

God Rest Ye Merry Gentleman

Did you know that *God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen* is one of the oldest Christmas carols in existence? Dating back to 16th century England, its earliest known print edition was published in 1760. Over the centuries the song has had various titles including “The Old Christmas Carol”, “God Bless You, Merry Gentleman” and “God Rest Ye, Merry Christians.”

During the Victorian era, the song even made an appearance in Charles Dickens’ novel, *A Christmas Carol* (1843), when early in the story Scrooge terrifies carol singers with his foul temper!

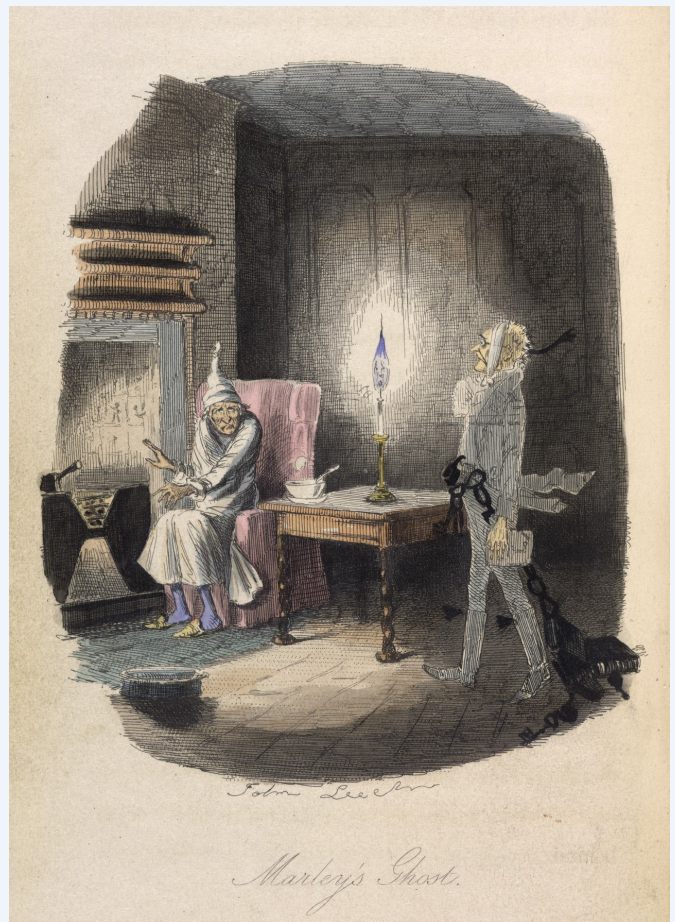
God rest ye merry gentlemen
Let nothing you dismay
For Jesus Christ our Saviour
Was born on Christmas Day
To save us all from Satan's pow'r
When we were gone astray
O tidings of comfort and joy
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

From God our Heavenly Father
A blessed Angel came;
And unto certain shepherds
Brought tidings of the same,
How that in Bethlehem was born
The Son of God by Name.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

The shepherds at those tidings
Rejoiced much in mind,
And left their flocks a-feeding
In tempest, storm and wind,
And went to Bethlehem straightway
The Son of God to find.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

But when to Bethlehem they came,
Whereat this infant lay,
They found Him in a manger,
Where oxen feed on hay;
His Mother Mary kneeling down,
Unto the Lord did pray.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy

Now to the Lord sing praises,
All you within this place,
And with true love and brotherhood
Each other now embrace;
This holy tide of Christmas
All other doth efface.
O tidings of comfort and joy,
Comfort and joy
O tidings of comfort and joy.



“Marley's Ghost”, original illustration by John Leech from the 1843 edition of *Christmas Carol* by Charles Dickens.