

## Over the Hill and Over the Vale



1 O - ver the hill and o - ver the vale Came three kings to  
 2 O - ver the hill and o - ver the vale Each king bears a  
 3 He - is God ye go - to meet, There - fore in - cense  
 4 O - ver the hill and o - ver the vale Ri - ding east to



ge - ther, Ca - ring nought for snow and hail, Cold and wind and  
 pre - sent, Wi - se men go, a child to hail, Mon - archs seek a  
 prof - fer; He - is King ye go to greet, Gold is in your  
 ge - ther, Ca - ring nought for snow and hail, Nought for wind and



wea - ther. Now on Per - sia's san - dy plain, Now where Tig - ris  
 pea - sant. And in front, a st - ar pro ceeds, O - ver rocks and  
 cof - fer. Al - so, man, he co - mes to share Ev - ery woe that  
 wea - ther. Warned by God from Her - od's door, Each king turns for



swells with rain, They their cam - els te - ther. Now through Syr - ian  
 ri - vers leads, Shines with beams in ces - sant. There - fore on - ward,  
 man can bear, Temp - ter, rail - er, scof - fer. There - fore now, a  
 home oncemore, Hearts and foot - steps ligh - ter. Now be - hind them



la - nds they go, Now through Mo - ab, faint and slow, Now o'er E - dom's  
 on - ward still, Ford the stream and climb the hill; Love makes all things  
 gain - st the day, In the grave when Him they lay, Myrrh ye al - so  
 sh - nes the star Which they fol - lowed from a - far, Shi - ning ev - er



hea - ther.  
 plea - sant.  
 of - fer.  
 brig - ter.

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| <p>1. Over the hill and over the vale<br/>         Came three kings together,<br/>         Caring nought for snow and hail,<br/>         Cold and wind and weather.<br/>         Now on Persia's sandy plain,<br/>         Now where Tigris swells with rain,<br/>         They their camels tether.<br/>         Now through Syrian lands they go,<br/>         Now through Moab, faint and slow,<br/>         Now o'er Edom's heather.</p>  | <p>3. He is God ye go to meet,<br/>         Therefore, incense proffer;<br/>         He is King ye go to greet,<br/>         Gold is in your coffer.<br/>         Also, man, he comes to share<br/>         Every woe that man can bear,<br/>         Tempter, railer, scoffer.<br/>         Therefore now, against the day,<br/>         In the grave when Him they lay,<br/>         Myrrh ye also offer.</p>                             |
| <p>2. Over the hill and over the dale<br/>         Each king bears a present,<br/>         Wise men go, a child to hail,<br/>         Monarchs seek a peasant.<br/>         And in front, a star proceeds,<br/>         Over rocks and rivers leads,<br/>         Shines with beams incessant.<br/>         Therefore onward, onward still,<br/>         Ford the stream and climb the hill;<br/>         Love makes all things pleasant.</p> | <p>4. Over the hill and over the dale<br/>         Riding east together,<br/>         Caring nought for snow and hail,<br/>         Nought for wind and weather.<br/>         Warned by God from Herod's door,<br/>         Each king turns for home once more,<br/>         Hearts and footsteps lighter.<br/>         Now behind them shines the star<br/>         Which they followed from afar,<br/>         Shining ever brighter.</p> |

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"Over the Hill and Over the Vale", also known as "O'er the Hill and O'er the Dale" is a carol produced by Rev. John Mason Neale and Rev. Thomas Helmore. Some sources say that Neale translated the Latin text "*In vernali tempore*" but that poem is about Spring and the return of life. There seems to be some confusion between the text and the tune which is given in the original *Piae Cantiones* as "*De Tempore Vernali Cantiones*".

Helmore adapted this tune for "Over the Hill and Over the Vale".

In 1853, a copy of the rare 1582 edition of *Piae Cantiones* was acquired by Rev. John Mason Neale and Rev. Thomas Helmore from G. J. R. Gordon, Her Majesty's Envoy and Minister at Stockholm. Helmore adapted the carol melodies and Neale either paraphrased the carol lyrics into English or wrote entirely new lines. Excerpts from both the music and words were published in **Carols for Christmas-tide** (London: Novello) in 1853 and **Carols for Easter-tide** in 1854, each of which contained 12 carols. At the time, *Piae Cantiones* was virtually unknown in England; thereafter, its words and music would be read, adapted and performed throughout the English-speaking world.

It was further printed in **The Cowley Carol Book** which was edited by George Ratcliffe Woodward and was published in 1901 and 1919, in two parts and was subtitled as a selection of carols "for Christmas, Easter and Ascension-tide". The First Series was produced by George Ratcliffe Woodward, and for the second, later volume he was assisted by Charles Wood. The 'First Series' (1901, revised 1902) contained 39 carols, some already published in J. M. Neale and T. Helmore's **Carols for Christmas-tide**, 1853 and **Carols for Easter-tide**, 1854. The second edition of the first volume (1902) had 65 carols - 42 for Christmas and Epiphany, 20 for Easter and 3 for Ascension-tide.

I have not found this in print in any current volume. It does not appear in either the original **Oxford Book of Carols** or the **New Oxford Book of Carols**.

It was recorded by Nowell Sing We Clear on **Nowell Sing We Clear, Volume 4** and by William Pint and Felicia Dale on **When I See Winter Return**. They use the melody shown here but with more syncopation. The audio file is from their recording.