

ANCIENT GROOVE MUSIC

COVENTRY CAROL

Edited by
Ben Byram-Wigfield

FROM THE 15TH-CENTURY PAGEANT
OF THE SHEARMEN AND TAILORS

(♩ = 100)

Lul - ly lul - la, thou lit - tle ti - ny child, By by, lul - - ly lul -

7

-lay, thou lit - tle ti - ny child, By by, lul - ly lul - - la. Fine

13

1. O sis - ters two, How may we do For to pre - serve this day Our
2. He - rod the King, In his rag - ing, Char - gèd he hath this day His
3. That woe is me, Poor child, for thee, And ev - er mourn and may For

20

whom we do 3: Da Capo al Fine

poor young - ling For whom we do sing By by, lul - ly lul - lay.
men of might In his own sight All young chil - dren to slay.
thy part - ing Neither say nor sing By by, lul - ly lul - lay.

whom we do

The 1591 manuscript was lost in a fire at Birmingham Free Library in 1879, but had been copied by the antiquarian Thomas Sharp in 1825; though his transcription has many obvious errors.

This edition adds an optional fourth part (tenor), corrects the text and restores the false relation from the standard OUP edition. The original has *'tine'* as a single syllable. *'Neither'* is sung as two crotchets on the 3rd beat of bar 21. The source has *'mo(u)rn and say'*—the last word meaning *'sigh'*—not *'morn and day'* as in OUP; but *'may'* has been suggested as more likely, creating alliteration and avoiding the repetition of *'say'*. The Bass part has *'Our poor youngling'*, while the others have *'This'*.

The words *lulla lullay* (as in *lullaby*) derive from the verb *'lull'*—to soothe and send to sleep. *By by* may have the same root as *'abide'*.