

A TREASURY OF CHRISTMAS

*Poems & Stories for the Season*

WINDERMERE PRESS



THIS TREASURY BELONGS TO

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FRONT COVER ARTWORK:

*Interior with Two Little Girls, Christmas Eve*  
by Johannes Wilhjelm (circa early 20<sup>th</sup> century)



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OF CHRISTMAS



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*Introduction*



# Introduction

## A TREASURY OF CHRISTMAS



The days grow darker and colder at Christmastime, and yet with its twinkling lights, fresh greenery, colorful decorations, and crackling fires, this season just might be the brightest and warmest of all. So, it's no wonder that we look forward to this special time all through the long year!

We've designed our *Treasury of Christmas* to be the perfect literary companion to the holiday, with poems, stories, and excerpts from longer works that explore all that Christmastime brings. The treasury is organized into themed sections that follow the course of the Christmas season from its start at Advent to its conclusion at Candlemas, touching on all the traditions we cherish along the way. You may wish to pace your exploration of this treasury throughout the holiday season by reading a poem or story each day, or you may prefer to settle in for a good long read while getting cozy by the Christmas tree. Either way, we hope that this treasury will inspire you to reflect on what sets Christmastime apart from other seasons and to make the most of what this time of year offers us.

We start by building anticipation with **Christmas Preparations**, a section about the wonderful period of waiting and working that begins in late November and early December as we get our homes and hearts ready for the holiday to come. Then, as our spirits rise, we go **Caroling, Caroling** to fill the

frosty night air with the songs of the season, including traditional carols *about* caroling!

Carolers aren't the only visitors who journey from house to house to spread cheer at this time of year—the good-natured gift-bringer known as **Saint Nicholas, Santa Claus, and Father Christmas** does the same on December 6, the feast day of Saint Nicholas, and on Christmas Eve. The selections here sketch a portrait of this generous gentleman from the earliest legends of Saint Nicholas, through Clement Clarke Moore's classic depiction, to more speculative views such as L. Frank Baum.

At Christmastime, we also open our homes and hearths to friends and family, inviting them to share our **Comfort and Joy**. The poetry and prose in this section conjure cozy fireside festivities where we enjoy good food, pleasant pastimes, and most importantly, each other's company. Then, **On Christmas Night** itself, we spread glad tidings of great joy with songs celebrating Jesus' birth and works about the Nativity story.

Even after Christmas Day has passed, the Christmas festivities continue. December 26, the feast day of Saint Stephen, was historically a day for charity, so we follow **The Spirit of Giving** with works about caring for others at Christmastime. And as the traditional Christmas season extends through January, in **Tidings of the Season**, we include works for the Twelve Days of Christmas, Twelfth Night on January 5, Epiphany and the arrival of the Three Kings on January 6, and Candlemas Eve on February 1.

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# Publisher's Note

## A TREASURY OF CHRISTMAS



The selections in this treasury are all in the public domain, which means that they were originally published at least 95 years before the publication of this treasury. We've selected works for this treasury that we believe have a timeless quality, but there are occasional differences between the language of today and that of a century or more ago. Context clues and any modern dictionary are usually all that are needed to decipher these differences, so all of the works included in this treasury are unaltered from their original sources.

The illustrations included in this treasury are also drawn from the public domain, and many were created specifically for the works they accompany.

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*Christmas  
Preparations*

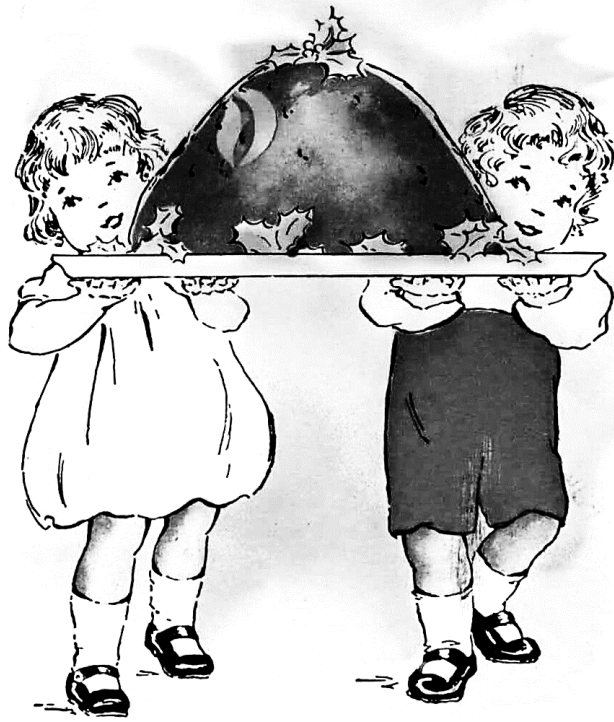


# Pudding Charms

CHARLOTTE DRUITT COLE



Our Christmas pudding was made in November,  
All they put in it, I quite well remember:  
Currants and raisins, and sugar and spice,  
Orange peel, lemon peel – everything nice  
Mixed up together, and put in a pan.  
“When you’ve stirred it,” said Mother, “as much as you can,  
We’ll cover it over, that nothing may spoil it,  
And then, in the copper, to-morrow we’ll boil it.”  
That night, when we children were all fast asleep,  
A real fairy godmother came crip-a-creep!  
She wore a red cloak, and a tall steeple hat  
(Though nobody saw her but Tinker, the cat!)  
And out of her pocket a thimble she drew,  
A button of silver, a silver horse-shoe,  
And, whisp’ring a charm, in the pudding pan popped them,  
Then flew up the chimney directly she dropped them;  
And even old Tinker pretended he slept  
(With Tinker a secret is sure to be kept!),  
So nobody knew, until Christmas came round,  
And there, in the pudding, these treasures we found.



*Caroling, Caroling*



# Six Green Singers

ELEANOR FARJEON



The frost of the moon fell over my floor  
And six green singers stood at my door.

“What do ye here that music make?”

“Let us come in for Christ’s sweet Sake.”

“Long have ye journeyed in coming here?”

“Our Pilgrimage was the length of the year.”

“Where do ye make for?” I asked of them.

“Our Shrine is a Stable in Bethlehem.”

“What will ye do as ye go along?”

“Sing to the world an evergreen song.”

“What will ye sing for the listening earth?”

“One will sing of a brave-souled Mirth,

“One of the Holiest Mystery,

The Glory of glories shall one song be,

“One of the Memory of things,

One of the Child’s imaginings,

“One of our songs is the fadeless Faith,  
And all are the Life more mighty than death.”

“Ere ye be gone that music make,  
Give me an alms for Christ’s sweet Sake.”

“Six green branches we leave with you;  
See they be scattered your house-place through.

“The staunch blithe Holly your board shall grace,  
Mistletoe bless your chimney-place,

“Laurel to crown your lighted hall,  
Over your bed let the Yew-bough fall,

“Close by the cradle the Christmas Fir,  
For elfin dreams in its branches stir,

“Last and loveliest, high and low,  
From ceil to floor let the Ivy go.”

From each glad guest I received my gift  
And then the latch of my door did lift—

“Green singers, God prosper the song ye make  
As ye sing to the world for Christ’s sweet Sake.”

