

# Christmas Song

## The Trees Are All Bare

*The Copper Family*  
*Rottingdean, Sussex (traditional)*

The musical score is written on four staves in G major (one sharp) and common time. The melody is simple and traditional. The lyrics are written below the notes, with some words underlined to indicate phrasing. The score ends with a double bar line.

The trees are all bare, not a leaf to be seen, And the  
meadows their beauty have lost. Now winter has come and 'tis  
cold for man and beast. And the stream they are  
And the streams they are all fast bound down with frost.

The trees all are bare, not a leaf to be seen  
And the meadows their beauty have lost.  
Now winter has come and 'tis cold for man and beast,  
And the streams they are,  
And the streams they are all fast bound down with frost.

'Twas down in the farmyard where the oxen feed on straw,  
They send forth their breath like the steam.  
Sweet Betsy the milkmaid now quickly she must go,  
For flakes of ice she finds,  
For flakes of ice she finds a-floating on her cream.

'Tis now all the small birds to the barn-door fly for food  
And gently they rest on the spray.  
A-down the plantation the hares do search for food,  
And lift their footsteps sure,  
Lift their footsteps sure for fear they do betray.

Now Christmas is come and our song is almost done  
For we soon shall have the turn of the year.  
So fill up your glasses and let your health go round,  
For I wish you all,  
For I wish you all a joyful New Year.

*Unknown outside of Sussex, although it appears to derive from 'Winter', a poem written by Thomas Brerewood of Horton, Cheshire (d. 1748). Known singers include the Downs shepherd, Michael Blann from Upper Beeding, whose MS songbook is in the Sussex Library; George Townshend of Lewes, Sussex who was recorded in the 1960s; and the Copper Family. Roud Index 1170.*