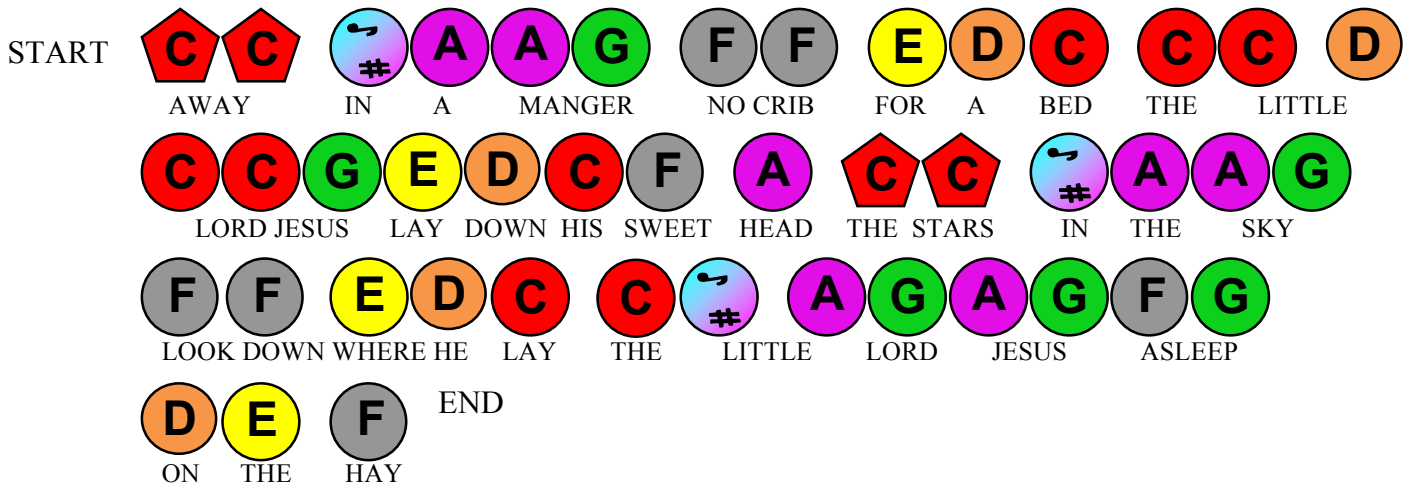


# Away In A Manger



## Lyrics

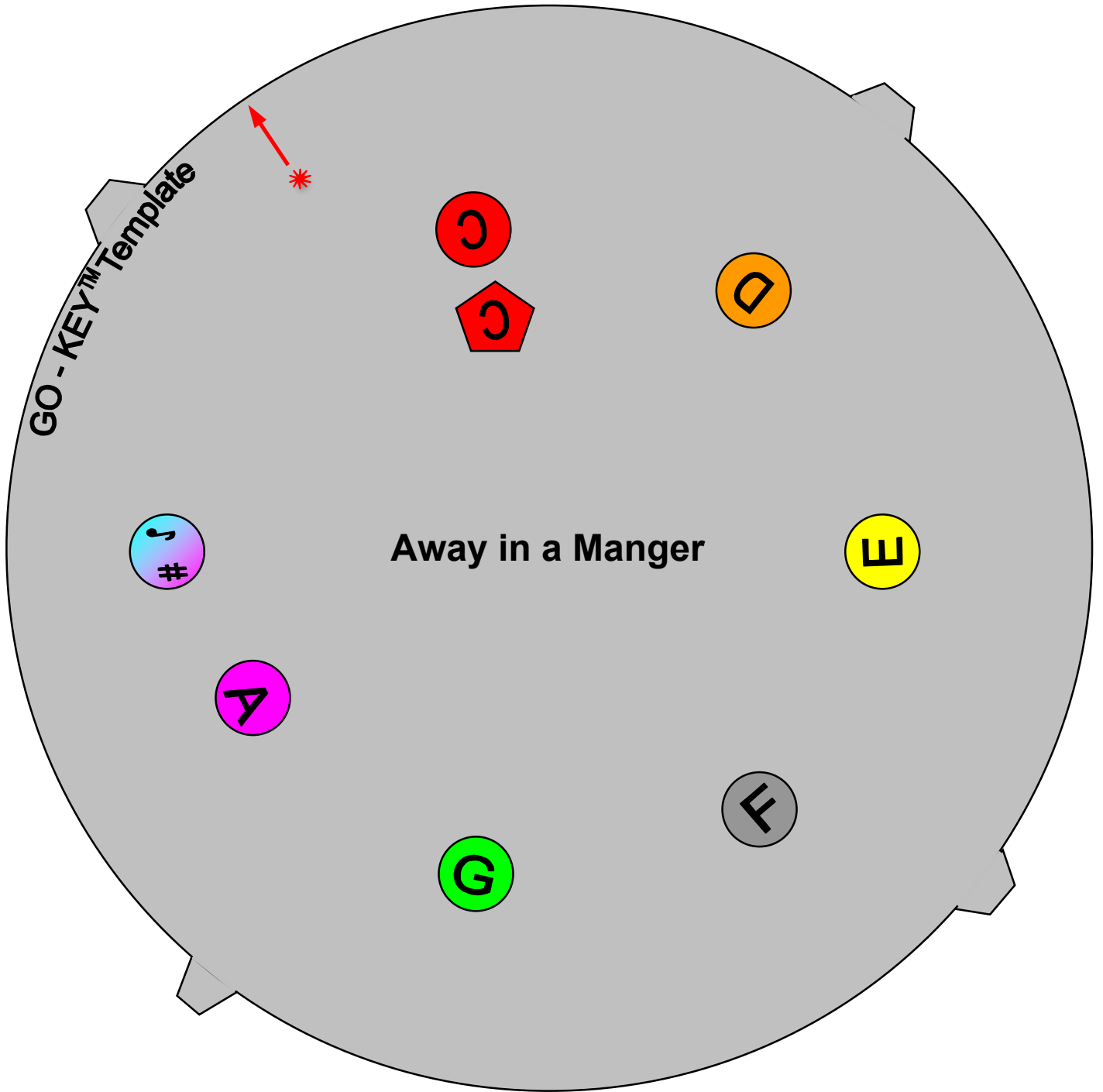
From Kirkpatrick (1895):

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,  
The little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.  
The stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,  
The little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,  
But little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.  
I love thee, Lord Jesus! look down from the sky,  
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.

Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask thee to stay  
Close by me forever, and love me I pray.  
Bless all the dear children in thy tender care,  
And take us to heaven to live with thee there.

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## History and Origin

"Away in a Manger" is a Christmas carol first published in the late nineteenth century and used widely throughout the English-speaking world. In Britain, it is one of the most popular carols; a 1996 Gallup Poll ranked it joint second. Although it was long claimed to be the work of German religious reformer Martin Luther, the carol is now thought to be wholly American in origin.

The two most-common musical settings are by William J. Kirkpatrick (1895) and James Ramsey Murray (1887). A great many published editions ascribe the lyrics of the first two verses to Martin Luther, but there is little evidence for his authorship, and researchers have not yet confirmed the original lyricist(s) of these verses. The third verse was added somewhat later.

The most popular musical setting in the United States is commonly known as "Mueller". The melody was first published, under the title "Luther's Cradle Hymn", by James R. Murray in his collection *Dainty Songs for Little Lads and Lasses* (1887).

The standard melody in England is "Cradle Song". The tune, written by the American composer William J. Kirkpatrick, was first published as part of the collection *Around the World with Christmas* (1895), a "Christmas Exercise" for schools featuring material representing various countries: "Away in a Manger" was included, under the title "Luther's Cradle Hymn", as a representative of "The German Fatherland".

Kirkpatrick's melody was later published in numerous hymn-books, and was the setting that, in Hill's words, "first carried the words beyond the confines of the United States", being included in collections such as *Carey Bonner's Sunday School Hymnary* (1905). It remains the most popular musical setting of "Away in a Manger" outside the United States.

In his article "Not so far away in a Manger, forty-one settings of an American carol", published in the *Music Library Association Notes* (second series) III, no. 1 for December 1945, Richard Hill treated 41 of the nearly 200 different musical settings of this text.

The first known musical setting specifically published with the words appeared in an Evangelical Lutheran Sunday School collection, *Little Children's Book for Schools and Families* (1885; preface dated Christmas 1884), where it simply bore the title "Away in a Manger". It was set to a tune called "St. Kilda," credited to J.E. Clark. The tune, according to Hill, "gives every appearance of being a standard melody used elsewhere for other hymns", but Hill adds that "no information on J. E. Clark or any other printing of his tune, previous or later, has been located."

The melody by John Bunyan Herbert (first published in 1891), is identified by Hill as among the most popular.

Charles H. Gabriel, already mentioned as being the first to publish the third verse in 1892, is also notable for having published more different musical arrangements of the hymn than any other known composer. His 1896 setting, reprinted in many different collections, is based on his 1892 melody but adds a chorus at the end of each verse, with the word "asleep" sung antiphonally.