

# *THE Popular Carol Book*



WORDS  
EDITION

# **THE *Popular* Carol Book**



MOWBRAY

## **Mowbray**

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indicates that a carol is suitable for use during Advent.



indicates that a carol is suitable for use at Christmas.



indicates that a carol is suitable for use at Epiphany.



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## **1** *A child this day is born*



- 1 A child this day is born,  
A child of high renown;  
Most worthy of a sceptre,  
A sceptre and a crown.
- 2 Good news the shepherds heard,  
Who watched their flock and fold;  
The angel that appeared to them  
Of God's salvation told.
- 3 And what the angel said,  
Did yet in truth appear;  
At Bethlehem they found the child,  
Laid in a manger there.
- 4 Then glory be to God  
Who reigns supreme on high;  
With glad thanksgiving, worthy praise,  
And joyful melody!
- 5 Nowell, nowell, nowell,  
Nowell sing all we may,  
Because the King of all kings  
Was born on Christmas day.

*English traditional*

*The original words came,  
like the tune, from  
William Sandys's  
Christmas Carols,  
published in 1833.  
Our version is somewhat  
shorter than the 21 verses  
included there.*

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## **2** *A cry in the night (Ballad of the Homeless Christ)*



- 1 A cry in the night  
And a child is born;  
A child in a stable,  
There isn't any room:  
A cry in the night, and God has made  
Our homelessness his home.
- 2 A trial in the dark,  
The disciples run;  
They bring him to Pilate,  
He stands there all alone:  
A trial in the dark, and God has made  
Our homelessness his home.
- 3 A man on a cross,  
And the sun beats down;  
Up there on the gallows  
He's got a thorny crown:  
A man on a cross, and God has made  
Our homelessness his home.

*Geoffrey Ainger (b. 1925)*

*Words and music*

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*A carol with an explicit  
social message about  
homelessness, arising out  
of the very poor housing  
situation, particularly for  
black families, in Geoffrey  
Ainger's Notting Hill  
parish during the 1960s.  
It relates to all homeless*

- 4 A voice in the dawn  
When the women came;  
'You're looking for Jesus,  
Don't seek him in a tomb':  
A voice in the dawn, and God has made  
Our homelessness his home.

*people everywhere.  
'Notting Hill' was  
composed by Ian Calvert  
(b. 1940), a member of  
the same church.*

---

### 3 *A great and mighty wonder*

- 1 A great and mighty wonder,  
A full and holy cure!  
The Virgin bears the Infant  
With virgin-honour pure.

Repeat the hymn again!  
'To God on high be glory,  
And peace on earth shall reign!'

- 2 The word becomes incarnate  
And yet remains on high!  
And cherubim sing anthems  
To shepherds from the sky.

Repeat the hymn again! . . .

- 3 While thus they sing your Monarch,  
Those bright angelic bands,  
Rejoice, ye vales and mountains,  
Ye oceans clap your hands.

Repeat the hymn again! . . .

- 4 Since all he comes to ransom,  
By all be he adored,  
The Infant born in Bethl'em,  
The Saviour and the Lord.

Repeat the hymn again! . . .

- 5 And idol forms shall perish,  
And error shall decay,  
And Christ shall wield his sceptre,  
Our Lord and God for ay.

Repeat the hymn again! . . .

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*St Germanus (634–734),  
tr. John Mason Neale  
(1818–66)*

*A German traditional  
carol, whose melody,  
harmonized by Michael  
Praetorius (1571–1621),  
is full of rhythmic interest,  
and needs a dancing  
lightness in performance.*

---

## 4 *All my heart this night rejoices*



1 All my heart this night rejoices  
As I hear,  
Far and near,  
Sweetest angel voices:  
'Christ is born!' their choirs are singing,  
Till the air  
Ev'rywhere  
Now with joy is ringing.

2 Hark! a voice from yonder manger,  
Soft and sweet,  
Doth entreat,  
'Flee from woe and danger!  
People, come! from all doth grieve you,  
You are freed;  
All you need  
I will surely give you.'

3 Come, then, let us hasten yonder!  
Here let all,  
Great and small,  
Kneel in awe and wonder!  
Love him who with love is yearning!  
Hail the star  
That from far  
Bright with hope is burning!

4 Thee, dear Lord, with heed I'll cherish,  
Live to thee,  
And with thee,  
Dying, shall not perish;  
But shall dwell with thee for ever,  
Far on high,  
In the joy  
That can alter never.

*Paul Gerhardt (1607–76),  
tr. Catherine Winkworth  
(1829–78)*

*Lutheran Paul Gerhardt  
lived for the whole of his  
youth and early adulthood  
through the Thirty Years  
War. His many great  
hymns, with their mystical  
quality, strike a personal  
note. In this one we are  
all called to the manger.*

*'Bonn', by Johann  
Georg Ebeling (1637–76),  
is of very simple  
construction, a pre-Bach  
chorale making a  
marvellous congregational  
anthem.*

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## 5 *Angels, from the realms of glory*



1 Angels, from the realms of glory,  
Wing your flight o'er all the earth;  
Ye who sang creation's story,  
Now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Come and worship  
Christ the new-born King;  
Come and worship,  
Worship Christ, the new-born King.

*James Montgomery  
(1771–1854) and Anon.*

*Angels, shepherds, wise  
men and saints are  
summoned in turn to  
come and worship the  
new-born King. The final  
verse comes originally*

- 2 Shepherds, in the field abiding,  
Watching o'er your flocks by night,  
God with us is now residing,  
Yonder shines the Infant Light:

Come and worship . . .

- 3 Sages, leave your contemplations,  
Brighter visions beam afar;  
Seek the great Desire of Nations,  
Ye have seen his natal star:

Come and worship . . .

- 4 Saints before the altar bending  
Watching long in hope and fear,  
Suddenly the Lord, descending,  
In his temple shall appear:

Come and worship . . .

- 5 Though an infant now we view him,  
He shall fill his Father's throne,  
Gather all the nations to him;  
Every knee shall then bow down:

Come and worship . . .

*from another carol, in The Christmas Box (1825).*

*'Come and worship' are Monigomery's own words for the refrain, rather than 'Gloria in excelsis Deo', which belonged to 'Les anges dans nos campagnes' (no. 58), the old French carol which he was translating. The Canadian version of this is no. 90.*

*The harmony for 'Iris' is by Martin Shaw (1875-1958), adapted by the editors.*

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**As Joseph was a-walking, he heard  
an angel sing  
(Cherry Tree Carol)**



- 6**
- 1 As Joseph was a-walking, he heard an angel sing,  
This night shall be born our heavenly King.  
He neither shall be born in housen nor in hall,  
Nor in the place of Paradise, but in an ox's stall.  
Noel, Noel.
- 2 As Joseph was a-walking, he heard an angel sing,  
This night shall be born our heavenly King.  
He neither shall be clothed in purple nor in pall,  
But all in fair linen as wear babies all.  
Noel, Noel.
- 3 As Joseph was a-walking, he heard an angel sing,  
This night shall be born our heavenly King.  
He neither shall be rockèd in silver nor in gold,  
But in a wooden cradle that rocks on the mould.  
Noel, Noel.

*English traditional*

*Part 2 of 'The Cherry Tree Carol', once one of the most popular of all folk carols, and traditionally sung on Christmas Eve. (Part 1 is the legend of Joseph and Mary talking in a cherry orchard, which also appears in the Coventry Mysteries.)*

*'Joseph' is by R. R. Terry (1865-1938), organist at Westminster Cathedral, who became very interested in folk song revival.*



- 4 As Joseph was a-walking, he heard an angel sing,  
This night shall be born our heavenly King.  
He neither shall be christenèd in white wine nor in  
red,  
But in the fair spring water, as we were christenèd.  
Noel, Noel.
- 

## 7 As with gladness men of old



- 1 As with gladness men of old  
Did the guiding star behold,  
As with joy they hailed its light,  
Leading onward, beaming bright,  
So, most gracious God, may we  
Evermore be led to thee.
- 2 As with joyful steps they sped  
To that lowly manger-bed,  
There to bend the knee before  
Him whom heaven and earth adore,  
So may we with willing feet  
Ever seek thy mercy-seat.
- 3 As they offered gifts most rare  
At that manger rude and bare,  
So may we with holy joy,  
Pure, and free from sin's alloy,  
All our costliest treasures bring,  
Christ, to thee our heavenly King.
- 4 Holy Jesu, every day  
Keep us in the narrow way;  
And, when earthly things are past,  
Bring our ransomed souls at last  
Where they need no star to guide,  
Where no clouds thy glory hide.
- 5 In the heavenly country bright  
Need they no created light;  
Thou its Light, its Joy, its Crown,  
Thou its Sun which goes not down:  
There for ever may we sing  
Alleluyas to our King.
- 

W. Chatterton Dix  
(1837–98)

*Dix was a businessman who wrote the hymn in 1860, while recovering from a serious illness. The first three verses compare the journey of the three wise men (Matthew 2.1–11) to our own spiritual pilgrimage, and the hymn ends with prayer and worship.*

*'Dix' is abridged by W. H. Monk (1823–89) from a chorale by Conrad Kocher (1786–1872).*