



Nowell Sing We Clear



Just Say Nowell

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- 1. The Truth from Above** This is the text and tune from the *Oxford Book of Carols* [#68] edited by Percy Dearmer, Ralph Vaughan Williams, and Martin Shaw (Oxford University Press, 1928). The setting is from Vaughan Williams.
- 2. Babe of Bethlehem** *Christmas Carols New and Old* edited by Rev. Henry Ramsden Bramley and Sir John Stainer (London: Novello & Co., 1871, #XXXI, pp. 66-67).
- 3. The First Nowell** I first heard this at a Wassail party near Burnley in Lancashire. It's the familiar Yorkshire tune to the song "Young Banker" from the Frank Kidson MSS, popularized by the Waterasons.
- 4. The Cherry Tree Carol** *New Oxford Book of Carols* [NOBC] #128-I, p.440-1.
- 5. London** We are indebted to Nym Cooke's invaluable compilation, *Awake to Joy: Christmas Carols for Part-Singing*, (Lyme, NH: Toad Hill Music Engraving for the Compiler, 1995) both for Timothy Swan's setting of "London" (from his *New England Harmony*, Northampton, MA, 1801) and for his suggestion that Swan may have based the text on the first verse of William Billings' "Shiloh," (also in *Awake to Joy*) from which we took a second verse.
- 6. The Blessings of Mary** NOBC #131-III, p.460-461 collected by Richard Chase from Will Brady of Carthage, NC (*Journal of American Folklore*, Vol. 48, No. 390, 1935).
- 7. I Saw a Maiden** NOBC 109-II, p. 389. This Edgar Pettiman's (1865-1943) setting of a Fifteenth century text (Sloan Manuscript, British Library 2593) using a Basque tune.
- 8. Chariots** John Kirkpatrick was commissioned to write a couple of new carols for a "Wassail" tour organized by Folkworks in the north of England in 1995. One was this new classic, through-composed for band, solo voices and a small choir.
- 9. The Holly and the Ivy** Sometimes to the annoyance of our friends and family, who always want to hear "their favorite," we have learned and performed several different versions of this carol. This one was an internet gift. David de la Barre sent me a scanned copy of a four-part setting labeled only as an "Old French Melody, 1861." He had it from *Take Joy: The Tasha Tudor Christmas Book*, (New York: Philomel Books, 1966).

10. Joy to the World From Mike Bailey and Rollo Woods, *West Gallery Carols and Anthems*, published by the singing group, The Madding Crowd, 1991, pp. 11-15. The anthem is by Thomas Shoel of Montacute, Somerset based on Isaac Watts' Psalm 98. This setting is from Nosworthy TN2, similar to others in MSS from Widcombe.

11. Christemas Hath Made An End or Well-a-Day This 17th century carol laments the departure of Sir Christemas, an ancestor of Santa Claus, and the end of the Christmas season on Candlemas Eve. Two hundred years later a carol also set to a variant of this same "Well-a-Day" tune, "The Yorkshire Gooding Carol," was sung door-to-door by children bearing a tree on Christmas morning. Our setting is based on the one from the NOBC #154, p.530-1.

12. Ditchling Carol According to Vic Gammon ("Hail Happy Morn: Two Sussex Church Band Carols in Old Harmony," *English Dance and Song*, 49, no. 3, pp. 11-13) the setting here was the work of Peter Parsons who died in 1901. Gammon collated the text from several local MSS.

13. Time to Remember the Poor A remarkable tune from Kidson's Yorkshire collection, this time from his Traditional Tunes (pp. 170-171; see above #3). The text is found on broadsides though we couldn't improve on the set used by Dave Townsend and the Mellstock Band on their recording *Tenants of the Earth*.

14. Stevens Family Waysail From the collector, Gwilym Davies, in his article "I'll give you the Waysailing Bowl, the Gloucestershire Waysailing Bowl," *English Dance and Song*, 50, No. 4, pp. 2-3.

15. Sound, Sound Your Instruments of Joy A new setting by New England composer Bruce Randall from Nym Cooke's *Awake to Joy: Christmas Carols for Part-Singing*. Additional verses are from NOBC (p. 321).

16. A Happy New Year Collected by Cecil Sharp from Frederick Grossman of Langport in Somerset in 1909 [#368B, p. 506 in Vol. II of *Cecil Sharp's Collection of English Folk Songs*, Maud Karpeles (Ed.), Oxford University Press, 1974].

Lyrics of all the songs can be found on my WWW home page at:

<http://www. Dover.net/~barrand/justsaynowell.html>

—Tony Barrand.

Produced by John Roberts & Tony Barrand
Recorded at Soundesign, Brattleboro, VT
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Mixed by Pete Sutherland
Mastered by Lane Gibson
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Photo: Robert McClintock
Design and Layout: Roger Mock
"No-ell" design by Robin & Andy Davis
Mummers' Play Caricature:
Concept by Lisa Preston,
Realization by Roger Mock

Nowell Sing We Clear

a Pageant of Mid-Winter Carols

John Roberts
Tony Barrand
Fred Breunig
Andy Davis

1. The Truth From Above 1:38
2. Babe of Bethlehem 3:43
3. The First Nowell 3:03
4. The Cherry Tree Carol 4:27
5. London 1:56
6. The Blessings of Mary 4:06
7. I Saw a Maiden 2:46
8. Chariots 6:11
9. The Holly and the Ivy 2:51
10. Joy to the World 3:01
11. Christmas Hath Made an End 3:00
12. Ditchling Carol 3:47
13. Time to Remember the Poor 5:47
14. Stevens Family Waysail 3:31
15. Sound, Sound Your Instruments
of Joy 2:26
16. New Year's Carol 3:19

Total playing time: 56:03

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