

**VARIOUS**

CHRISTMAS IN  
POETRY

Various  
**Christmas in Poetry**

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# Various Christmas in Poetry Carols and Poems

## A CHRISTMAS CAROL

God bless the master of this house,  
The mistress also,  
And all the little children,  
That round the table go.

And all your kin and folk,  
That dwell both far and near;  
I wish you a merry Christmas,  
And a happy New Year.

*Old English Carol*

## FROM FAR AWAY

From far away we come to you.  
The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,  
To tell of great tidings, strange and true.  
Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.  
From far away we come to you,  
To tell of great tidings, strange and true.

For as we wandered far and wide,  
The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,  
What hap do you deem there should us betide?  
Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.

Under a bent when the night was deep,  
The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,  
There lay three shepherds, tending their sheep.  
Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.

“O ye shepherds, what have ye seen,  
The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,  
To stay your sorrow and heal your teen?”  
Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.

“In an ox stall this night we saw,  
The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,  
A Babe and a maid without a flaw.  
Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.

“There was an old man there beside;  
The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,  
His hair was white, and his hood was wide.  
Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.

“And as we gazed this thing upon,  
The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,  
Those twain knelt down to the little one.  
Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.

“And a marvellous song we straight did hear,  
The snow in the street, and the wind on the door.  
That slew our sorrow and healed our care.”  
Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.

News of a fair and marvellous thing,  
The snow in the street, and the wind on the door,  
Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, we sing.

Minstrels and maids, stand forth on the floor.  
From far away we come to you,  
To tell of great tidings, strange and true.

*William Morris*

## LORDINGS, LISTEN TO OUR LAY

Lordings, listen to our lay —  
We have come from far away  
To seek Christmas;  
In this mansion we are told  
He His yearly feast doth hold:  
'Tis to-day!  
May joy come from God above,  
To all those who Christmas love.

*Old Carol*

## 'Twas JOLLY, JOLLY WAT

'Twas jolly, jolly Wat, my foy,  
He was a goodman's shepherd boy,  
And he sat by his sheep  
On the hill-side so steep,  
And piped this song,  
Ut hoy! Ut hoy!  
O merry, merry sing for joy,  
Ut hoy!

A'down from Heav'n that is so high  
There came an angel companye,  
And on Bethlehem hill  
Thro' the night-tide so still  
Their song out-rang:  
On high, On high,  
O glory be to God on high,  
On high!

Now must Wat go where Christ is born,  
Yea, go and come again to-morn.  
And my pipe it shall play,  
All my heart it doth say  
To Shepherd King:  
Ut hoy! Ut hoy!  
O merry, merry sing for joy,  
Ut hoy!

O peace on earth, good will to men,  
The angels sang again, again,  
For to you was He born  
On this Christmas morn,  
So sing we all:  
On high, On high,  
O glory be to God on high,  
On high!

Jesu my King, it's naught for Thee,  
A bob of cherries, one, two, three,  
But my tar-box and ball,  
And my pipe, I give all  
To Thee, my King.  
Ut hoy! Ut hoy!  
O merry, merry sing for joy,  
Ut hoy!

Farewell, herd-boy, saith Mary mild.  
Thanks, jolly Wat, smiled Mary's child,  
For fit gift for a king  
Is your heart in the thing.  
So pipe you well,  
For joy, for joy!  
O merry, merry sing for joy,  
Ut hoy!

*C. W. Stubbs*

## BOOTS AND SADDLES

Our shepherds all  
As pilgrims have departed,  
Our shepherds all  
Have gone to Bethlehem.  
They gladly go  
For they are all stout-hearted,  
They gladly go —  
Ah, could I go with them!

I am too lame to walk,  
Boots and saddles, boots and saddles,  
I am too lame to walk,  
Boots and saddles, mount and ride.

A shepherd stout  
Who sang a catamialulo,  
A shepherd stout  
Was walking lazily.  
He heard me speak  
And saw me hobbling after,  
He turned and said  
He would give help to me.

“Here is my horse  
That flies along the high-road,  
Here is my horse,  
The best in all the towns.  
I bought him from  
A soldier in the army,  
I got my horse  
By payment of five crowns.”

When I have seen  
The Child, the King of Heaven,  
When I have seen  
The Child who is God’s son,  
When to the mother,  
I my praise have given,  
When I have finished,  
All I should have done:

No more shall I be lame,  
Boots and saddles, boots and saddles,  
No more shall I be lame,  
Boots and saddles, mount and ride.

*Provençal Noël of Nicholas Saboly  
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## CAROL

Villagers all, this frosty tide,  
Let your doors swing open wide,  
Though wind may follow, and snow beside,  
Yet draw us in by your fire to bide;  
Joy shall be yours in the morning!

Here we stand in the cold and the sleet,  
Blowing fingers and stamping feet,  
Come from far away you to greet —  
You by the fire and we in the street —  
Bidding you joy in the morning!

For ere one half of the night was gone,  
Sudden a star has led us on,  
Raining bliss and benison —  
Bliss to-morrow and more anon,  
Joy for every morning!

Goodman Joseph toiled through the snow —  
Saw the star o'er a stable low;  
Mary she might not further go —  
Welcome thatch, and litter below!  
Joy was hers in the morning!

And then they heard the angels tell  
“Who were the first to cry NOWELL?  
Animals all, as it befell,  
In the stable where they did dwell!  
Joy shall be theirs in the morning!”

*Kenneth Grahame*

*From “The Wind in the Willows”;*

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## THE NEIGHBORS OF BETHLEHEM

Good neighbor, tell me why that sound,  
That noisy tumult rising round,  
Awaking all in slumber lying?  
Truly disturbing are these cries,  
All through the quiet village flying,  
O come ye shepherds, wake, arise!

What, neighbor, then do ye not know  
God hath appeared on earth below  
And now is born in manger lowly!  
In humble guise he came this night,  
Simple and meek, this infant holy,  
Yet how divine in beauty bright.

Good neighbor, I must make amend,  
Forthwith to bring Him will I send,  
And Joseph with the gentle Mother.  
When to my home these three I bring,  
Then will it far outshine all other,  
A palace fair for greatest king!

*Thirteenth Century French Carol*  
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## CAROL OF THE RUSSIAN CHILDREN

Snow-bound mountains, snow-bound valleys,  
Snow-bound plateaus, clad in white,  
Fur-robed moujiks, fur-robed nobles,  
Fur-robed children, see the light.  
Shaggy pony, shaggy oxen,  
Gentle shepherds wait the light;  
Little Jesus, little Mother,  
Good St. Joseph, come this night.

*Russian Folk Song*

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## SIGNS OF CHRISTMAS

When on the barn's thatch'd roof is seen  
The moss in tufts of liveliest green;  
When Roger to the wood pile goes,  
And, as he turns, his fingers blows;  
When all around is cold and drear,  
Be sure that Christmas-tide is near.

When up the garden walk in vain  
We seek for Flora's lovely train;  
When the sweet hawthorn bower is bare,  
And bleak and cheerless is the air;  
When all seems desolate around,  
Christmas advances o'er the ground.

When Tom at eve comes home from plough,  
And brings the mistletoe's green bough,  
With milk-white berries spotted o'er,  
And shakes it the sly maids before,  
Then hangs the trophy up on high,  
Be sure that Christmas-tide is nigh.

When Hal, the woodman, in his clogs,  
Bears home the huge unwieldy logs,  
That, hissing on the smouldering fire,  
Flame out at last a quiv'ring spire;  
When in his hat the holly stands,  
Old Christmas musters up his bands.

When cluster'd round the fire at night,  
Old William talks of ghost and sprite,  
And, as a distant out-house gate  
Slams by the wind, they fearful wait,  
While some each shadowy nook explore,  
Then Christmas pauses at the door.

When Dick comes shiv'ring from the yard,  
And says the pond is frozen hard,  
While from his hat, all white with snow,  
The moisture, trickling, drops below,  
While carols sound, the night to cheer,  
Then Christmas and his train are here.

*Edwin Lees*

## A CHRISTMAS HYMN

Once in royal David's city  
Stood a lowly cattle-shed  
Where a mother laid her Baby,  
In a manger for His bed.  
Mary was that mother mild,  
Jesus Christ her little Child.

He came down to earth from heaven,  
Who is God and Lord of all,  
And His shelter was a stable,  
And His cradle was a stall.  
With the poor, and mean, and lowly  
Lived on earth our Saviour holy.

And through all His wondrous childhood,  
He would honour and obey.  
Love and watch the lowly mother  
In whose gentle arms He lay.  
Christian children, all must be  
Mild, obedient, good as He.

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