An Hymn for Christmas Day

William Knapp

1 Hark hear ye not a cheerful, cheerful
2 So loud they sung it down to, down to
3 Their Prince, their God, like one, like one of

5 noise, which makes ye Heavens ring with joy,
Earth, innocent children heard their mirth,
those, is made a child and wrapt in cloaths,

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Earth, innocent children heard their mirth,
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see where light stars bright an-gels, an-gels fly,
and sung with them what none, what none can say,
all this in time was fully, fully done,

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and sung with them what none, what none can say,
all this in time was fully, fully done,

see where light stars bright an-gels, an-gels fly,
and sung with them what none, what none can say,
all this in time was fully, fully done,

a thou-sand heav’n-ly ech-oes fly.
for joy their Prince was born to-day.
we have a Sav-iour, God the Son.

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‘An Hymn for Christmas Day’ comes from A Book of Psalmody, ‘collected, printed, taught and sold by Matthew Wilkins of Great Milton near Thame, Oxfordshire’. c.1760 (B.Lb. A.992.) Earliest known source of the tune to date is William Knapp’s ‘Anthems for Christmas Day’, pub. 1743 (only known copy in USA). Knapp published the tune as Keynson, to a different text, 10 years later, in ‘New Church Melody’. Daniel Bayley reproduced ‘Keynson’ in his New Universal Harmony, Mass., in 1773. No other published versions of the original tune have yet been found. Unlike the New Oxford Book of Carols, we have resisted the temptation to alter in Bar 11 ‘light’ to ‘like’, and adhered to Wilkins’ word fit and spelling. © Shelwin Music, Oxford, 2006 and 2014.