

music by Mykola Leontovich
word by Peter J. Wilhousk
arr. by Roberto Di Marino

Hark how the bells

for mixed choir (SATB)

1996

Score

Hark how the bells

*Hark how the bells,
Sweet silver bells,
All seem to say,
Throw cares away*

*Christmas is here,
Bringing good cheer;
To young and old,
Meek and the bold,*

*Ding dong ding dong
That is their song
With joyful ring
All caroling*

*One seems to hear
Words of good cheer
From ev'ry where
Filling the air*

*Oh how they pound,
Raising the sound,
O'er hill and dale,
Telling their tale,*

*Gaily they ring
While people sing
Songs of good cheer;
Christmas is here,*

Merry Christmas.

Hark how the bells

Carol of the bells

music by Mykola Leontovich
words by Peter J. Wilhousk
arr. by Roberto Di Marino

♩ = c. 52

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

p

ding

Hark how the bells sweet sil-ver bells all seems to say throw cares a-way. Christ-mas is here

6

dong ding dong ding dong

p

ding dong

bring - ing good cheer to young and old meek and the bold ding dong ding dong that is their song

11

p cresc.

Christ - mas is here bring - ing good cheer to young and old

p cresc.

ding dong

p cresc.

ding dong

O

O

p

with joy - ful ring all carol - ing. ding dong ding

Hark how the bells

16

mf dim.

meek and the bold ding dong ding dong that is their song with joy-ful ring all carol - ing.

mf dim.

mf dim.

mp ding dong ding *p* ding dong ding

21

p cresc. poco a poco

Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale. Oh, how they pound

p cresc. poco a poco

Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale. Oh, how they pound

p cresc. poco a poco

8 how they rai - sing the sound how

p cresc. poco a poco

ding dong ding dong ding

26

f

rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale.— Gai - ly they ring— while peo - ple sing—

f

rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale.— Gai - ly they ring while peo - ple sing

f

8 they rai - sing the sound Gai - ly they ring while peo - ple sing

f

ding dong ding Gai - ly they ring while peo - ple sing

Hark how the bells

31

songs of good cheer— Christ-mas is here Gai-ly they ring— while peo-ple sing— songs of good cheer—

songs of good cheer Christ-mas is here Gai-ly they ring while peo-ple sing songs of good cheer

8 songs of good cheer Christ-mas is here Gai-ly they ring while peo-ple sing songs of good cheer

songs of good cheer Christ-mas is here Gai-ly they ring while peo-ple sing songs of good cheer

36

Christ-mas is here mer-ry, mer-ry, mer-ry, mer-ry Christ-mas mer-ry, mer-ry, mer-ry, mer-ry Christ-mas

Christ-mas is here ding dong ding dong ding dong ding ding dong

8 Christ-mas is here ding dong ding dong ding dong ding ding dong

Christ-mas is here ding dong ding dong ding dong ding ding dong

41

Hark how the bells sweet sil-ver bells all seems to say throw cares a-way. Christ-mas is here

p subito

p ding

Hark how the bells

46

dong ding dong ding dong
 bring - ing good cheer to young and old meek and the bold ding dong ding dong that is their song

51

ding dong
 with joy - ful ring all carol - ing. One _____ seems to hear _____ words of
p
 One seems to hear _____ words of
p
 One seems to hear _____ words of good _____ cheer from

57

p
 One _____ seems to hear _____
 good _____ cheer One seems to hear _____ words of good _____
 good _____ cheer _____
 e - very - where _____ fill - ing the air _____ One seems to hear

Hark how the bells

64

— words of good — cheer — fill - ing the air —
cheer from e - very - where — fill - ing the air — *mf* One —
8 *mf* One seems to hear —
mf words of good — cheer — One

70

— seems to hear — words of good — cheer —
8 words of good — cheer from e - very - where — fill - ing the
seems to hear words of good — cheer —

76

mf One seems to hear — words of good — cheer from e - very - where —
fill - ing the air —
8 air — One — seems to hear — words of good —
— One seems to hear words of good —

Hark how the bells

83

fill - ing the air

fill - ing the air

cheer

cheer

p Hark how the bells sweet sil - ver bells all seems to say throw cares a - way.

89

p ding dong ding dong ding dong

ding dong

p ding dong

Christ - mas is here bring - ing good cheer to young and old meek and the bold ding dong ding dong that is their song

95

p cresc. poco a poco Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale.

cresc. poco a poco ding dong Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale.

cresc. poco a poco ding dong Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale.

cresc. poco a poco with joy - ful ring all carol - ing. Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale.

Hark how the bells

101

Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale. how

Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale. Oh, how they pound

8 Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale. Oh, how they pound

Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale. ding

106

they rai - sing the sound Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale

rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale. Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale

8 rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale tell - ing their tale. how they rai - sing the

ding ding dong Oh, how they pound rai - sing the sound o'er hill and dale

112

tell - ing their tale. — *ff* Gai - ly they ring — while peo - ple sing — songs of good cheer — Christ - mas is here

tell - ing their tale. *ff* Gai - ly they ring while peo - ple sing songs of good cheer Christ - mas is here

8 sound *ff* Gai - ly they ring while peo - ple sing songs of good cheer Christ - mas is here

tell - ing their tale. *ff* Gai - ly they ring while peo - ple sing songs of good cheer Christ - mas is here

Hark how the bells

117

Gai-ly they ring— while peo-ple sing— songs of good cheer— Christ-mas is here mer-ry, mer-ry, mer-ry,
 Gai-ly they ring while peo-ple sing songs of good cheer Christ-mas is here ding
 8 Gai-ly they ring while peo-ple sing songs of good cheer Christ-mas is here ding
 Gai-ly they ring while peo-ple sing songs of good cheer Christ-mas is here ding

122

mer-ry Christ-mas mer-ry, mer-ry, mer-ry, mer-ry Christ-mas
 dong ding dong ding dong ding dong Hark how the bells sweet sil-ver bells
 8 dong ding dong ding dong ding dong Hark how the bells sweet sil-ver bells
 dong ding dong ding dong ding dong

127

rit.
 Gai-ly they ring while peo-ple sing songs of good cheer Christ-mas is here
 all seems to say throw cares a-way. Gai-ly they ring while peo-ple sing songs of good cheer Christ-mas is here
 8 all seems to say throw cares a-way. ding dong songs of good cheer Christ-mas is here
 ding dong ding dong songs of good cheer Christ-mas is here

UKRAINIAN MUSIC HAS SLOWLY won a place for itself in the treasury of world music by its beauty and originality. Often foreign composers, recognizing the creative element of Ukraine's music, have incorporated Ukrainian melodies into their own compositions. This is the case with such famous composers as Bach, Haydn, Mozart, Chopin, Beethoven and Liszt. However, the Ukrainian ancestry of these melodies has usually been lost sight of in the entire symphony or composition.

There have been relatively few Ukrainian songs that have won widespread recognition in their own right. Undoubtedly the best known among these is Shchedryk which is popularly known as the Carol of the Bells. Every Christmas for the past twenty years this Ukrainian song has appeared in dozens of different arrangements. It has been performed on television shows such as the Julie Andrews Christmas Special, on the stage of New York's Radio City Music Hall, on radio programs, at Christmas tree lighting ceremonies of countless city halls, by church choirs and even in commercials. Renditions have appeared in many choral versions as well as in a multitude of instrumental versions.

The strange thing is that the original Ukrainian Shchedryk is not a Christmas carol. It is a shchedrivka or New Year's carol. How was it that this one song came across the ocean from Ukraine to establish itself so firmly in the Christmas repertoire of the United States and Canada? There are relatively few songs that have won a secure place beside such favorites as Silent Night from Germany.

AFTER UKRAINE BECAME INDEPENDENT in 1918 the government of the Ukrainian National Republic the following year sent out into the world as its goodwill ambassador a choir. This was the famous Ukrainian Republican Capella Choir under the leadership of the composer and director Alexander Koshetz. This choir visited almost every European capital city and later traveled across to the United States and Canada. Koshetz himself later lived in the U.S.A. and then moved to Winnipeg where he died in 1944.

The choir attracted much attention not only for its superb voices but also because of the beauty and arrangements of the songs presented. Among these songs was Shchedryk arranged by the Ukrainian composer and school teacher Mykola Leontovich (1877-1921).

Vienna, which was then the musical capital of Europe, if not of the world, marveled at the choir. One music critic wrote: "Our composers can learn from Leontovich. Shchedryk is a masterpiece, which will remain one of the most precious acquisitions in the world's treasury of choral music." The critic was proven right a half century later when the song finally became a permanent choice of the Christmas musical season.

WHEN KOSHETZ TOURED the United States with his choir, music critics often drew special attention to Shchedryk. It was an American school teacher, Peter J. Wilhousky, who was inspired by the melody to write some English lyrics for it. It was Wilhousky who transformed the Ukrainian New Year's song into an American Christmas "Carol of the Bells."

The original Shchedryk is a carol sung usually on Shchedry Vechir ("Bountiful Evening") or Malanka which is the Ukrainian New Year's Eve, January 13. Like most of these carols it expresses a wish for happiness in the form of a rich harvest. The song mentions a 'lastivka', or swallow, who will return from the south to Ukraine bringing an early Spring and the warmth of the sun. The carol wishes the farmer wealth and also a beautiful wife ("V tebe zhinka chornobrova"). Literally it says "a woman with black, or dark, eyebrows." The reason is that traditionally in Ukrainian folk songs dark eyebrows are a symbol of the beauty of women.

The English words of Peter Wilhousky do not attempt to translate the Ukrainian but they do capture some of the same joyful spirit and hope of happiness.

Andrew Gregorovich