



**Some Ancient Christmas Carols, with the Tunes to  
Which They Were Formerly Sung in the West of  
England (Cambridge Library Collection - Music)  
(Volume 3)**

*Davies Gilbert*

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A significant figure in the scientific community of his day, and a mentor to the chemist Sir Humphry Davy and his successor as president of the Royal Society, Davies Gilbert (1767-1839) also represented his native Cornwall in Parliament for almost thirty years. His love of his county and his concern to preserve its customs led him to publish in 1822 this collection of eight Christmas folk carols, the first of its kind, drawing on Cornwall's rich oral tradition. In his preface, Davies paints a heartwarming picture of the Christmas Eves of his childhood when, 'in the evening, cakes were drawn hot from the oven; cyder or beer exhilarated the spirits in every house; and the singing of Carols was continued late into the night'. From 'The Lord at first did Adam make' to 'Let all that are to mirth inclined', these simple ballads reflect the West of England's festive heritage.

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