Like many of our much loved Carols this song is old. The tune is first recorded in book of dances in the 16th Century in France.

Eventually lyrics were added by an English Composer and bell ringing enthusiast called George Woodward and it was published in a Carol book in 1924.

It is a Carol that doesn’t often feature in Carol services in church due to a whole repertoire of other “Gloria” refrained Carols that can lead thankful a chair will be provided at the end!

It also doesn’t really move the story on as far as the nativity service or 9 lessons and carols may need it to. There is no mention of Jesus or his birth but bell ringers get a good few mentions.

We know that they are ringing out the bells to celebrate Jesus’ birth. In the era it was written the parish churches would have rung out on special occasions and to herald good news. A fitting tribute to herald Jesus’ birth.

To the best of my knowledge there is just one URC in the UK that has a full set of peeling bells which is Port Sunlight in Mersey Synod. It us part of a heritage village worthy of a day out and visit.

In the brass band world this carol often proves quite a challenge to the inner parts. It gives a dilemma – go to slow the top part expire and go to fast the lower part can’t fit in all their rests and notes. However it is a dance and should be lively, joyful and full of energy. Enjoy.

**2**

**Ding Dong Merrily on High**

Ding dong merrily on high,
In heav'n the bells are ringing:
Ding dong! verily the sky
Is riv'n with angel singing.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

E'en so here below, below,
Let steeple bells be swungen,
And "Io, io, io!"
By priest and people sungen.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

Pray you, dutifully prime
Your matin chime, ye ringers;
May you beautifully rime
Your evetime song, ye singers.
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!
Gloria, Hosanna in excelsis!

**Other Versions to enjoy**

[Carol: Ding Dong! Merrily On High - Bing video](https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=ding+dong+merrily+on+high+songs+of+praise&&view=detail&mid=4094557749376BFF8F874094557749376BFF8F87&&FORM=VRDGAR&ru=%2Fvideos%2Fsearch%3Fq%3Dding%2520dong%2520merrily%2520on%2520high%2520songs%2520of%2520praise%26qs%3Dn%26form%3DQBVR%26sp%3D-1%26pq%3Dding%2520dong%2520merrily%2520on%2520high%2520songs%2520of%2520prais%26sc%3D0-40%26sk%3D%26cvid%3D942A5F71F83D4AE292BC9F3E19A8667A) BBC

With words

<https://youtu.be/9yjVIo7IARM>

Swing version

<https://youtu.be/lGp4-uMs6S0>

Rend collective