

Hark! Hark! What News the Angels Bring

"The Old Hark"

after Joseph Stephenson (1723-1810)

setting from Davies Gilbert,

Some Ancient Christmas Carols (1822)

1. Hark! hark! what news the ang - els bring; Glad
2. This is the day, the bless - ed morn, The

ti-dings of a new - born King, Who is the sa - viour of man -
Sa-viour of man - kind was born; Born of a maid, a vir - gin

kind, pure, In whom we may sal - va - tion find.
Born with-out sin, from guilt se - cure.

3.

If Angels sung at Jesus' birth,
Sure we have greater cause for mirth,
For why? because 'twas for our sake
Christ did our human nature take.

5.

I am resolv'd whilst here I live,
As I'm in duty bound, to give
All glory to the deity,
One God alone, in persons three.

4.

My soul, learn by thy Saviour's birth,
For to debase thyself on earth ;
That thou may'st be exalted high,
To live with him eternally.

This three-part setting of the eighteenth-century carol known as "The Old Hark", originally by Joseph Stephenson of Poole, appears in Davies Gilbert's *Some Ancient Christmas Carols* (1822). In West Gallery practice it would probably have been sung SSTB, with the middle (melody) line sung at both octaves by sopranos and tenors, and instruments doubling the voices.

The dissonances and consecutive octaves and fifths are as given in the source, and are typical of the gallery style. I have slightly amended Gilbert's text from other sources to solve a few difficulties of underlay.

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