

WHAT SO ★ PROUDLY ★ WE HAIL

The American Soul in Story, Speech, and Song

White Christmas

IRVING BERLIN

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“White Christmas” may be the most popular secular American Christmas carol, rivaled only by “Jingle Bells.” Written in 1940 by the American composer and songwriter Irving Berlin (1888–1989) for the 1942 movie Holiday Inn, starring Bing Crosby and Fred Astaire, it quickly became a classic—not only a wartime hit, but the best-selling Christmas single of all time.

What mood does this song evoke? What does a “white Christmas” suggest to you? Is it simply a Christmas with snow? Why do you think this song became so popular, particularly during World War II? How does singing this song make you feel?

I’m dreaming of a white Christmas
Just like the ones I used to know
Where the treetops glisten and children listen
To hear sleigh bells in the snow.

I’m dreaming of a white Christmas
With every Christmas card I write
May your days be merry and bright
And may all your Christmases be white.