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The Christmas Sleigh-Ride

Helen Gray Cone

They started from the old farm-gate,
The happiest boys alive,
With Rob, the roan, and Rust, his mate,
And Uncle Jack to drive;
The snow was packed, that Christmas-time,
The moon was round and clear,
And when the bells began to chime,
They all began to cheer.
Chime, chime, chime, chime,— such a merry load
Sleighbing in the moonlight along the river road!



They passed the lonely cider-mill,
That's falling all apart;
The hermit heard them on the hill,—
It warmed his frozen heart;
They cheered at every farm-house gray,
With window-panes aglow,—
Within, the farmer's wife would say,
"Well, well, I want to know!"
Chime, chime, chime, chime,— such a noisy load
Speeding by the homesteads along the river road!
The river shone, an icy sheet,

As o'er the bridge they flew;
Then down the quiet village street
Their Christmas horns they blew;
The sober people smiled and said,
"We'll have to give them leave
(Boys will be boys!) to make a noise,
Because it's Christmas eve!"
Chime, chime, chime, chime,— such a lively load
Scattering songs and laughter along the river road!

But now it's growing hard to keep
Awake, and now it seems
The very bells have gone to sleep,
And jingle in their dreams.
The lane at last,— the farm-gate creaks,
And Grandma cries, "It's Jack!
Why, what a peck of apple-cheeks
These boys have brought us back!"
Chime, chime, chime, chime,— such a hungry load,
Rosy from the Christmas ride along the river road!

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