

'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime (*Estennialon de tsonue Jesus ahatonnia*)

Text: The earliest Canadian carol in existence (HCLBW, p. “The words were written in the Huron Indian language by **Father Jean de Brebeuf**, (1593-1649) a Jesuit missionary to the Iroquois and Huron tribes of Canada. It was probably sung among the Hurons from 1641 - 1649 until the Iroquois invaded and tortured the tribe and Fr. Brebeuf to death. (CUMH, p. 724) A century later, Fr. de Villeneuve heard the carol and wrote it down, then translated it into French and it was sung in Quebec. (PHC, p. 61) de Villeneuve was stationed at Lorette (1747-1794) where he wrote the carol down as he heard it. **Paul Picard**, an Indian notary, translated it into French and it first appeared in Ernest Myrand's *Noel Anciens de la Nouvelle France* (1879) [ref. Osborne, Stanley (1976) McKellar (1992, p. 203)

The English translation by **Jesse Edgar Middleton** (Canadian poet, novelist, playwright and historian, 1872-1960) is more of an interpretation, coming from Huron via French and adapted to this melody. Verse 2 was prepared by Gilbert E. Doan, Jr. Middleton, born in Ontario, worked as a school teacher and journalist, in addition to serving as a choir master in Toronto for nearly forty years. (HCLBW, p. 175) (PHC, p. 61)

1. 'Twas in the moon of wintertime when all the birds had fled,
That mighty Gitchi Manitou sent angel choirs instead.
Before their light the stars grew dim,
And wand'ring hunters heard the hymn:

“Jesus, your King, is born.
Jesus is born.
In excelsis gloria!”

2. Within a lodge of broken bark the tender Babe was found,
A ragged robe of rabbit skin enwrapped His beauty round.
And as the hunter braves drew nigh,
The angel song rang loud and high:
3. The earliest moon of winter time is not so round and fair,
As was the ring of glory on the helpless Infant there.
While Chiefs from far before him knelt,
With gifts of fox and beaver pelt.
4. O children of the forest free, O sons of Manitou,
The Holy Child of earth and Heav'n is both today for you.
Come, kneel before the radiant Boy
Who brings you beauty, peace and joy.

Tune: “UNE JEUNE PUCELLE (lit. “a young maiden”) is a sixteenth-century French folk song which is closely related to the tune, VON GOTT WILL ICH NICHT LASSEN. It served as the basis for organ noëls composed by **Claude Daquin** (1695-1772) and **Nicholas BeBegue** (1631-1702). **Blume** (?) suggests that it has pre-Protestant origins, probably from popular sources.” (HCLBW, p. 176) The tune is named JESOUS AHATONHIA for the United Methodist Hymnal (CUMH, p. 671)

'Twas in the Moon of Wintertime

Mode: Aeolian

France

Arranged for Dulcimer
by Steve Eulberg

1. 'Twas in the moon of win-ter-time when all the birds had fled, That

0 0 1 0 X

0	0	0	0	0	0
1 2 3 4	3 2 1 0	1 1 2 0	1	X	

might-y Git-chi Man-i-tou sent an-gel choirs in - stead. Be - fore their light the

0 0 1 0 0 4

0	0	0	0	0	4
1 2 3 4	3 2 1 0	1 1 2 0	1	5	5 5 2 3

stars grew dim, And wan-d'ring hun - ters heard the hymn:—"Je - sus, your

3 4 3 X X 0 0

3	3	3 3	0	2	0 0 0
4 3 2 2	3 2 1 1	2 1 1 X	X	1 1	

King, is born. Je - sus is born. In ex - cel-sis glo - ri - a!"

4+ (4) 0 0 0

0	0	0	0	0	0
0 X X	1 0 X	5 1 2	3 4 5 X	1	

Text: Huron, Father Jean de Brebeuf (1593-1640), tr. J.E. Middleton
Tune: French Carol

Track #4 