

*Angels We Have Heard on High*  
Traditional French Hymn, Anonymous, 18<sup>th</sup> Century

This is a five-part arrangement of the well-known Christmas carol, "*Angels We Have Heard on High*". William Studwell, professor emeritus from Northern Illinois University, has devoted nearly 6,000 hours of his life to researching, writing, & lecturing about Christmas



carols. In all that time, few carols he encountered have been shrouded in more misinformation and historical debate. His investigation led him to conclude that the piece likely was not a folk carol (as legend holds). Instead, it was an 18<sup>th</sup> century traditional French carol, known as, "*Les Anges dans nos campagnes*" (literally, "*Angels in our countryside*") composed by an unknown author in Languedoc, France.

It was first formally published in France in 1855. Although, a translation appeared in England under the current title in 1862, the original version was known in England by 1816, when it served as

the inspiration for the carol "*Angels from the Realms of Glory*". Studwell found the earliest known occurrence of the modern version in a rare 1916 collection of carols, which seems to have been almost universally adopted after that date, with numerous translations.

The version used here was translated by an Irish bishop named James Chadwick around 1860. It is sung to the hymn tune "*Gloria*", so named by the glorious chorus line: "*Gloria in Excelsis Deo.*" It is of unknown authorship. This arrangement was written by Edwin Barnes in 1927.

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