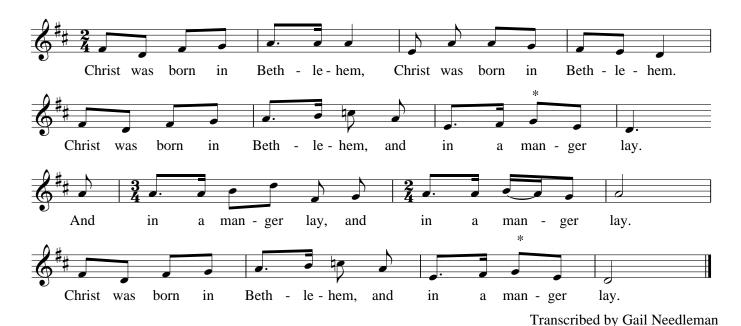
## Christ Was Born in Bethlehem

Informant/Performer: Jean Ritchie, Kate Corrigan, and Pamela Schall

Source: Kentucky Christmas Old and New Greenhays Recordings GR70717, 1980





- 2. Joseph stood a-nigh him (3x) To keep him from all harm.
- Sheep and cattle by him (3x)
   To keep the baby warm.
   To keep the baby warm (2x)
   Sheep and cattle by him
   To keep the baby warm.
- 4. Kings and shepherds kneeling (3x) To welcome in his birth.
- 5. Angels sang his lullaby (3x) It rang around the earth. It rang around the earth (2x) Angels sang his lullaby, It rang around the earth.

## **Background Information**

Our sister Jewel heard this carol when she went back to Knott County to teach her first school on Lotts Creek, boarding with Uncle Joe Ritchie, Dad's brother. In school in those days (mid 1930s) they began the day with Opening Exercises - recitations or Bible reading, saluting the flag, and singing one or two favorite songs. As springtime came on, one boy about seven or eight years old would always leap up with raised hand and holler, "Les sing 'Down Came an Angel'!" One day she finally told him that if he'd lead it they'd try it. Well, the other children all knew it and joined in - it was a lovely Easter carol. She brought it home to us, and when Dad heard us singing on it, he said, "O yes, that's a good 'un - I've known that all my life!" After the first verse, the traditional song tells the Easter story. I have given it Christmas words, so that it may be used for both seasons.