

CHRISTMAS CAROLS & POEMS



Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, Robert Louis Stevenson, James Montgomery, Sir Walter Scott, Clement Clarke Moore, William Wordsworth, Alfred Lord Tennyson, Rudyard Kipling, John Milton, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Thomas Hardy, Emily Dickinson, William Butler Yeats, William Makepeace Thackeray, Clinton Scollard, Sara Teasdale, John Greenleaf Whittier, Thomas Tusser, Robert Seymour Bridges, Charles Kingsley, Ella Wheeler Wilcox, C. W. Stubbs, William Topaz McGonagall, Eugene Field, Paul Laurence Dunbar, William Chatterton Dix, John Donne, Charles Wesley, James Whitcomb Riley, Carolyn Wells, Phillips Brooks, William Drummond, James Russell Lowell, Alfred Domett, Reginald Heber, Dinah Maria Mulock, Margaret Deland, John Addington Symonds, Edward Thring, Cecil Frances Alexander, Mary Austin, James S. Park, Nora A. Smith, Isaac Watts, Robert Herrick, Edmund Hamilton Sears, Ben Jonson, Edmund Bolton, William Drummond, Robert Southwell, C.S. Stone, Frances Ridley Havergal, William Morris, William Shakespeare, Charles Mackay, Harriet F. Blodgett, Eliza Cook, George Wither, John G. Whittier, Richard Watson Gilder, Tudor Jenks, Henry Vaughan, Edmund H. Sears, Martin Luther, Christian Burke, Andrew Lang, Emily Huntington Miller, Cyril Winterbotham, Robert Browning, Phillips Brooks, Juliana Horatia Ewing, R. W. Gilder

Christmas Carols & Poems

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Table of Contents

[Silent Night](#)

[The Three Kings \(Henry Wadsworth Longfellow\)](#)

[Christmas Bells \(Henry Wadsworth Longfellow\)](#)

[Christmas At Sea \(Robert Louis Stevenson\)](#)

[Angels from the Realms of Glory \(James Montgomery\)](#)

[Christmas in the Olden Time \(Sir Walter Scott\)](#)

[Marmion: A Christmas Poem \(Sir Walter Scott\)](#)

[Old Santa Claus \(Clement Clarke Moore\)](#)

[The Twelve Days of Christmas](#)

[Minstrels \(William Wordsworth\)](#)

[Ring Out, Wild Bells \(Alfred Lord Tennyson\)](#)

[Christmas In India \(Rudyard Kipling\)](#)

[Hymn On The Morning Of Christ's Nativity \(John Milton\)](#)

[A Christmas Carol \(Samuel Taylor Coleridge\)](#)

[The Oxen \(Thomas Hardy\)](#)

[A Christmas Ghost Story \(Thomas Hardy\)](#)

[The Savior Must Have Been A Docile Gentleman \(Emily Dickinson\)](#)

['Twas just this time, last year, I died \(Emily Dickinson\)](#)

[The Magi \(William Butler Yeats\)](#)

[The Mahogany Tree \(William Makepeace Thackeray\)](#)

[A Bell \(Clinton Scollard\)](#)

[Christmas Carol \(Sara Teasdale\)](#)

[The Mystic's Christmas \(John Greenleaf Whittier\)](#)

[Christmas Cheer \(Thomas Tusser\)](#)

[Noel: Christmas Eve 1913 \(Robert Seymour Bridges\)](#)

[The Holly and the Ivy](#)

[Adam lay_ybounden](#)
[Christmas Day_\(Charles Kingsley\)](#)
[Christmas Fancies_\(Ella Wheeler Wilcox\)](#)
[Twas jolly,.jolly Wat_\(C. W. Stubbs\)](#)
[A Tale Of Christmas Eve_\(William Topaz McGonagall\)](#)
[Jest 'Fore Christmas_\(Eugene Field\)](#)
[A Christmas Folksong_\(Paul Laurence Dunbar\)](#)
[As with Gladness Men of Old_\(William Chatterton Dix\)](#)
[Nativity a Christmas_\(John Donne\)](#)
[Boar's Head Carol](#)
[Come,Thou Long Expected Jesus_\(Charles Wesley\)](#)
[Coventry Carol](#)
[Here We Come A-wassailing](#)
[A Defective Santa Claus_\(James Whitcomb Riley\)](#)
[King Winter](#)
[Christmas Gifts and Other Poems_\(Carolyn Wells\)](#)
[The Night After Christmas_\(Anonymous\)](#)
[O Little Town of Bethlehem_\(Phillips Brooks\)](#)
[The Shepherds_\(William Drummond\)](#)
[A Christmas Carol_\(James Russell Lowell\)](#)
[A Christmas Hymn_\(Alfred Domett\)](#)
[Brightest and Best of the Sons of the Morning_\(Reginald Heber\)](#)
[God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen_\(Dinah Maria Mulock\)](#)
[The Christmas Silence_\(Margaret Deland\)](#)
[A Christmas Lullaby_\(John Addington Symonds\)](#)
[Hymn for the Nativity_\(Edward Thring\)](#)
[Masters in This Hall_\(Anonymous\)](#)
[The Adoration of the Wise Men_\(Cecil Frances Alexander\)](#)
[The Shepherds in Judea_\(Mary Austin\)](#)

[Christmas Carol \(James S. Park\)](#)
[Neighbors of the Christ Night \(Nora A. Smith\)](#)
[Cradle Hymn \(Isaac Watts\)](#)
[An Ode on the Birth of Our Saviour \(Robert Herrick\)](#)
[Christmas Song \(Edmund Hamilton Sears\)](#)
[A Hymn on the Nativity of My Saviour \(Ben Jonson\)](#)
[The Shepherd's Song \(Edmund Bolton\)](#)
["While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night" \(Margaret Deland\)](#)
[The Angels \(William Drummond\)](#)
[New Prince, New Pomp \(Robert Southwell\)](#)
[Wassailer's Song \(Robert Southwell\)](#)
[Sly Santa Claus \(Mrs. C.S. Stone\)](#)
[The Waits \(Margaret Deland\)](#)
[God Bless Us Every One \(James Whitcomb Riley\)](#)
[Bells Across the Snow \(Frances Ridley Havergal\)](#)
[Minstrels and Maids \(William Morris\)](#)
[Song of the Holly \(William Shakespeare\)](#)
[Under the Holly-bough \(Charles Mackay\)](#)
[December \(Harriet F. Blodgett\)](#)
[The Christmas Holly \(Eliza Cook\)](#)
[So, Now Is Come Our Joyfulst Feast \(George Wither\)](#)
[The Christmas Carol \(William Wordsworth\)](#)
[A Christmas Carmen \(John G. Whittier\)](#)
[Sery \(Richard Watson Gilder\)](#)
[A Christmas Song \(Tudor Jenks\)](#)
[The End of the Play \(William Makepeace Thackeray\)](#)
[Christ's Nativity \(Henry Vaughan\)](#)
[Mark Well My Heavy, Doleful Tale \(Anonymous\)](#)
[The Glorious Song of Old \(Edmund H. Sears\)](#)

[A Christmas Carol for Children \(Martin Luther\).](#)

[A Christmas Carol \(Christian Burke\).](#)

[A Ballade of Old Loves \(Carolyn Wells\).](#)

[Ballade of Christmas Ghosts \(Andrew Lang\).](#)

[Hang Up the Baby's Stocking \(Emily Huntington Miller\).](#)

[A Christmas Prayer \(Cyril Winterbotham\).](#)

[Christmas Eve \(Robert Browning\).](#)

[A Christmas Song \(Phillips Brooks\).](#)

[The Willow Man \(Juliana Horatia Ewing\).](#)

[The Peaceful Night \(John Milton\).](#)

[A Christmas Hymn \(R.W. Gilder\).](#)

Silent Night

[Table of Contents](#)

Silent night, holy night,
all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night,
shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born,
Christ the Savior is born!

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,
wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing,
Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born,

Christ the Savior is born!

The Three Kings

(Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

[Table of Contents](#)

Three Kings came riding from far away,
Melchior and Gaspar and Baltasar;
Three Wise Men out of the East were they,
And they travelled by night and they slept by day,
For their guide was a beautiful, wonderful star.

The star was so beautiful, large, and clear,
That all the other stars of the sky
Became a white mist in the atmosphere,
And by this they knew that the coming was near
Of the Prince foretold in the prophecy.

Three caskets they bore on their saddle-bows,
Three caskets of gold with golden keys;
Their robes were of crimson silk with rows
Of bells and pomegranates and furbelows,
Their turbans like blossoming almond-trees.

And so the Three Kings rode into the West,
Through the dusk of night, over hill and dell,
And sometimes they nodded with beard on breast
And sometimes talked, as they paused to rest,
With the people they met at some wayside well.

'Of the child that is born," said Baltasar,
'Good people, I pray you, tell us the news;

For we in the East have seen his star,
And have ridden fast, and have ridden far,
To find and worship the King of the Jews."

And the people answered, "You ask in vain;
We know of no king but Herod the Great!"
They thought the Wise Men were men insane,
As they spurred their horses across the plain,
Like riders in haste, and who cannot wait.

And when they came to Jerusalem,
Herod the Great, who had heard this thing,
Sent for the Wise Men and questioned them;
And said, "Go down unto Bethlehem,
And bring me tidings of this new king."

So they rode away; and the star stood still,
The only one in the gray of morn
Yes, it stopped, it stood still of its own free will,
Right over Bethlehem on the hill,
The city of David where Christ was born.

And the Three Kings rode through the gate and the guard,
Through the silent street, till their horses turned
And neighed as they entered the great inn-yard;
But the windows were closed, and the doors were barred,
And only a light in the stable burned.

And cradled there in the scented hay,
In the air made sweet by the breath of kine,

The little child in the manger lay,
The child, that would be king one day
Of a kingdom not human but divine.

His mother Mary of Nazareth
Sat watching beside his place of rest,
Watching the even flow of his breath,
For the joy of life and the terror of death
Were mingled together in her breast.

They laid their offerings at his feet:
The gold was their tribute to a King,
The frankincense, with its odor sweet,
Was for the Priest, the Paraclete,
The myrrh for the body's burying.

And the mother wondered and bowed her head,
And sat as still as a statue of stone;
Her heart was troubled yet comforted,
Remembering what the Angel had said
Of an endless reign and of David's throne.

Then the Kings rode out of the city gate,
With a clatter of hoofs in proud array;
But they went not back to Herod the Great,
For they knew his malice and feared his hate,
And returned to their homes by another way.

Christmas Bells

(Henry Wadsworth Longfellow)

[Table of Contents](#)

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!

And thought how, as the day had come,
The belfries of all Christendom
Had rolled along
The unbroken song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Till, ringing, singing on its way,
The world revolved from night to day,
A voice, a chime
A chant sublime
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

Then from each black accursed mouth
The cannon thundered in the South,
And with the sound
The carols drowned
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

It was as if an earthquake rent
The hearth-stones of a continent,

And made forlorn
The households born
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!

And in despair I bowed my head;
'There is no peace on earth," I said;
'For hate is strong,
And mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep:
'God is not dead; nor doth he sleep!
The Wrong shall fail,
The Right prevail,
With peace on earth, good-will to men!"

Christmas At Sea

(Robert Louis Stevenson)

[Table of Contents](#)

The sheets were frozen hard, and they cut the naked hand;
The decks were like a slide, where a seaman scarce could
stand;

The wind was a nor'wester, blowing squally off the sea;
And cliffs and spouting breakers were the only things a-lee.

They heard the surf a-roaring before the break of day;
But 'twas only with the peep of light we saw how ill we lay.
We tumbled every hand on deck instanter, with a shout,
And we gave her the maintops'l, and stood by to go about.

All day we tacked and tacked between the South Head and
the North;
All day we hauled the frozen sheets, and got no further forth;
All day as cold as charity, in bitter pain and dread,
For very life and nature we tacked from head to head.

We gave the South a wider berth, for there the tide race
roared;
But every tack we made we brought the North Head close
aboard:
So's we saw the cliffs and houses, and the breakers running
high,
And the coastguard in his garden, with his glass against his
eye.

The frost was on the village roofs as white as ocean foam;
The good red fires were burning bright in every 'long-shore
home;

The windows sparkled clear, and the chimneys volleyed out;
And I vow we sniffed the victuals as the vessel went about.

The bells upon the church were rung with a mighty jovial
cheer;

For it's just that I should tell you how (of all days in the year)
This day of our adversity was blessed Christmas morn,
And the house above the coastguard's was the house where I
was born.

O well I saw the pleasant room, the pleasant faces there,
My mother's silver spectacles, my father's silver hair;
And well I saw the firelight, like a flight of homely elves,
Go dancing round the china plates that stand upon the
shelves.

And well I knew the talk they had, the talk that was of me,
Of the shadow on the household and the son that went to
sea;

And O the wicked fool I seemed, in every kind of way,
To be here and hauling frozen ropes on blessed Christmas
Day.

They lit the high sea-light, and the dark began to fall.
All hands to loose top gallant sails,' I heard the captain call.
By the Lord, she'll never stand it,' our first mate, Jackson,
cried.

. . . 'It's the one way or the other, Mr. Jackson,' he replied.

She staggered to her bearings, but the sails were new and
good,

And the ship smelt up to windward just as though she
understood.

As the winter's day was ending, in the entry of the night,
We cleared the weary headland, and passed below the light.

And they heaved a mighty breath, every soul on board but
me,

As they saw her nose again pointing handsome out to sea;
But all that I could think of, in the darkness and the cold,
Was just that I was leaving home and my folks were growing
old.

Angels from the Realms of Glory

(James Montgomery)

[Table of Contents](#)

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, come and worship
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

Shepherds, in the fields abiding,
Watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with man is now residing,
Yonder shines the infant light:

Come and worship, come and worship
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

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

Come and worship, come and worship
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

Sinners, wrung with true repentance,
Doomed for guilt to endless pains,

Justice now revokes the sentence,
Mercy calls you—break your chains:

Come and worship, come and worship
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

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, come and worship
Worship Christ, the newborn King.

All creation, join in praising
God the Father, Spirit, Son,
Evermore your voices raising,
To th'eternal Three in One:

Come and worship, come and worship
Worship Christ, the newborn King

Christmas in the Olden Time

(Sir Walter Scott)

[Table of Contents](#)

Heap on more wood! — the wind is chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deemed the new born year
The fittest time for festal cheer.
And well our Christian sires of old,
Loved when the year its course had rolled,
And brought blithe Christmas back again,
With all his hospitable train.
Domestic and religious rite
Gave honour to the holy night:
On Christmas eve the bells were rung;
On Christmas eve the mass was sung;
That only night, in all the year,
Saw the stole'd priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;
The hail was dressed with holly green;
Forth to the wood did merry men go,
To gather in the mistletoe,
Then opened wide the baron's hail
To vassal, tenant, serf, and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside,
And ceremony doff'd his pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose.
The lord, underogating, share

The vulgar game of "post and pair!"
All hailed with uncontroll'd delight
And general voice, the happy night
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down.
The fire with well dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge hail table's oaken face,
Scrubb'd till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon: its massive board
No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
By old, blue-coated serving-man;
Then the grim boar's head frowned on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green-garbed ranger tell,
How, when, and where, the monster fell;
What dogs before his death he tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.
The wassail round in good brown bowls,
Garnished with ribbon, blithely trowls.
There the huge sirloin reeked: hard by
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie;
Nor failed old Scotland to produce
At such high tide her savoury goose.
Then came the merry masquers in,
And carols roar'd with blithesome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
Who lists may in their mumming see

Traces of ancient mystery;
White shirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visor made
But oh! what masquers, richly dight,
Can boast of bosoms half so light!
England was merry England when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale,
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft would cheer
A poor man's heart through half the year.

Marmion: A Christmas Poem

(Sir Walter Scott)

[Table of Contents](#)

Heap on more wood! the wind is chill;
But let it whistle as it will,
We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
Each age has deem'd the new-born year
The fittest time for festal cheer:
Even, heathen yet, the savage Dane
At lol more deep the mead did drain;
High on the beach his galleys drew,
And feasted all his pirate crew;
Then in his low and pine-built hall
Where shields and axes deck'd the wall
They gorged upon the half-dress'd steer;
Caroused in seas of sable beer;
While round, in brutal jest, were thrown
The half-gnaw'd rib, and marrow-bone:
Or listen'd all, in grim delight,
While Scalds yell'd out the joys of fight.
Then forth, in frenzy, would they hie,
While wildly loose their red locks fly,
And dancing round the blazing pile,
They make such barbarous mirth the while,
As best might to the mind recall
The boisterous joys of Odin's hall.

And well our Christian sires of old
Loved when the year its course had roll'd,

And brought blithe Christmas back again,
With all his hospitable train.
Domestic and religious rite
Gave honour to the holy night;
On Christmas Eve the bells were rung;
On Christmas Eve the mass was sung:
That only night in all the year,
Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
The damsel donn'd her kirtle sheen;
The hall was dress'd with holly green;
Forth to the wood did merry-men go,
To gather in the mistletoe.
Then open'd wide the Baron's hall
To vassal, tenant, serf and all;
Power laid his rod of rule aside
And Ceremony doff'd his pride.
The heir, with roses in his shoes,
That night might village partner choose;
The Lord, underogating, share
The vulgar game of 'post and pair'.
All hail'd, with uncontroll'd delight,
And general voice, the happy night,
That to the cottage, as the crown,
Brought tidings of salvation down.

The fire, with well-dried logs supplied,
Went roaring up the chimney wide;
The huge hall-table's oaken face,
Scrubb'd till it shone, the day to grace,
Bore then upon its massive board

No mark to part the squire and lord.
Then was brought in the lusty brawn,
By old blue-coated serving-man;
Then the grim boar's head frown'd on high,
Crested with bays and rosemary.
Well can the green-garb'd ranger tell,
How, when, and where, the monster fell;
What dogs before his death to tore,
And all the baiting of the boar.
The wassel round, in good brown bowls,
Garnish'd with ribbons, blithely trowls.
There the huge sirloin reek'd; hard by
Plum-porridge stood, and Christmas pie;
Nor fail'd old Scotland to produce,
At such high tide, her savoury goose.
Then came the merry makers in,
And carols roar'd with blithesome din;
If unmelodious was the song,
It was a hearty note, and strong.
Who lists may in their mumming see
Traces of ancient mystery;
White shirts supplied the masquerade,
And smutted cheeks the visors made;
But, O! what maskers, richly dight,
Can boast of bosoms half so light!
England was merry England, when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
Twas Christmas broach'd the mightiest ale;
Twas Christmas told the merriest tale;
A Christmas gambol oft could cheer

The poor man's heart through half the year.

Old Santa Claus

(Clement Clarke Moore)

[Table of Contents](#)

But where I found the children naughty,
In manners rude, in temper haughty,
Thankless to parents, liars, swearers,
Boxers, or cheats, or base tale-bearers,

I left a long, black, birchen rod,
Such as the dread command of God
Directs a Parent's hand to use
When virtue's path his sons refuse.

The Twelve Days of Christmas

[Table of Contents](#)

On the first day of Christmas,
My true love sent to me
A partridge in a pear tree.

On the second day of Christmas,
My true love sent to me
Two turtle doves, and
A partridge in a pear tree.

On the third day of Christmas,
My true love sent to me
Three French hens,
Two turtle doves, and
A partridge in a pear tree.

On the fourth day of Christmas,
My true love sent to me
Four calling birds,
Three French hens,
Two turtle doves, and
A partridge in a pear tree.

On the fifth day of Christmas,
My true love sent to me
Five gold rings,
Four calling birds,
Three French hens,

Two turtle doves, and
A partridge in a pear tree.

On the sixth day of Christmas,
My true love sent to me
Six geese a-laying,
Five gold rings,
Four calling birds,
Three French hens,
Two turtle doves, and
A partridge in a pear tree.

On the seventh day of Christmas,
My true love sent to me
Seven swans a-swimming,
Six geese a-laying,
Five gold rings,
Four calling birds,
Three French hens,
Two turtle doves, and
A partridge in a pear tree.

On the eighth day of Christmas,
My true love sent to me
Eight maids a-milking,
Seven swans a-swimming,
Six geese a-laying,
Five gold rings,
Four calling birds,
Three French hens,

Two turtle doves, and
A partridge in a pear tree.

On the ninth day of Christmas,
My true love sent to me
Nine drummers drumming,
Eight maids a-milking,
Seven swans a-swimming,
Six geese a-laying,
Five gold rings,
Four calling birds,
Three French hens,
Two turtle doves, and
A partridge in a pear tree.

On the tenth day of Christmas,
My true love sent to me
Ten pipers piping,
Nine drummers drumming,
Eight maids a-milking,
Seven swans a-swimming,
Six geese a-laying,
Five gold rings,
Four calling birds,
Three French hens,
Two turtle doves, and
A partridge in a pear tree.

On the eleventh day of Christmas,
My true love sent to me