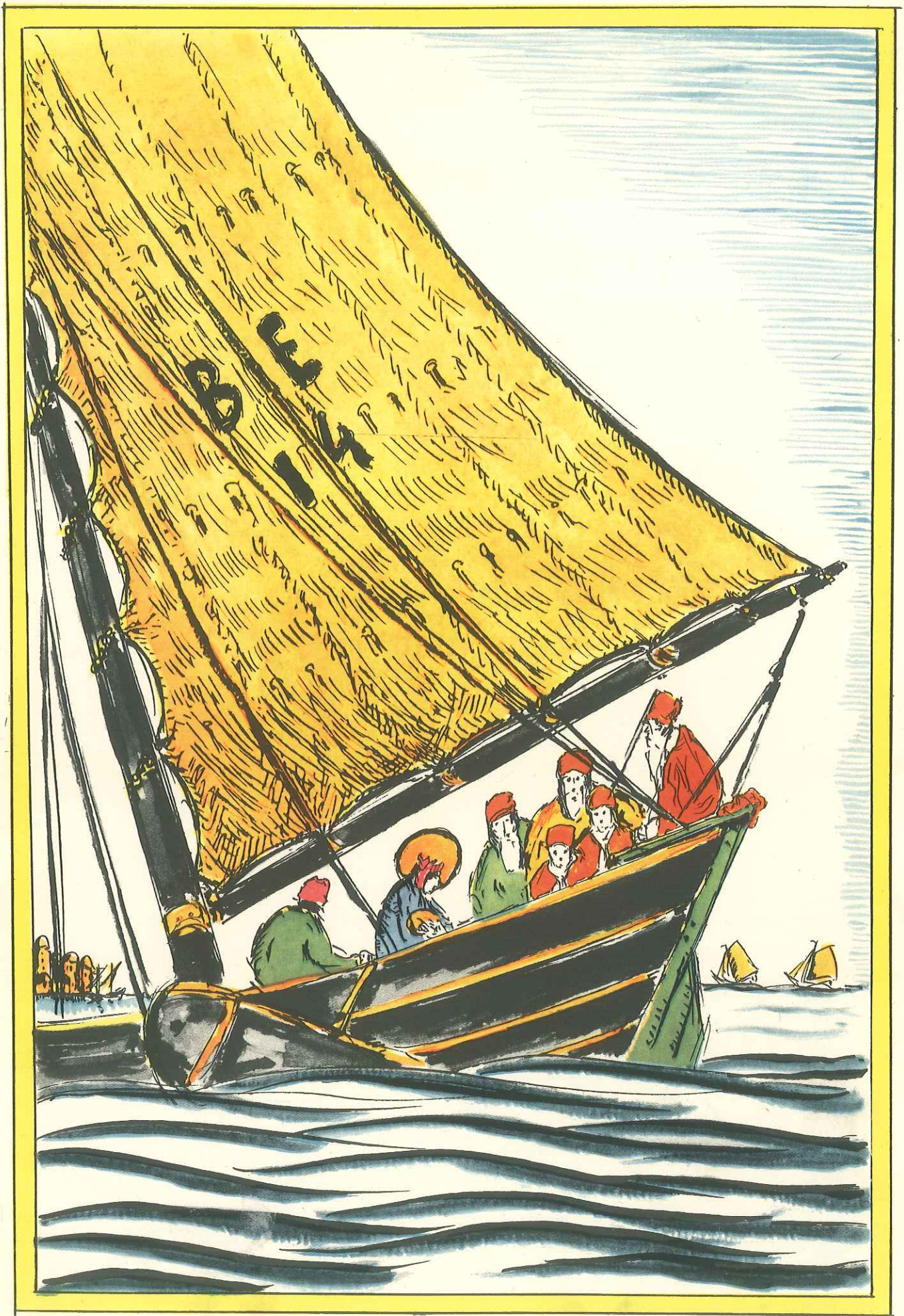
And by the light of the same Star,
Three Wisemen came from country far;
To seek for a King was their intent,
And to follow the Star wherever it went.
Nowell, etc.

This Star drew nigh to the northwest,
O'er Bethlehem it took its rest,
And there it did both stop and stay,
Right over the place where Jesus lay.
Nowell, etc.

Then entered in those Wisemen three,
Full reverently upon their knee,
And offered there, in His Presence,
Their gold, and myrrh, and frankincense.
Nowell, etc.

Then let us all with one accord,
Sing praises to our Heavenly Lord,
That hath made Heaven and earth of nought,
And with His Blood mankind hath bought.
Nowell, etc.





I Saw Three Ships

Briskly and merrily

1. I saw three ships come sail - ing in, On
 2. And what was in those ships all three? On

Christ - mas Day, on Christ - mas Day, I saw three ships come
 And what was in those

sail - ing in, On Christ - mas Day in the morn - ing.
 ships all three?

I SAW THREE SHIPS

3. The Virgin Mary and Christ were there,
4. Pray, whither sailed those ships all three?
5. O they sailed into Bethlehem,
6. And all the bells on earth shall ring,
7. And all the angels in Heaven shall sing,
8. And all the souls on earth shall sing,
9. Then let us all rejoice amain,



O Jesus, So Sweet

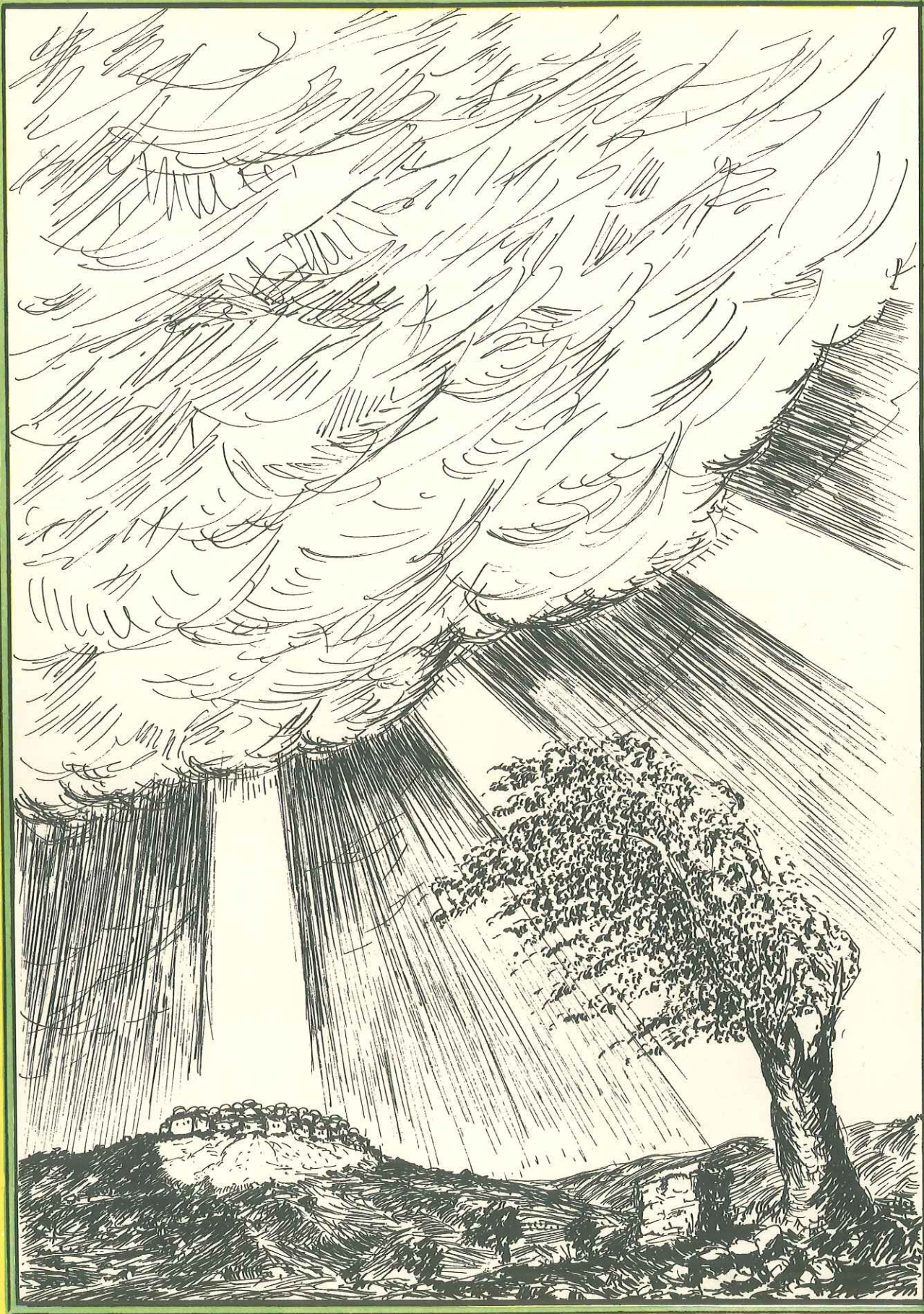
Gently

1. O Je - sus, so sweet, O Je - sus so mild; O
 1. O Je - su - lein süß, O Je - su - lein mild, des

love - ly Babe, Ce - les - tial Child! Thou cam'st to us, from
 Va - ter's Will'n hast du er - füllt. Bist kom - men aus dem

Heav'n a - bove, To bring poor mor - tals God's great
 Him - mel - reich, uns Ar - men Men - schen wor - den

love; O Je - sus so sweet, O Je - sus so mild!
 gleich; O Je - su - lein süß, O Je - su - lein mild



Maestoso

f

1. Joy to the world! the Lord is come: Let earth re -
 2. Joy to the world! the Sa - viour reigns: Let men their

p

ceive her King; Let ev - 'ry heart pre - pare Him room And
 songs em - ploy; While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains Re -

heav'n and na - ture sing, And heav'n and na - ture
 peat the sound - ing joy, Re - peat the sound - ing

And heav'n and na - ture sing, And
 Re - peat the sound - ing joy, Re

f

sing, And heav'n, and heav'n and na - ture sing.
 joy, Re - peat, re - peat the sound - ing joy.

heav'n and na - ture sing,
 peat the sound - ing joy,



We Three Kings of Orient Are

John H. Hopkins

We Three Kings of Orient Are

American Carol
John H. Hopkins, 1857

Slowly

mf

All: 1. We three kings of

mf

8

O - ri - ent are; Bear - ing gifts we tra - verse a - far,

pp

pp

Field and foun - tain, moor and moun - tain, Fol - low - ing yon - der Star.

cresc.

rit.

cresc.

rit.

CHORUS

a tempo f

O Star of won - der, Star of night, Star with

a tempo f

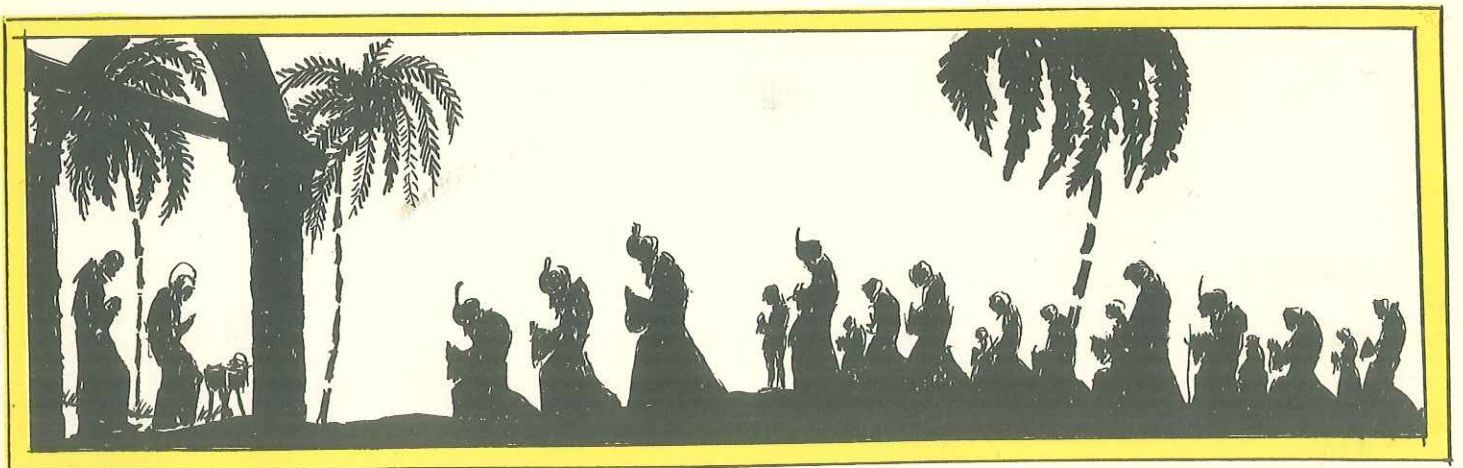
roy - al beau - ty bright, West - ward lead - ing, still pro -

The first system of music consists of a vocal line on a single treble clef staff and a piano accompaniment on a grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is one sharp (F#). The vocal line begins with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, then a quarter rest, then quarter notes D5, E5, and F5, and finally a quarter note G5. The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line in the left hand and chords in the right hand.

ceed - ing, Guide us to Thy per - fect light.

dim.

The second system of music continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The vocal line starts with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5, then a quarter note D5, and finally a half note E5. The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns. A *dim.* (diminuendo) marking is placed above the vocal line and below the piano accompaniment. The system concludes with a double bar line and repeat dots.



WE THREE KINGS OF ORIENT ARE

Melchior

Born a King on Bethlehem's plain,
Gold I bring, to crown Him again,
King forever, ceasing never,
Over us all to reign.

CHORUS

Caspar

Frankincense to offer have I,
Incense owns a Deity nigh,
Pray'r and praising, all men raising,
Worship Him, God most high.

CHORUS

Balthazar

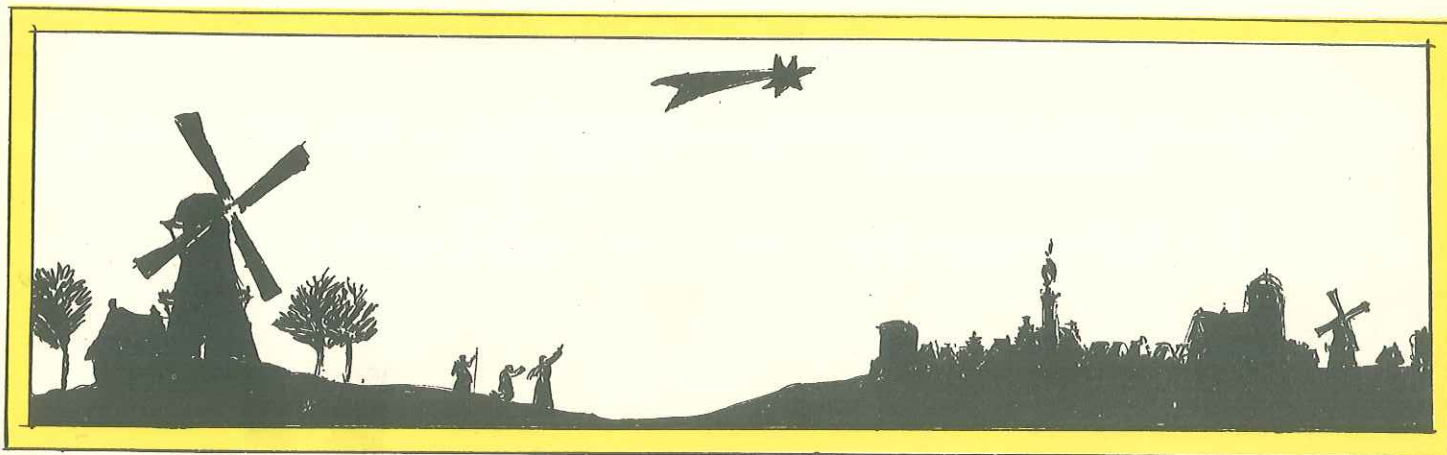
Myrrh is mine, its bitter perfume
Breathes a life of gathering gloom,
Sorrowing, sighing, bleeding, dying,
Seal'd in the stone-cold tomb.

CHORUS

All

Glorious now behold Him arise,
King and God and Sacrifice,
Alleluia, alleluia,
Earth to the heav'ns replies.

CHORUS





IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR

O ye, beneath life's crushing load,
Whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way
With painful steps and slow!
Look now, for glad and golden hours
Come swiftly on the wing:
O rest beside the weary road,
And hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on,
By prophets seen of old,
When with the ever-circling years,
Shall come the time foretold,
When the new heaven and earth shall own
The Prince of Peace their King,
And the whole world send back the song
Which now the angels sing.

It Came upon the Midnight Clear

Joyously

mf *cresc.*

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 - furl'd; —

mf

From an - gels bend - ing near the earth, To touch their harps of gold: —
 And still their heav'n - ly mus - ic floats O'er all the wear - y world: —

f *dim.*

"Peace on the earth, good - will to men, From heav'n's all gra - cious King"; —
 A - bove its sad and low - ly plains They bend on hov - 'ring wing. —

mf

The world in sol - emn still - ness lay To hear the an - gels sing. —
 And ev - er o'er its Ba - bel sounds The bless - ed an - gels sing. —



So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come, peasant, king, to own Him;
The King of Kings, salvation brings:
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.

Raise, raise the song on high,
The Virgin sings her lullaby:
Joy, joy, for Christ is born,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!

What Child Is This?

William C. Dix

Old English "Greensleeves"

Not too fast

1. What Child is this, — Who, laid to rest, — On Ma - ry's lap — is
2. Why lies He in — such mean es - tate, — Where ox and ass — are

sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with an - thems sweet, While shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
feed - ing? Good Chris - tians, fear: for sin - ners here — The si - lent Word — is plead - ing:

CHORUS

This, this — is Christ the King, — Whom shep - herds guard — and an - gels sing:
Nails, spear, — shall pierce Him through, The Cross be borne — for me, for you:

Haste, haste — to bring Him laud, — The Babe, — the Son — of Ma - ry!
Hail, hail, — the Word made flesh, — The Babe, — the Son — of Ma - ry!



GOOD CHRISTIAN MEN, REJOICE

Good Christian men, rejoice
With heart and soul and voice,
Now ye need not fear the grave:
Jesus Christ was born to save.
Calls you one and calls you all,
To gain His everlasting hall;
Christ was born to save,
Christ was born to save.

Good Christian Men, Rejoice

John M. Neale

14th century German

Joyously, rather fast

The musical score is written in 3/4 time with a key signature of one flat (B-flat). It consists of a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The piano part features a steady bass line and chords in the right hand. The vocal line has two parts, with lyrics written below the notes. Dynamics include *mf*, *f*, and *ff*, along with *cresc.* markings. The score is divided into four systems, each with a vocal staff and a piano staff.

mf

1. Good Chris - tian men, re - joice With heart and soul and
2. Good Chris - tian men, re - joice With heart and soul and

voice; Give ye heed to what we say: Je - sus Christ is
voice; Now ye hear of end - less bliss: Je - sus Christ was

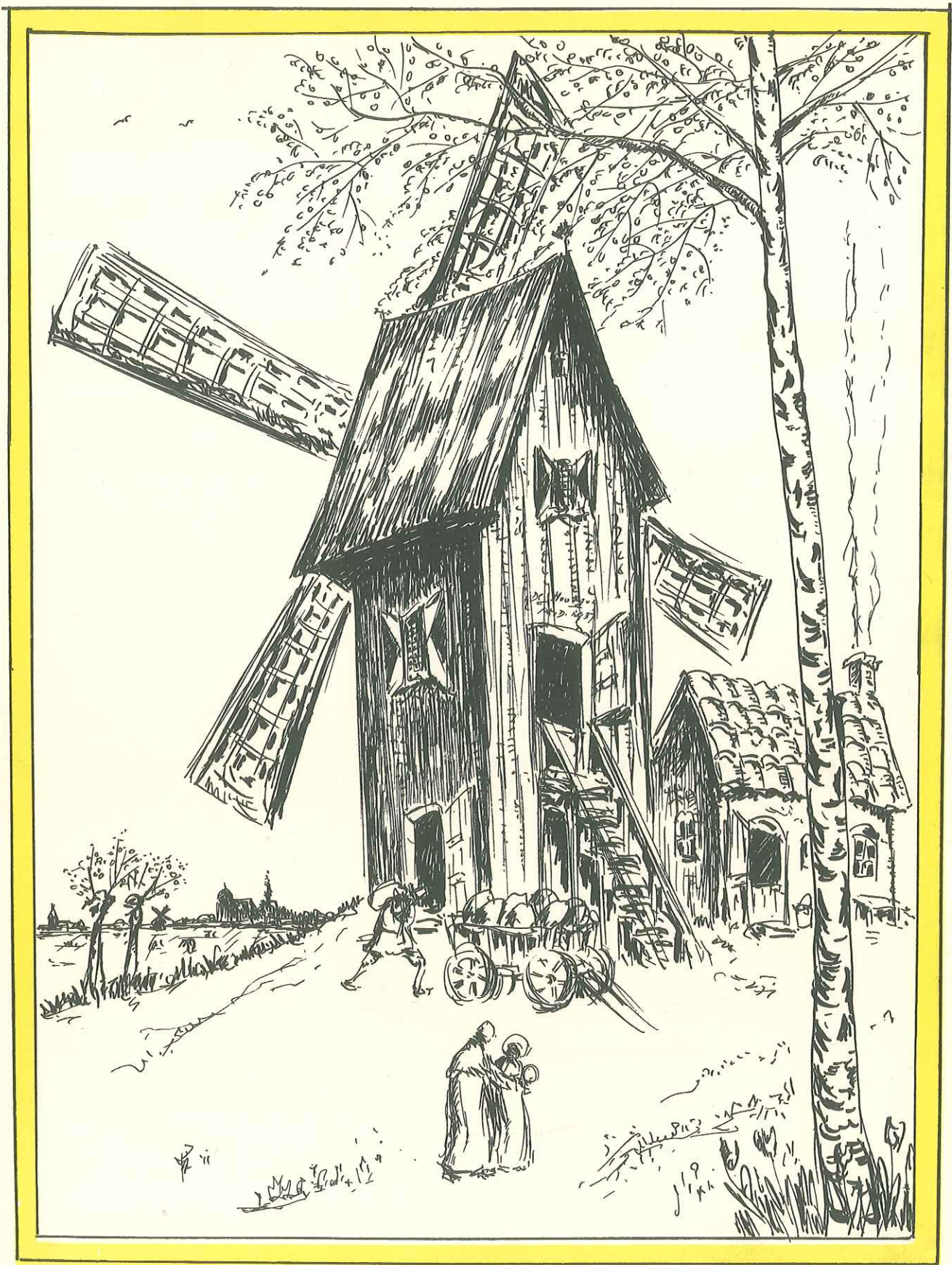
cresc.

born to - day! Ox and ass be - fore Him bow, And He is in the
born for this! He hath oped the heav'n - ly door, And man is bless - ed

f *ff*

man - ger now; Christ is born to - day! Christ is born to - day!
ev - er - more; Christ was born for this! Christ was born for this!

f *ff*



Jesus' Lullaby

Polish

Tenderly, with flowing rhythm

pp
Ped.

p

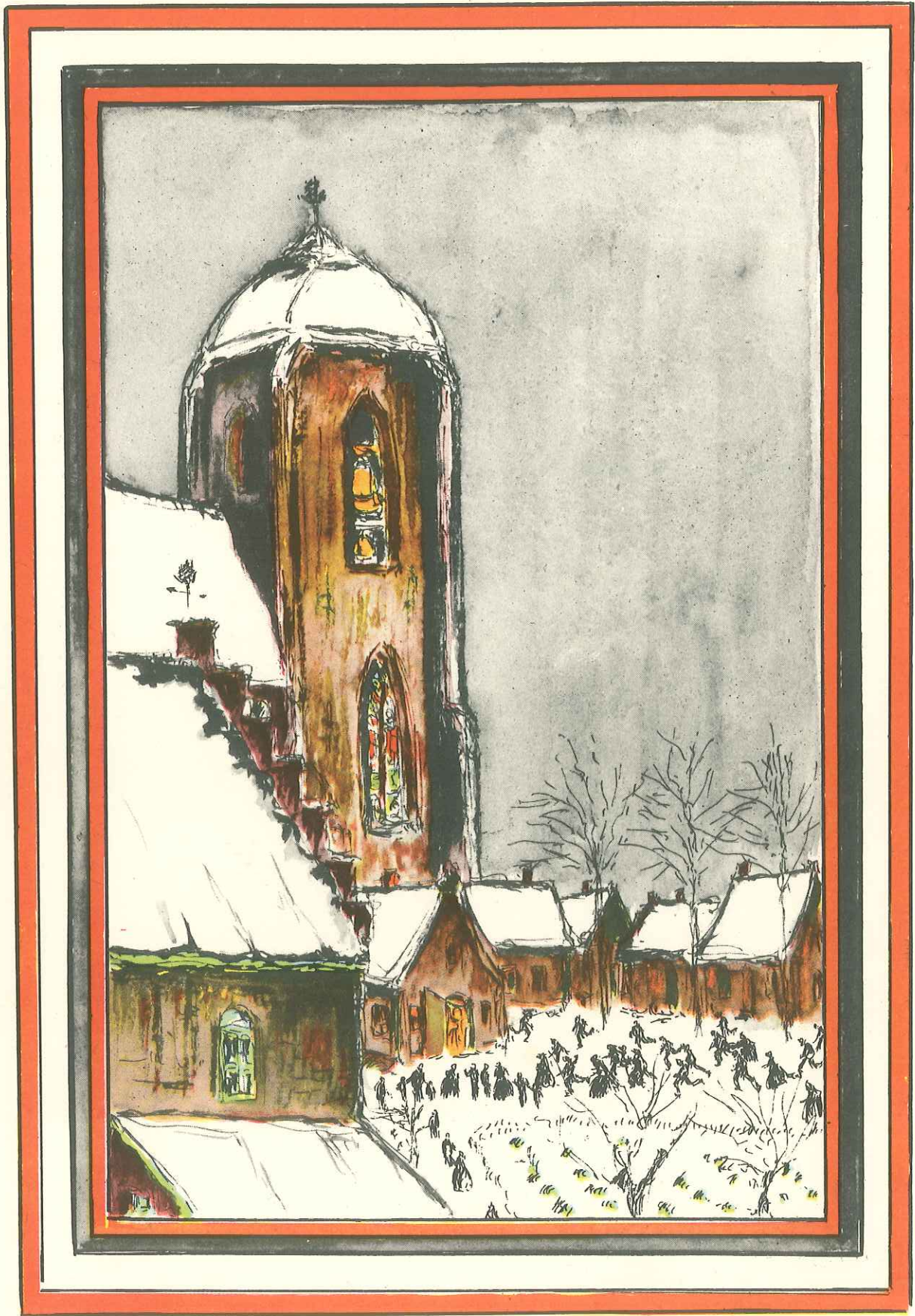
1. Lul - la - by, Je - sus, my own lit - tle — treas - ure, Lul - la - by,
2. Sleep now, - my Lit - tle One, Dear - est Babe — Je - sus, Sleep, now, - my

Je - sus, my joy be - yond meas - ure. Lul - la - by, - Je - sus, - my -
Lit - tle Son, Fair - est One, sleep now.

pp *rit.*

dear jew - el sleep - ing, Ma - ry - is hold - ing you, watch - ing, and keep - ing.

pp *rit.*



O Come, Little Children

J. P. A. Schulz

Simply, not too fast

The musical score is written in 2/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It consists of three systems of vocal and piano accompaniment. The first system includes two vocal parts with lyrics: '1. O come, lit-tle chil-dren, O come, one and all. O come to the' and '2. O see, in the cra-dle, this night in the stall, O see how the'. The piano accompaniment is marked 'p'. The second system continues the lyrics: 'man-ger in Beth-le-hem's stall; And see what our Fa-ther on' and 'light daz-zles e-ven us all; In pure gleam-ing white lies this'. The piano accompaniment is marked 'cresc.'. The third system concludes with lyrics: 'this ho-ly night, Has sent us from Heav-en for our pure de-light.' and 'Child, heav-en's love, More beau-t'ous and ho-ly than an-gels a-bove.'. The piano accompaniment is marked 'f'.

IHR KINDERLEIN KOMMET

Ihr Kinderlein, kommet, O kommet doch all'!
Zur Krippe her kommet in Bethlehem's Stall,
Un seht, was in dieser hochheiligen Nacht
Der Vater im Himmel fuer Freude uns macht.

O seht in der Krippe im naechtlichen Stall,
Seht heir bei des Lichtleins hellglaenzendem Strahl,
In reinlichen Windeln das himmlische Kind,
Viel schoener und holder, als Engel es sind.



God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen

With spirit

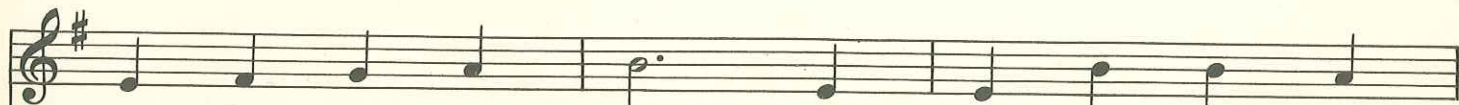
mf



1. God rest you mer - ry, Gen - tle - men, Let
 2. In Beth - le - hem, in Jew - ry, This



mf



noth - ing you dis - may, Re - mem - ber Christ our
 bless - ed Babe was born, And laid with - in a



cresc.



Sa - viour Was born on Christ - mas Day, To
 man - ger Up - on this bless - ed morn; The



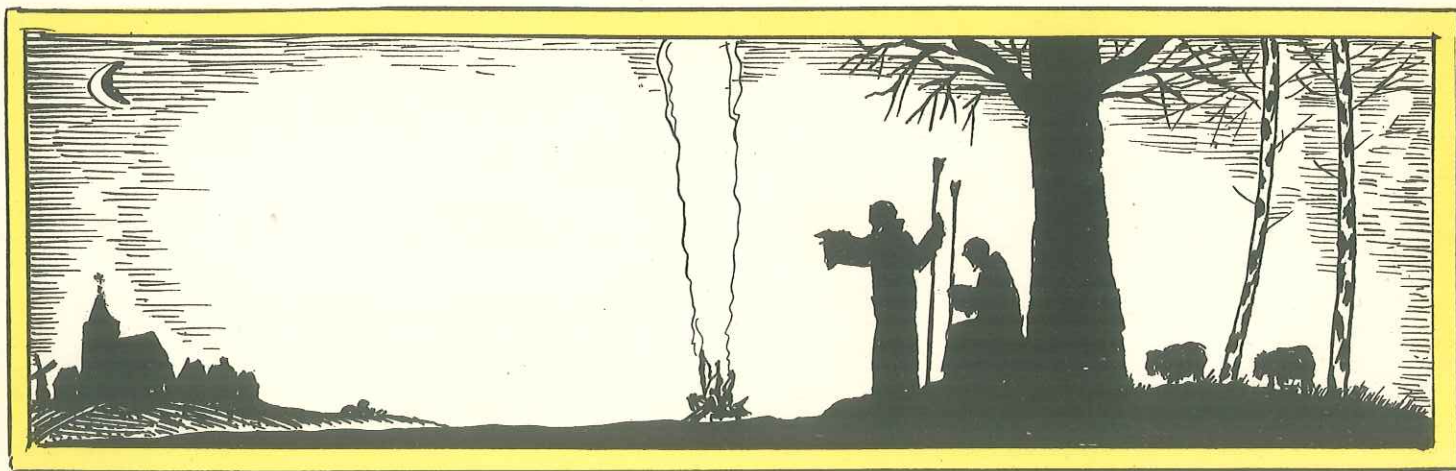
cresc.

save us all from Sa - tan's pow'r When we were gone a - stray.
 which His moth - er Ma - ry, Did noth - ing take in scorn.

CHORUS

f O — ti - dings of com - fort and joy, com - fort and

f joy, O — ti - dings of com - fort and joy.



GOD REST YOU MERRY, GENTLEMEN

From God our heav'nly Father,
A blessed angel came,
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same;
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by name.

CHORUS

"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."

CHORUS

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.

CHORUS

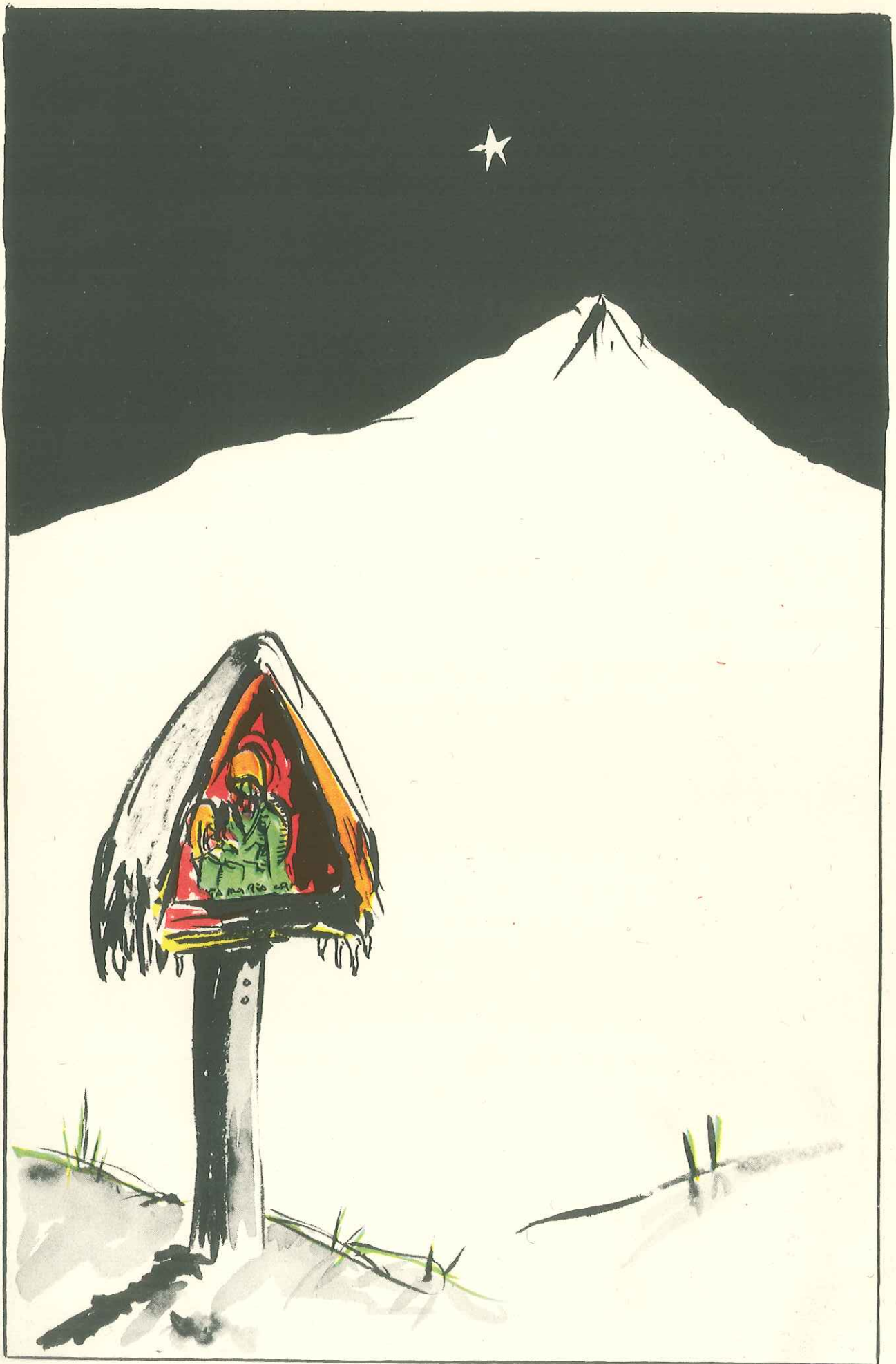
And when they came to Bethlehem,
Where our dear Saviour lay,
They found Him in a manger,
Where oxen feed on hay;
His mother Mary kneeling down,
Unto the Lord did pray.

CHORUS

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.

CHORUS





How Brightly Beams the Morning Star

Slowly

p

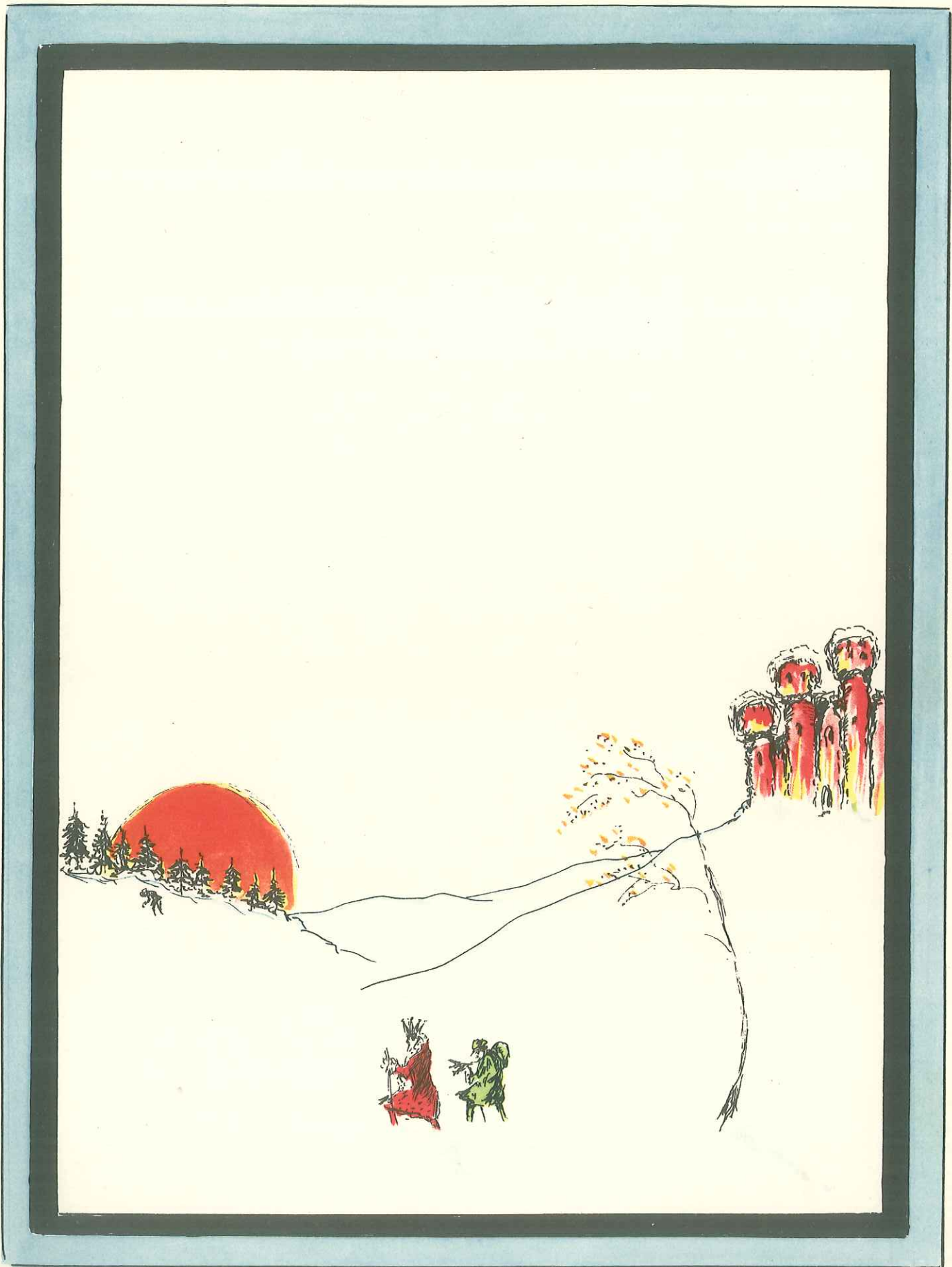
1. How bright - ly beams the morn - ing star. What
 2. The ray of God that breaks our night And

sud - den ra - diance from a - far Doth glad us with its shin - ing?
 fills the dark - en'd souls with light, Who long for truth were pin - ing.

mf *p*

Thy word, Je - sus, tru - ly feeds us, Right - ly leads us,

Life be - stow - ing. Praise, oh praise such love o'er - flow - ing.



Good King Wenceslas

1. Good king Wen - ces - las look'd out, On the Feast of
 2. "Hith - er, page, and stand by me, If thou know'st it,

Steph - en, When the snow lay round a - bout,
 tell - ing, Yon - der peas - ant, who is he?

Deep and crisp and e - ven: Bright - ly shone the
 Where and what his dwell - ing?" "Sire, he lives a

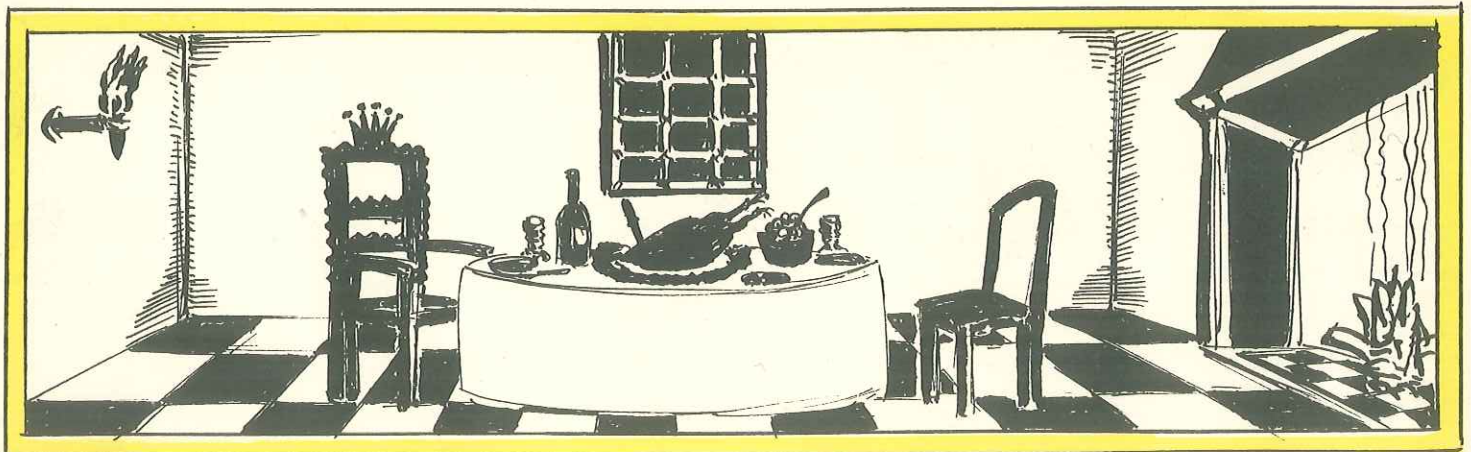
p

moon that night, Though the frost was cru - el, When a poor man
 good league hence, Un - der - neath the moun - tain; Right a - gainst the

rit.

came in sight, Gath - 'ring win - ter fu - - el.
 for - est fence, By Saint Ag - nes' foun - - tain".

rit.



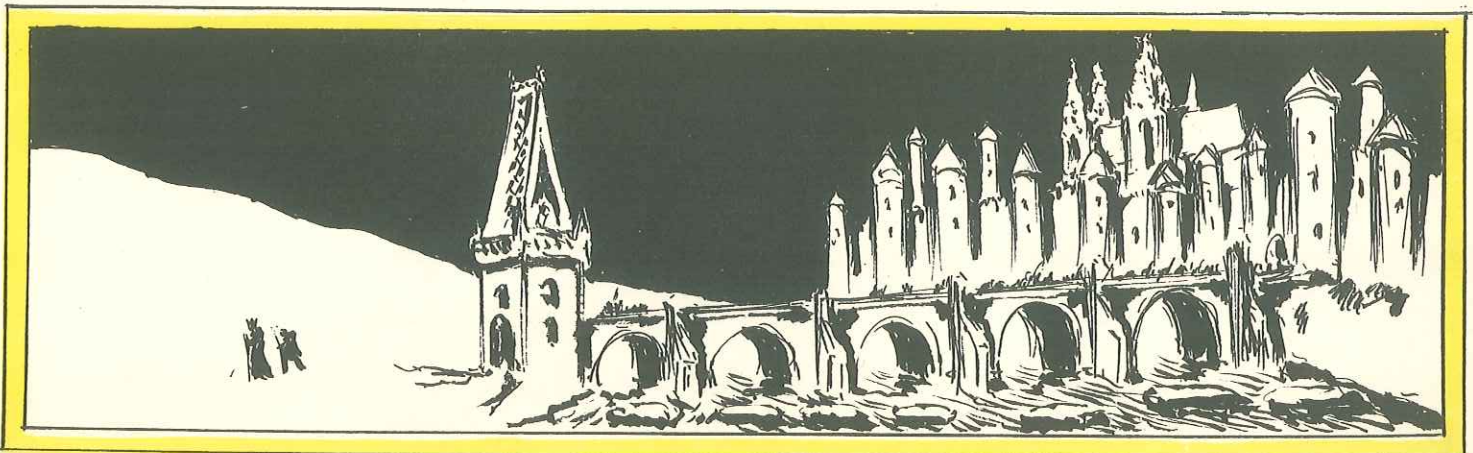
GOOD KING WENCESLAS

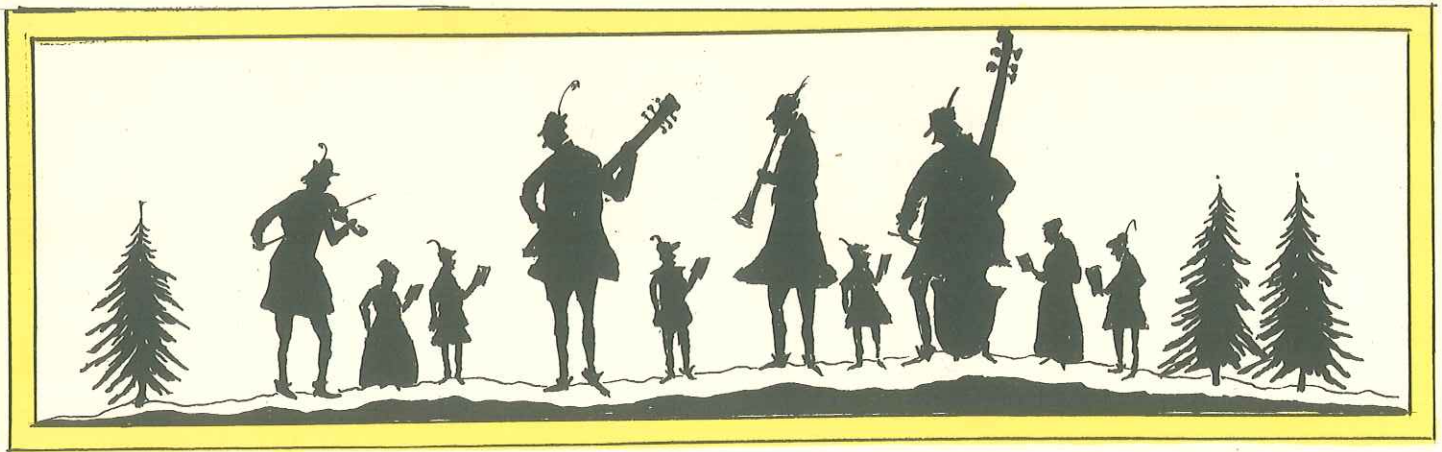
“Bring me flesh, and bring me wine,
Bring me pine logs hither,
Thou and I will see him dine,
When we bear them thither.”
Page and monarch forth they went,
Forth they went together;
Through the rude winds’ wild lament,
And the bitter weather.

“Sire, the night is darker now,
And the wind blows stronger;
Fails my heart, I know not how,
I can go no longer.”

“Mark my footsteps, my good page,
Tread thou in them boldly:
Thou shalt find the winter’s rage
Freeze thy blood less coldly.”

In his master’s steps he trod,
Where the snow lay dinted;
Heat was in the very sod
Which the saint had printed.
Therefore, Christian men, be sure,
Wealth or rank possessing,
Ye who now will bless the poor,
Shall yourselves find blessing.





A Few Words About the Adventures of These Songs

ORIGINALLY a “carol” was a dance. Gradually the word came to mean the tune to which the people danced. Today carols are usually identified with those “hymns of joy” which are sung at Christmas time, and we are apt to be very solemn about them. That, however, is all wrong, for Christmas should be the happiest season of the whole year. Therefore, when you sing these Christmas carols, please sing them *giocoso*, or as we say nowadays in English, “gaily and with a light spirit.”

SILENT NIGHT, HOLY NIGHT. *Habent sua fata libelli*. The Romans were right. Books have indeed their own queer adventures but few literary or musical products have gone through such a strange experience as this, the best known and best beloved of all our many Christmas songs.

It was written early in the nineteenth century. On the day before Christmas it was discovered that the organ of the church of Oberndorf had broken down. Oberndorf was a small village in the Bavarian mountains, and the Bavarians, until the coming of the Third Reich, were staunch Catholics who celebrated Christmas in a very elaborate fashion.

When Franz Xaver Gruber, the village schoolmaster and the church organist, found that there would be no music (a blizzard had cut the village off from the rest of the world), he went to Josef Mohr, the as-

sistant priest, and suggested that he set to work at once and write a special song for tomorrow’s festivities, but something so simple that it could be sung without any further preparation, for there would be no time to rehearse. Mohr said that he would do his best and by that same afternoon *Silent Night, Holy Night* had been written. In the evening, Gruber composed a little unpretentious melody to fit the words, and *Silent Night, Holy Night* was ready to conquer the world.

On Christmas morning of the year 1818 it was sung for the first time. On this occasion the accompaniment was played by a young Oberndorf citizen who knew a few chords on the guitar, and that was all.

A short time later when the roads were once more passable, a repair man came from the nearby Zillerthal to look after the organ of Oberndorf, and Gruber showed

The Adventures of These Songs

him the new song. The repair man thought it was fine and he asked for a copy. Gruber gave him one and in this way *Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht* got to the Zillerthalers, who even then were already famous both as singers and yodelers.

From the Zillerthal the tune thereupon spread across the whole of the civilized world. A hundred years ago, Tirolean singers were very popular in America and it was a group of Tiroleans who first brought the song to our own country and sang it in their concerts all the way from Boston to Cincinnati.

The music is often attributed to Michael Haydn, the brother of the great Joseph and himself a musician of extraordinary talent. Unfortunately Michael Haydn died in 1806, and we have not been able to follow the song further back than the year 1818. It therefore is a piece of true "folk music"—a tune that came right out of the heart of the people. Unless Gruber had done what all famous musicians seem to have done since time immemorial and had "borrowed" the melody from some old and forgotten hymn-book. But there is no evidence that he was guilty of such an artistic theft, and so we might as well give him all possible credit.

* * *

DECK THE HALL WITH BOUGHS OF HOLLY comes from that land of marvelous singers—Wales. It is a very old tune. Mozart used it for a piano-violin duet, but its history is obscure.

* * *

AWAY IN A MANGER. The words were written by Martin Luther and the song too was adapted by him from an older melody. The great German reformer was totally indifferent to the plastic arts but he loved music and was an excellent player of the lute with a decided gift for composition.

He realized that music should begin at home and organized his own children into a small domestic choir, and for their benefit he wrote quite a number of simple and not-quite-so-simple compositions. This is one of them.

* * *

THE FIRST NOWELL. This is a medieval shepherd's tune. It is very old and of either French or English origin but we do not know which for sure. It first appeared in print in England and as you will notice, it is really the story of the Nativity, told to the shepherds by an angel. The chorus is thereupon sung by a group of angels.

* * *

WE THREE KINGS OF ORIENT ARE. This was written (both the words and the music) by an American, an Episcopal clergyman by the name of John Henry Hopkins. The date was 1857. It may have been meant as a dramatic representation of the birth of Jesus, as the three Wise Men speak in sequence and not in unison. By the way, here you meet the three wise men for the first time by name: Caspar, Melchior, and Balthazar. Balthazar was the wise man of dusky hue, as you can see for yourself in all the medieval pictures of this charming scene.

* * *

HOW BRIGHTLY BEAMS THE MORNING STAR. Johann Sebastian Bach wrote this. Papa Bach apparently liked the tune, for he used it again in one of his choral preludes and also introduced it into his cantatas. It is a very touching, simple and lovable carol, one of the most beautiful of our entire collection.

* * *

HARK! THE HERALD ANGELS SING. The words were written by Charles Wesley, the brother of the famous divine, John Wesley,

but the music is by no one less than Felix Mendelssohn-Bartholdy. In 1840 the great composer composed a cantata to commemorate the invention of printing. This melody is from the second chorus of that cantata.

* * *

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM. Phillips Brooks, Bishop of Massachusetts, wrote the words as a hymn for Sunday school use, and he thought so little of his poem that he did not bother to sign it. But it was a tremendous success and soon the secret leaked out, and in this way the famous Bishop became the author of one of our most popular Christmas carols. Many of our best composers have since then set these words to music. This one, the most popular version, was composed by Lewis Redner in the year 1868. Redner was the organist of Phillips Brooks' church in Boston.

* * *

IT CAME UPON THE MIDNIGHT CLEAR. The words were written by an American, a Unitarian minister by the name of Edmund Sears. A friend of his, another minister, Richard Willis, then set them to music.

* * *

FROM HEAVEN HIGH I COME TO YOU. This song was also composed by Martin Luther and again for the benefit of his own children. The tune was later adapted and harmonized by Johann Sebastian Bach.

* * *

O COME, LITTLE CHILDREN. This song was composed by a Dane by the name of Schulz and that, I am sorry to say, is all I know about him.

* * *

GOOD KING WENCESLAS. This is the story of the legendary King Wenceslas of Bohemia who lived early in the tenth century and who was famous far and wide, for his

generosity. Originally it was a spring carol and not really a Christmas carol. It used to be sung (as a discreet hint) by groups of carolers who hoped in this way to receive a pleasant *largesse* (old French for "tip") for their efforts from those whom they favored with their little impromptu concert. It was included in the *Piae Cantiones*, the collection of pious songs which Luther collected and which were published for the first time in the year 1582, thirty-six years after the great reformer's death.

* * *

JESUS' LULLABY. This is a Polish song of unknown origin, but is so lovely that it really does not matter very much who wrote it as long as we can sing it.

* * *

O JESUS, SO SWEET. This song was not, as is so often claimed, written by Johann Sebastian Bach, or by Mozart. It is much older than either of these composers, for as far as we have been able to discover, it first appeared in Cologne in the year 1623, and Bach was not born until fifty-two years later. The reason it has been accredited to Bach was probably due to the fact that the great master included it in one of his collections of spiritual songs. But Bach, like Handel and all the other great composers, was a most cheerful borrower and why not, since he enriched everything he touched?

* * *

JOY TO THE WORLD. This is a paraphrase on the ninety-eighth psalm of David, written by a certain Dr. Isaac Watts in 1719. The tune is from Handel's *Messiah*. This carol was adapted from the *Messiah* by Lowell Mason.

* * *

WHAT CHILD IS THIS? This is a very old tune based upon the old English *Greensleeves*, which according to Mr. William Shakespeare, the well-known playwright,

The Adventures of These Songs

was the most popular tune of his time. The words are by William C. Dix (1837-1898).

* * *

I SAW THREE SHIPS. This is also an old traditional song. It is sometimes called *Christmas Day in the Morning*. It was probably written in the second half of the fifteenth century, and England seems to have been its home country.

Since you may wonder what the two letters on the sail mean, let me tell you that all fishing vessels in Europe carry on their sails the first two letters of the village which they use as their home port. Bethlehem was not a seaport, but that meant nothing to the people of the Middle Ages. They lived in a world of the imagination rather than of fact, and they were just as apt to turn Bethlehem into a harbor full of fishermen as to turn Nazareth or Jerusalem into a contemporary Dutch or French or English village, as I have again done in this book.

* * *

GOOD CHRISTIAN MEN, REJOICE. In 1601 a German, Bartholomew Gesius, arranged this tune from a fourteenth-century hymn called *In dulci Jubilo*. The words are by the Rev. Dr. John Mason Neale, who, forced to retire on account of illness, devoted himself to collecting and translating numerous Greek and Latin hymns and rendering them into modern English.

* * *

GOD REST YOU MERRY, GENTLEMEN. This is a traditional old English carol. The words and music are English, written in the sixteenth century, and were later adapted by Sir John Stainer, the organist of St. Paul's cathedral in London, who died in 1901, and who "arranged" so many of

our modern Christmas carols that people sometimes seem to think that he was the author of all of them. He was not. He was merely the arranger.

* * *

O COME, ALL YE FAITHFUL. Next to *Silent Night*, this is probably the best known of all our many Christmas carols but its history is by no means clear. Most likely it was an old Latin carol, sung and danced around the *crèche*, and according to the tradition, it was written by Saint Bonaventura, the *Doctor Seraphicus* or "Seraphic Doctor" of the thirteenth century and a disciple of the merry Saint Francis. It is sometimes attributed to an Englishman by the name of John Reading who had died in 1692. It is sometimes known as the "Portuguese Hymn" after the Catholic composer, Marcos Portugallo, who during the first half of the nineteenth century conducted the choir of the Portuguese chapel in London. You may also find it in a slightly different literary version, which begins, "How firm a foundation."

The words we sing today were written in the year 1841 by Canon Frederick Oakeley, an English clergyman who afterwards was converted to the Catholic faith.

Incidentally, as you may have noticed, from these songs Christmas is the only occasion when all Christians seem able to forget their minor denominational differences and to realize that the message of love and good will of that joyous day was brought to all mankind and not to one particular group or sect. It seems unfortunate that every day cannot be Christmas day. But that—again—is another story. And so—just go ahead and sing and forget what cannot be helped.

H. v. L.

A Few Words About the Music

In selecting and arranging these carols, I have been careful to remember that they are to be played as well as sung. The old favorites and several new ones (which very much deserve to become favorites) have all of them been submitted to a slight overhauling. It would have been easier, of course, to leave them in their old and familiar four-part setting. But I have preferred to give them a slightly more "pianistic" treatment. As a result (so I feel convinced) the fate of the player will be a much happier one. He or she can now proceed without ever experiencing that feeling of irritation which comes from the too frequent repetition of a somewhat meager melody and which is apt to make the accompanist suggest, "let us turn the page," long before the singers feel likewise.

GRACE CASTAGNETTA