



The Christmas Carol Reader (Haworth Popular Culture)

William E Studwell, Frank Hoffmann, B Lee Cooper

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Like that Biblical, astronomical star of Bethlehem, The Christmas Carol Reader guides readers on their quest for information about Christmas songs. Studwell gathers a composite picture of the world's most important and famous carols and includes an ample selection of lesser-known Christmas songs. All of the carols are presented in their historical and cultural contexts which adds to readers' understanding and appreciation of the songs. As the only book that covers this elusive topic, The Christmas Carol Reader informs and entertains readers on over 200 songs of all types (sacred and secular), of all periods (Middle Ages through the 20th century), and from a number of countries and cultures. Because many of the songs in The Christmas Carol Reader fit into more than one distinct category, Studwell wisely divides the songs into two major groups-- those that reflect Christmas as a Holy Day and those that celebrate Christmas as a Holiday. Here is just a sample of the breadth of coverage of songs:

- Sacred: From Heaven Above to Earth I Come; O Come, O Come Emmanuel; Angels From the Realms of Glory; As With Gladness Men of Old; O Holy Night (Cantique de Noël); Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne
- Secular: Happy Holiday; A Holly Jolly Christmas; God Rest You Merry, Gentlemen; Silver Bells; Here Comes Santa Claus; I'll Be Home for Christmas
- Medieval: Puer Natus in Bethlehem (A Boy Is Born in Bethlehem); Coventry Carol; I Sing of a Maiden; La marche des rois (The March of the Kings); In Dulci Jubilo
- 1500--1700's: Bring a Torch, Jeanette, Isabella; I Saw Three Ships; Carol of the Bagpipers
- 1800's: Adeste Fideles (O Come All Ye Faithful); O Little Town of Bethlehem; What Child Is This?; It Came Upon a Midnight Clear; Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht (Silent Night)
- Spirituals: Go Tell It on the Mountain; I Wonder as I Wander; Mary Had a Baby; Rise Up, Shepherd, and Follow
- Little Known: O Bethlehem!; The Sleep of the Infant Jesus; Song of the Nuns of Chester
- Countries and Cultures: O Tannenbaum; Lulajze Jezuniu (Polish Lullaby); Fum, Fum, Fum; Carol of the Bells; Patapan; El rorro (The Babe)

As readers learn about the history and nature of the Christmas carol in general and the specific history of individual religious and secular carols, they will learn some history and nature of the holiday season which can bring more enjoyment into their celebrations for years to come. On long winter nights, The Christmas Carol Reader can be read continuously as a series of fact-based commentaries on Christmas music. For shorter periods in between holiday activities, readers can peruse one of the topical sections or select, with the aid of the title index, an individual essay of interest. As a library reference, this book can provide facts for research on Christmas songs or just provide an entertaining education for curious library patrons.

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Marie Clemmer:

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